THE HOLY QUR'ĀN

ARABIC TEXT, ENGLISH TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY

(Revised Edition)

By

MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI



SIXTH EDITION

AHMADIYYAH ANJUMAN ISHA'AT ISLAM
LAHORE, PAKISTAN
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محکمۂ اوقاف حکومت پنجاب - لاہور

رجسٹریشن سرٹیفیکیٹ

رجسٹریشن نمبر ____________

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تصدیق کی جاتی ہے کہ فرد / کمپنی / پریس **احمدیہ انجمن اشاعت اسلام - لاہور**

کو اشاعت قرآن پاک (طباعتی اغلاط سے مبرا) ایکٹ ایل، آئی، وی 1973ء کے تحت بطور "ناشر قرآن" رجسٹر کر لیا گیا ہے۔

فضل کریم
دستخط
ناظم اعلیٰ محکمہ اوقاف، پنجاب



ایم محمد رمضان

حکومت پاکستان وزارت امور مذہبی (شعبہ اسلامیٰ) کا منظور شدہ پروف ریڈر برائے قرآن مجید

سرٹیفکیٹ

مَیں نے مولانا محمد علی لاہوری کے انگریزی ترجمۃ القرآن کے عربی متن کو انجمن حمایتِ اسلام لاہور کے شائع کردہ مستند نسخہ قرآن مجید کے مطابق چیک کرلیا ہے۔ غلطیوں کو درست کر دیا گیا ہے۔

وَاللّٰہُ اَعْلَمُ بِالصَّوَاب

محمد رمضان

رجسٹرڈ پروف ریڈر برائے قرآن مجید

حکومتِ پاکستان

پروف ریڈر مذہبی کتب بالخصوص قرآن مجید

پتہ برائے خط و کتابت

عالم سٹریٹ نمبر 17

نیواں محلہ ۔ چاہ میراں

لاہور پاکستان

Foreword to Fifth Edition

This edition of Maulana Muhammad Ali's Translation of the Qur'ān is the first to appear after the author's death. The first thought that comes to mind is to acknowledge the very great service which the Maulana has rendered to modern humanity, groping for some ray of light out of the desperate situation created by the unprecedented decay of faith, in making the Qur'ān—a burning flame of light and life—available in the English language.

Interpreting the Word of God calls for great gifts of scholarship, no doubt, and Maulana Muhammad Ali's Translation has been widely acclaimed "as the first work published by any Muslim with the thoroughness worthy of Qur'ānic scholarship and achieving the standards of modern publications."[1] But it requires something much more, which no scholarship can confer—the gift of inner purity. That is the significance of the Qur'ānic verse that none can touch the Qur'ān except the pure ones.[2] Maulana Muhammad Ali wielded a scholar's pen with a saint's hands, and that is where lay the secret of this Translation becoming a real spiritual force and a beacon of light for seekers-after-truth.

Maulana Muhammad Ali's Translation marks a definite epoch in the understanding of Islam. Among the Muslim intelligentsia it positively arrested the creeping decay of faith as a result of the Western materialistic influences, and the sceptical trends of Western philosophic thought. Typical of this reaction of the Muslim mind was the fulsome acknowledgment by a well-known devout Muslim thinker and writer, referred to by the author in the Preface, who ascribes his own rescue from the wilderness of atheism to this Translation.

In the realm of Western scholarship, the impact of this Translation is noticeable in the changed outlook on Islam, and the changed tone of literature about Islam that has since appeared. The very first indications of such wholesome change are met with in the writings of a man of no less scholarly stature than H. G. Wells. The first edition of this Translation appeared in 1917, and in 1920 when Wells's *The Outline of History* appeared, it carried the whole of Section 16 of Surah Āl'Imrān, as rendered in this Translation, as a specimen of the Qur'ān's "majestic utterances." To quote his own words:

> "Here for the judgment of the reader is an example of these majestic utterances from the recent orthodox translation by the Maulvi Muhammad Ali."[3]

The primary object of this Translation was to disabuse the Western mind of the many stupid and unkind things said and believed about Islam throughout the centuries, and to enlighten it as to the truth of Islam.

In the Middle Ages, it was a common thing to describe the Prophet Muhammad as a "false" prophet, and the Qur'ān as a "forgery." The image of Islam that had emerged before the Western mind was a bundle of all that was disgusting. A stage arrived, however, when the conscience of fair-minded men in the West itself revolted against these absurdities and calumnies. Typical of this school was Carlyle who in his *Heroes and Hero-worship* raised a vigorous protest against this kind of wild talk:

> "The lies which well-meaning zeal has heaped around this man are disgraceful to ourselves only. . . . A false man found a religion? Why, a false man cannot build a brick house. . . . It will not stand for twelve centuries to lodge a hundred and eighty millions; it will fall straightway."[4]

George Sale, another man of great scholarship, in his Preface to his English translation of the Qur'an, speaks with two voices about Islam and the Prophet, his

[1] *The Student's Qur'ān*, by H. Amir Ali, Asia Publishing House, London (1961), p. iv
[2] The Qur'ān, 56: 79.
[3] *The Outline of History*, by H. G. Wells, pp. 601, 602.
[4] *Heroes and Hero-worship*, by Thomas Carlyle, Collins Press, London, pp. 60–61.

mind being torn between inherited prejudices on the one hand and the sense of scientific objectivity on the other. The very first page entitled "To the Reader" opens with the lines:

> "I imagine it almost needless either to make an apology for publishing the following translation, or to go about to prove it a work of use as well as curiosity. They must have a mean opinion of the Christian religion or be but ill-grounded therein, who can apprehend any danger from so manifest a forgery."[1]

Only two pages further, however, this very distinguished scholar proceeds to shower on the Prophet an encomium which a Muslim would hardly be able to improve upon, describing him as:

> ". . . richly furnished with natural endowments, beautiful in his person, of a subtle wit, agreeable behaviour, showing liberality to the poor, courtesy to everyone, fortitude against his enemies, and above all a high reverence for the name of God; severe against the perjured, adulterers, murderers, slanderers, prodigals, covetous, false witnesses, etc., a great preacher of patience, charity, mercy, beneficence, gratitude, honouring of parents and superiors, and a frequent celebrator of Divine praises."[2]

Here lies the silver-lining of hope that the Western mind will not be able to shut out the light of Truth much longer, and will see the force of the plain logic that a man severe against the perjured and false witnesses could not in the same breath be justly accused of forgery and falsehood.

A most striking instance of this changing attitude towards Islam may be found in a recent book, *Islam and the West*, which has taken the pains to collect all this atrocious material about Islam that has come down from the past, with the express purpose to confront the Western mind with the reproach: "Look, this is the nonsense that your civilisation so readily accepted!"

The very reproduction of all this stuff, however, the author feels, is an outrage on good sense, and the very opening page begins with an apology:

> "I hope that Muslim readers will not be scandalised by some of the things in this book, or consider that I have been wrong to revive the memory of, among other things, certain silly and unpleasant libels of their religion and their Prophet."

His purpose, the author explains, is to make:

> "Europeans to recognise how many erroneous ideas their civilisation has in the past accepted."[3]

And then follows displayed on a full page the Arabic saying, in Arabic script:

> "Nāqil-il kufri laisa bikāfirin."
>
> "The reproducer of a blasphemy does not become a blasphemer."[4]

What baffles understanding is that while the Western mind was for centuries thus wandering in the wilderness, nothing was done by Muslims to place before the Western people at least an authentic translation of the Qur'ān to let them see for themselves that Islam is neither a displacement nor a replacement, but a rediscovery and fulfilment of true Christianity, as taught by Jesus Christ. Whatever of the Qur'ān reached Europe did so in translations by Christian scholars, the first being in Latin as early as 1143, followed by some in other languages.[5]

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[1] *The Koran*, by George Sale, Frederick Warne & Co., London, p. v.
[2] *Ibid*, p. vii.
[3] *Islam and the West*, by Norman Daniel, The University Press, Edinburgh, p. v.
[4] *Ibid*, p. x.
[5] *Early Translations of the Qur'ān into European languages:*

1143, in Latin MS., printed in 1543 by Bibliander (Basle).
1616, German (Schweigger); 1647, French (Du Ryer); 1649, English (A. Ross); 1698, Latin (Maracci) with Arabic text and commentary.
1734, English (George Sale); 1773, German (Boysen); 1776, Russian (at St. Petersburg); 1783, French (Savary).
1828, German (Wahl); 1840, German (Ullmann); 1840, French (Kasimerski); 1861, English (J. M. Rodwell); 1876, English (E. H. Palmer).
1917, English (Muhammad Ali).

It was against such a historic background that Maulana Muhammad Ali's Translation appeared on the scene, the first in a Western language from a Muslim's pen in the history of Islam, up to the highest standards of Western scholarship. And from this point we find a new era dawn in the better understanding of Islam in the West. The misconceptions give way to positive appreciation, even admiration, as reflected in the books even by distinguished Orientalists. For instance, what a far cry from Sale's "forgery"-attitude to the following by Professor Gibb:

> ". . . the Koran is essentially untranslatable. The seer can never communicate his vision in ordinary language. He can express himself only in broken images, every inflection of which, every nuance and subtlety, has to be long and earnestly studied before their significance breaks upon the reader—images, too, in which the music of sounds plays an indefinable part in attuning the mind of the hearer to receive the message. To paraphrase them in other words can only be to mutilate them, to substitute clay for fine gold, the plodding of the pedestrian intelligence for the winged flight of intuitive perception. . . . An English translation of the Koran must employ precise and often arbitrary terms for the many-faced and jewel-like phrases of the Arabic; and the more literal it is, the grayer and more colourless it must be. . . . Even in so simple a sentence as 'We give life and death and unto Us is the journeying,' it is impossible to present in English (or perhaps any other language) the force of the five-times-repeated 'We' in the six words of the original (L: 43.)"[1]

The verse referred to as impossible of translation reads thus in Arabic:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي وَنُمِيتُ وَإِلَيْنَا الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٤٣﴾

Rebutting the sword-myth, so much played up in connection with the rapid spread of Islam, H. G. Wells says:

> "And if the reader entertains any delusions about a fine civilisation, either Persian or Roman, Hellenic or Egyptian, being submerged by this flood, the sooner he dismisses such ideas the better. Islam prevailed because it was the best social and political order the times could offer. It prevailed because everywhere it found politically apathetic peoples, robbed, oppressed, bullied, uneducated and unorganised, and it found selfish and unsound governments out of touch with any people at all. It was the broadest, freshest and cleanest political idea that had yet come into actual activity in the world, and it offered better terms than any other to the mass of mankind."[2]

Within the Church itself there is a growing realisation of the need for drastic reorientation of the doctrinal aspect of Christianity. A distinguished Church dignitary, in a very illuminating book, contends that Christianity also teaches unity of God, Son and Holy Ghost being only two attributes of God the Father, just as Raḥmān and Rahim are attributes of Allah.[3] Another book, *Honest to God*, by a distinguished Bishop of the Church of England urges that "Our image of God must go," if Christianity is to be saved.[4] The fact is the Church has not been honest to Jesus Christ either, and ascribed to him things which he never taught. What the Church needs is to be honest to Jesus Christ as well. If and when that happens, it will be found that the Qur'ān alone gives the true conception of God as taught by Jesus Christ—true to the realities of Nature and the dictates of reason.

Never before was the Western mind in such desperate theological and ideological ferment as today. Faith in God is fast tottering, and when faith decays, the collapse of the whole fabric of civilisation cannot be far behind. Modern man typifies the man in the parable who gains the whole world but loses his own soul. Without a firm faith in God's existence man's life is a rootless life, and a rootless life is a restless life. The poison of Godlessness which is vitiating the foundations of life today is amenable to no cure other than a living throbbing faith in the existence of God, and rehabilitating man's relationship with his Creator on a personal level. No philosophy or science can do that. The living Word of God alone can take man beyond the haze and mist of doubt and dismay, to the sunshine of faith and hope,

[1] *Modern Trends in Islam*, by H. A. R. Gibb, pp. 3, 4.
[2] *The Outline of History*, by H. G. Wells, pp. 613–14.
[3] *The Call of the Minaret*, by Dr. Kenneth Cragg, Oxford University Press (1956).
[4] *Honest to God*, by Dr. John Robinson, the Bishop of Woolwich; S.C.M. Press, London.

and true peace and bliss. Here lies the significance to the modern man of the Qur'ān as the last Word of God, intact in all its pristine purity.

In the problems of life that confront the modern man, the Qur'ān will be found to give a guidance which is free from all imperfections of the human mind. Being rooted in the demands of human nature, it is balanced and well-adjusted. But more than that, there is the problem of the inward conflicts of man of which the arena lies in the deeper depths of his own mind. Here again, if there is anything that can resolve these inner conflicts, and give man a well-integrated personality, it is a living faith in God's existence and a bond of personal relationship with Him. The main theme and purpose of the Qur'ānic revelation is to keep that flame of faith and personal contact with God burning. That is what makes the Qur'ān indispensable to the modern man, already on the brink of self-destruction.

The mantle of the historic role to make this burning flame of Faith available to the Western mind in a Western language could not have fallen on better shoulders. By the very cast of his mind, Maulana Muhammad Ali was deeply religious. Having obtained three university degrees, when the prospects of a bright worldly career lay at his feet he dedicated his life to the service of Islam.[1] And what a dedication! He took up his pen in that cause in 1902 as a young man in his twenties, wielded it incessantly, untiringly and devotedly for half a century and did not lay it down until it was actually snatched from him by the hand of death![2]

The English Translation of the Qur'ān alone took him seven long years (1909–16). The amount of original research that went into tracing the meanings of the words and verses, the underlying sense of Sections and Chapters, and linking it up with the preceding and succeeding Sections and Chapters, so that the whole of the Qur'ān was shown to have the thread of a continuous theme running into it—it is simply staggering to think of all this stupendous and most taxing labour put in single-handed day after day for seven long years. But that is exactly what made Maulana Muhammad Ali's Translation the boom of the world of scholarship in the West as well as the East when it appeared in print in 1917. It was a pioneer venture breaking altogether new ground, and the pattern set was followed by all subsequent Translations of the Qur'ān by Muslims. It meets every criticism that has been levelled against the Qur'ān. The introduction is a whole mine of research, which throws light on all the salient features of a truly Divine religion. There is no attempt at pedantry or literary flourishes. Nor is there any pandering to preconceived popular notions or a bid for cheap popularity. It is a loyal service to the Word of God aiming at scrupulously honest, faithful rendering.

About the closing years of his life, when the Translation had already run into three editions, and the Maulana was stepping into his seventies, he felt he owed it to the world to give it the fruit of his deeper insight into the Qur'ānic truths, which more extensive study in the meantime, and advancing years, had brought him, and once more he plunged himself into another long spell of most taxing labour to bring out a revised edition. This took him another five years (1946–51). He forgot that he was no longer a young man. The strain proved too much for him, so that he had to do the proof-reading in his sick-bed, which finally proved his death-bed.

"On arrival of proofs from England," so write his biographers, "the Maulana would get his head raised in his bed, and with hands quivering would correct proofs and give the final touches."[3] The final proofs were corrected on October 8, 1951, and five days later he breathed his last. He died in harness in the service of the Qur'ān.

The Maulana's biographers who have just published his life-story in Urdu, have fittingly given the book the title *Mujāhid-i-Kabīr*.[4] The Qur'ān describes the battle for the minds of men as the highest Jehad. There could hardly be anyone more deserving of that title. Maulana Muhammad Ali was undoubtedly the greatest Mujāhid of his day in the cause of the Qur'ān.

The Shah Jehan Mosque,
Woking, England.
March 20, 1963.

MUHAMMAD YAKUB KHAN.

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[1] B.A. (1894); M.A. (1896); LL.B. (1899).

[2] Born December 1874; died October 13, 1951.

[3] *Mujāhid-i-Kabīr*, p. 403.

[4] *Mujāhid-i-Kabīr*, by M. A. Faruqui and Muhammad Ahmad, published by Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, Lahore, Pakistan.

PREFACE
to the Revised Edition

There has been a demand for a revised edition of my English Translation and Commentary of the Holy Qur'ān since the end of the Second World War. Conditions have changed so rapidly since I first took this work in hand in 1909 that I myself felt the need for a revised edition. In fact, it is not only the change of circumstances that called for a revision; my own knowledge of the Holy Book has since increased to a very large extent owing to the fact that I have been engaged day and night in further research in this line, studying the Holy Qur'ān, the Ḥadīth and other religious literature of Islām. During this interval of about 33 years — the first edition was published in 1917 — I made substantial contribution to the religious literature of Islām both in English and in Urdu. After the English Translation I wrote a voluminous Urdu Commentary, the *Bayān al-Qur'ān,* in three volumes, and this kept me occupied for another seven years. It extends to over 2,500 pages and is much more explanatory than the notes in the English Translation. During the same period I also wrote a life of the Holy Prophet in Urdu, which was later translated into English under the name of *Muḥammad the Prophet.* A little later was issued a history of the Early Caliphate both in Urdu and in English. About the year 1928 a smaller edition of the English Translation without Arabic Text and with briefer notes was published. Then came the translation and commentary in Urdu of the *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī,* the well-known Ḥadīth collection. In 1936 was published another voluminous work in English, *The Religion of Islām,* which contains full information on almost all Islamic questions whether relating to doctrine or practice and casts full light on all Islamic questions of modern days. *The New World Order, A Manual of Ḥadīth* and *The Living Thoughts of the Prophet Muḥammad* were added after 1940.

Owing to the extensive study which I had to make for these writings I myself felt that I had received more light and was bound to give the English-reading public, which extends over a vast part of the world, a deeper insight into the Holy Qur'ān than I had given in my younger days. I began the work of revising the translation and commentary of the Holy Qur'ān some time late in 1946, but the year 1947 was a critical year for the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent and, on 29th August, 1947, I myself had to flee for my life from Dalhousie, where I used to work in the summer months. The literary work that I was doing there suffered considerably but I took it up later at Quetta, where I passed the summer of 1948. Before making much progress, however, I fell seriously ill and the work had again to be put off for more than six months. The manuscript was ready by the middle of 1950, but another serious illness overtook me at Karachi, where I was then carrying on this work. I was spared, however, by God's grace, to see the work through the press, and to give it the finishing touches; perhaps also to render some further service to the cause of Truth. Though still on my sick-bed I am able to go through the proofs and revise the Introduction.

Before stating what changes I have made in the Revised Edition I quote a few paragraphs from the old preface relating to the chief features of this Translation:

"As regards the translation I need not say much. That a need was felt for a translation of the Holy Book of Islām with full explanatory notes from the pen of a Muslim in spite of the existing translations is universally admitted.

Whether this translation satisfies that need, only time will decide. I may, however, say that I have tried to be more faithful to the Arabic Text than all existing English translations. It will be noticed that additional words as explaining the sense of the original have generally been avoided, and where necessary — and these cases are very few — they are given within brackets. Wherever a departure has been made from the ordinary or primary significance of a word, reason for this departure has been given in a footnote and authorities have been amply quoted.

"There are some novel features in this translation. The Arabic Text has been inserted, the translation and the text occupying opposite columns. Each verse begins with a new line in both the Text and the translation, and verses are numbered to facilitate reference. Necessary explanations are given in footnotes in serial numbers, and generally either authorities are quoted or reasons given for the opinion expressed. This made the work very laborious, but I have undertaken this labour to make the work a real source of satisfaction to those who might otherwise be inclined to be sceptical regarding many statements which will appear new to the ordinary reader. I have tried to avoid repetition in the explanatory footnotes by giving a reference where repetition was necessary, but I must confess that these references are far from being exhaustive. When the significance of a word has been explained in one place it has been thought unnecessary, except in rare cases, to make a reference to it. For the reader's facility I have, however, added a list of the Arabic words explained, and the reader may refer to it when necessary.

"Besides the footnotes, ample introductory notes have been given at the commencement of each chapter. These introductory notes give the abstract of each chapter in sections, at the same time showing the connection of the sections and also explaining that of the different chapters with each other. This feature of the translation is altogether new, and will, I hope, in course of time, prove of immense service in eradicating the idea which is so prevalent now that there is no arrangement in the verses and chapters of the Holy Qur'ān. It is quite true that the Qur'ān does not classify the different subjects and treat them separately in each section or chapter. The reason for this is that the Holy Qur'ān is not a book of laws, but essentially a book meant for the spiritual and moral advancement of man, and therefore the power, greatness, grandeur and glory of God is its chief theme, the principles of social laws enunciated therein being also meant to promote the moral and spiritual advancement of man. But that there exists an arrangement will be clear even to the most superficial reader of the introductory notes on these chapters. It will be further noted that the Makkan and Madīnan revelations are beautifully welded together, and there are groups of chapters belonging to about one time and relating to one subject. The introductory notes also show whether a particular chapter was revealed at Makkah or Madīnah, and also the probable period to which it belongs. Exact dates and specified order of the revelation of different chapters are often mere conjectures, and therefore I have avoided this useless task.

"The references to the authorities quoted in the notes are explained in the list of abbreviations given on p. lx. Among the commentators, I have made the greatest use of the voluminous commentaries of Ibn Jarīr, Imām Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, Imām Athīr al-Dīn Abū Ḥayyān and the shorter but by no means less valuable commentaries of *Zamakhsharī, Baiḍāwī* and *Jāmi' al-Bayān* of Ibn Kathīr. Among the lexicons, *Tāj al-'Arūs* and the *Lisān al-'Arab* are voluminous standard works and have been freely consulted, but the smaller work of Imām Rāghib Iṣfahānī, known as *Mufradāt fī Gharīb al-Qur'ān,* has afforded immense help, and it undoubtedly occupies the first place among the standard works in Arabic Lexicology so far as the Qur'ān is concerned. The valuable dictionaries of Ḥadīth, the *Nihāyah,* of Ibn Athīr and the *Majma' al-Biḥār* have also proved very serviceable in explaining many a moot point. It will, however, be noted that I have more often referred to Lane's *Arabic-English Lexicon,* a work the value of which for the English student of Arabic can hardly be overestimated ; this has been done purposely so that the reader of this volume may have the facility to refer to an easily accessible work. It is a pity that the great author was not spared to complete his work, but up to the letter *fā,* Lane has placed the world under the greatest obligation. Besides commentaries and Lexicons, historical and other works have also been consulted. Among the collections of Ḥadīth, *Bukhārī, Kitāb al-Tafsīr,* or chapter on the commentary of the Holy Qur'ān, has been before

me throughout, but the whole of Bukhārī and other reliable Ḥadīth collections have also been consulted. And lastly, the greatest religious leader of the present time, Mirza Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān, has inspired me with all that is best in this work. I have drunk deep at the fountain of knowledge which this great Reformer — Mujaddid of the present century and founder of the Aḥmadiyyah Movement — has made to flow. There is one more person whose name I must mention in this connection, the late Maulawī Ḥakīm Nūr al-Dīn, who in his last long illness patiently went through much the greater part of the explanatory notes and made many valuable suggestions. To him, indeed, the Muslim world owes a deep debt of gratitude as the leader of the new turn given to the exposition of the Holy Qur'ān. He has done his work and passed away silently, but it is a fact that he spent the whole of his life in studying the Holy Qur'ān, and must be ranked with the greatest expositors of the Holy Book.

"The principle of the greatest importance to which I have adhered in interpreting the Holy Qur'ān is that no word of the Holy Book should be interpreted in such a manner as to contradict the plainer teachings of the Holy Qur'ān, a principle to which the Holy Word has itself called the attention of its reader in 3:6; see 387. This rule forms the basis of my interpretation of the Qur'ān, and this is a very sound basis, if we remember that the Holy Qur'ān contains metaphors, parables, and allegories side by side with plain teachings. The Practice (*Sunnat*) and Sayings of the Holy Prophet, when contained in reliable reports, are the best commentary of the Holy Word, and I have therefore attached the greatest importance to them. Earlier authorities have also been respected, but reports and comments contradicting the Qur'ān itself cannot but be rejected. I have also kept before me the rule that the meaning to be adopted in any case should be that which suits the context best, and the only other limitation to which I have subjected myself is that the use of that word in that sense is allowed by the Lexicons or by Arabic literature. Existing translations have rendered me great help, but I have adopted an interpretation only after fully satisfying myself and having recourse to original authorities. Many of the stories generally accepted by the commentators find no place in my commentary, except in cases where there is either sufficient historical evidence or the corroborative testimony of some reliable Saying of the Holy Prophet. Many of these stories were, I believe, incorporated into Islamic literature by the flow of converts from Judaism and Christianity into Islām. I must add that the present tendency of Muslim theologians to regard the commentaries of the Middle Ages as the final word on the interpretation of the Holy Qur'ān is very injurious and practically shuts out the great treasures of knowledge, which an exposition of the Holy Book in the new light reveals. A study of the old commentators, to ignore whose great labour would indeed be a sin, also shows how freely they commented upon the Holy Book. The great service which they have done to the cause of Truth would indeed have been lost to the world, if they had looked upon their predecessors as uttering the final word on the exposition of the Holy Qur'ān, as most theologians do to-day."

It is a matter of no small pleasure to me that many of the special features of my Translation as noted above have been adopted by later Muslim translators of the Holy Qur'ān, the introductory notes to chapters, giving the abstract of each chapter and showing its connection with what has gone before, have been specially appreciated. Even in the matter of interpretation, most of the views adopted by me have found acceptance with them. The following quotations from *The Moslem World*, July, 1931, Revd. Zwemer's quarterly, would furnish interesting reading in this connection:

> "A careful comparison of Mr. Pickthall's translation with that of the Ahmadiyya translator, Maulvi Muhammad Ali, shows conclusively, that Mr. Pickthall's work is not very much more than a revision of the Ahmadiyya version" (p. 289).
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> "We have made a thorough examination of about forty verses in the second chapter, sixty verses in the third, forty verses in the nineteenth, and all of the last fifteen chapters, comparing his renderings with those of Sale, Rodwell, Palmer and Muhammad Ali; as well as with the Arabic. From this careful investigation we have come to the conclusion that Mr. Pickthall's translation, in all that part of his work which we have examined, resembles very closely the version of

Muhammad Ali, the difference between the two versions in many passages being merely verbal" (p. 290).

"Now if we compare the above passage (3:57-63) with the versions of S, R and P, we shall see that Mr. Pickthall is very much nearer to MA than he is to any of the three previous translators, so that one gets the impression that although he may have taken a word here and there from R and P, yet he has not followed them so closely as he obviously followed MA" (p. 292).

"The dependence of Mr. Pickthall upon the work of MA is also indicated in an occasional footnote, and those who will compare these footnotes with the notes in the 1920 edition of MA, which contains his commentary, will find that throughout chapter 2 almost every footnote is based on the Ahmadiyya Commentary" (p. 293).

"We think it will now be evident to the reader how much Mr. Pickthall is indebted to the version of Maulvi Muhammad Ali, not only for his footnotes but also for the translation itself" (p. 293).

"By comparing these two passages with Mr. Sarwar's rendering given on page 133 of the last issue of this journal, it will be seen that both Mr. Sarwar and Mr. Pickthall have followed MA very closely" (p. 294).

"In the passages which we have examined carefully, namely the verses at the beginning of the second, third and nineteenth suras, and the last fifteen, the translation of Pickthall follows MA so closely that one finds very few evidences of original work" (p. 297).

Similar views have been expressed by other writers. Thus the author of *Islām in Its True Light* calls this Translation "a leading star for subsequent similar Muslim works" (p. 69) and mentions both Mr. Sarwar and Mr. Pickthall as following closely this Translation. The reason is not far to seek. My work was a work of labour. For every rendering or explanation I had to search Ḥadīth collections, Lexicologies, Commentaries and other important works, and every opinion expressed was substantiated by quoting authorities. Differences there have been in the past, and in future too there will be differences, but wherever I have differed I have given my authority for the difference. Moreover the principle I have kept in view in this Translation and Commentary, i.e., seeking the explanation of a problematic point first of all from the Holy Qur'ān itself, has kept me nearest to the truth, and those who study the Qur'ān closely will find very few occasions to differ with me. The Christian writer of the article in *The Moslem World,* from which I have quoted above, concludes with the following words:

"One cannot read far in the translation of Maulvi Muhammad Ali or in his notes without being convinced that before he began his work on the Koran he was already widely read in the Arabic Authorities listed on page lx, to which frequent reference is made in his notes; also his quotations from Lane's Lexicon indicate that he was not altogether oblivious to the results of European scholarship" (p. 303).

And then it is added: "It is a pity that his work is so saturated with the peculiar doctrines of the Ahmadiyya sect and with bitter denunciation of Christian teachings that the results of his Oriental scholarship have been seriously vitiated."

I may here add that it is not only in having recourse to Lane's Lexicon that I have taken advantage of European scholarship. For full nine years before taking up this translation I was engaged in studying every aspect of the European criticism of Islām as well as of Christianity and religion in general, as I had specially to deal with these subjects in *The Review of Religions,* of which I was the first editor. I had thus an occasion to go through both the higher criticism of religion by advanced thinkers and what I may call the narrower criticism of Islām by the Christian missionaries who had no eye for the broader principles of Islām and its cosmopolitan teachings, and the unparalleled transformation wrought by Islām. The talk of Aḥmadiyyah doctrines is, however, nothing but false propaganda. The faith of Islām is one and all sects of Islām are one so far as the essential doctrines of Islām are concerned. There are differences in interpretation but they all relate to minor and secondary points. The Christian reviewer's combining together "the peculiar doctrines of the Ahmadiyya sect" and "bitter denunciation of the Christian teachings" lets the cat out of the bag. So far as the criticism of

the false church doctrines of Trinity, Sonship and Atonement is concerned, the doctrines are so emphatically denounced in plain words in the Qur'ān itself that no commentator need be bitter. What offends the Christian missionary and what he calls the peculiar doctrines of the Aḥmadiyyah sect is no more than an expression of opinion that Jesus Christ did not bodily ascend to heaven and is not alive there and that he died a natural death like other prophets. There is not a single *doctrine* of the religion of Islām in which this Translation differs from orthodox views. I hope to be excused for clearing up this point by a quotation from Mr. Pickthall's review of my "Religion of Islām" in the *Islamic Culture* for October, 1936:

> "Probably no man living has done longer or more valuable service for the cause of Islamic revival than Maulvi Muhammad Ali of Lahore. . . . In our opinion the present volume is his finest work. It is a description of Al-Islām by one well-versed in Sunnah who has on his mind the shame of the Muslim decadence of the past five centuries and in his heart the hope of the revival, of which signs can now be seen on every side. Without moving a hair's breadth from the traditional position with regard to worship and religious duties, the author shows a wide field in which changes are lawful and may be desirable because here the rules and practices are not based on an ordinance of the Quran or on an edict of the Prophet (peace be on him!)."

Mr. Pickthall was an orthodox Muslim, and what he has said of *The Religion of Islām* is true of this Translation. There is not a hair's breadth departure from the essentials of Islām, and this Translation does not contain anything contrary to the views of the great Imāms and learned *Ahl Sunnat* that have gone before. That there have been differences in the interpretation of the Holy Qur'ān among the greatest commentators, among even the Companions of the Holy Prophet and the great Imāms, cannot be denied. But these differences do not relate to the essentials of the faith of Islām on which all Muslims are agreed; they relate to minor or secondary points. All Muslims believe in the Unity of God and the prophethood of Muḥammad. They believe in all the prophets of God and in His Books. They believe that Divine revelation came to perfection with the Prophet Muhammad who is thus the last of the prophets — *Khātam al-Nabiyyīn* — after whom no prophet will come, and the Holy Qur'ān is the last Divine message to the whole of humanity. All these doctrines find clear expression in my translation and the explanatory footnotes.

The only important matter wherein I may be said to have differed with the majority relates to the death of Jesus Christ. But in the first place the belief that Jesus is alive somewhere in the heavens has never been included among the essentials of Islām. It has never been included among the religious doctrines of the faith of Islām. There are Muslims who still believe that four prophets are alive, Khiḍr, Idrīs, Elias and Jesus Christ, but that is not an article of faith with any Muslim. Many learned Muslims have held such belief regarding the first three to be based on Israelite stories and as having nothing to support it in the Holy Qur'ān and authentic Ḥadīth. They are not looked upon as unorthodox for that reason. Why should this Translation be looked upon as unorthodox for saying the same thing about a belief in Jesus Christ being alive? I may call the reader's attention to another fact as well. Most learned Muslims all over the world, if not all, are to-day convinced that Jesus Christ died like other prophets and many of them have given expression to such views, among them being the famous Muftī Muḥammad 'Abdu-hū and Sayyid Rashīd Raḍā' of Egypt.

I may be excused for quoting two other orthodox views about this Translation. Maulānā 'Abd al-Mājid Daryābādī, editor, *Such,* Lucknow, who is a recognized leader of orthodox Muslim opinion, wrote on 25th June, 1943:

> "To deny the excellence of Maulvī Muḥammad 'Alī's translation, the influence it has exercised and its proselytizing utility, would be to deny the light of the sun. The translation certainly helped in bringing thousands of non-Muslims to the Muslim fold and hundreds of thousands of unbelievers much nearer Islām. Speaking of my own self, I gladly admit that this translation was one of the few books which brought me towards Islām fifteen or sixteen years ago when I was groping in darkness, atheism and scepticism. Even Maulānā Muḥammad 'Alī of the *Comrade* was greatly enthralled by this translation and had nothing but praise for it."

Here we have the view of not one but two great orthodox leaders of Islām. I would add only one more orthodox leader's view to show that there is not the least ground for the false propaganda that this Translation is saturated with any unorthodox or heretical views. It is the Urdu paper *Wakīl*, which was published from Amritsar and of which both the editor and the proprietor were orthodox Muslims. Its review of this Translation when it was first issued was in the following words:

> "We have seen the translation critically and have no hesitation in remarking that the simplicity of its language and the correctness of the version are all enviable. The writer has kept his annotations altogether free from sectarian influence with wonderful impartiality, and has gathered together the wealth of authentic Muslim theology. He has also displayed great skill and wisdom in using the new weapons of defence in refuting the objections of the opponents of Islām."

As I have already stated I have throughout this Translation quoted authorities wherever I have differed with previous translators or commentators or with certain views generally held by Muslims but which are not supported by the Holy Qur'ān or by authentic Ḥadīth of the Prophet. In the revised edition I have laid even greater emphasis on this point. In the case of Ḥadīth collections I have now given exact references, to book and chapter, which were wanting in the first edition, and have moreover made greater use of reliable ḥadīth when they explain the Qur'ān, giving the greatest importance to Bukhārī — *Aṣaḥḥ al-Kutub ba'da Kitāb Allāh* — the most correct of the books after the Book of God. Lexicons have also been resorted to on a vaster scale, and a complete index of the Arabic words and phrases explained has been added. The general index has been amplified, and headings have been added bearing on important subjects dealt with in the Qur'ān.

The serial numbers of footnotes are the same as in the first edition, though changes have been made in many cases and notes have been entirely changed in others. A large number of new notes has been added and new numbers have been given to them. For instance, in the very first chapter two footnotes have been added and given the numbers 8a and 8b, as they follow footnote 8. While the introductory note to each chapter has been retained, as it deals with the subject-matter of the chapter and explains the relation of the different sections to each other as also the relations of the different chapters, the abstract of the sections given with each chapter has been restricted to the list of contents. The abstract of verses given at the head of each section has been omitted, the connection of verses being pointed out, where necessary, in the footnotes. The margin of the first edition has also been found unnecessary, alternative interpretations and cross-references being given, where necessary, in the footnotes. As regards the Translation itself, I have tried to make it simpler, though still adhering to the principle adopted in the first edition of being faithful to the Arabic text.

Changes have also been made in the subjects discussed in the first preface, finding place now in the Introduction. The subject of the Purity of the Quranic Text was very important as throwing light on the collection and arrangement of the Holy Book and it has been retained with some changes. But the summary of the teachings of Islām has been omitted as it is now circulated free on a very large scale under the name *Islām, the Religion of Humanity*, and is easily accessible. Details of the Islamic Institution of prayer are also obtainable separately and have been omitted from the Introduction. In the place of these, new and important subjects have been inserted to afford facility to the reader in understanding the Holy Qur'ān itself.

Muslim Town,
Lahore (Pakistan).
18th January, 1951.

MUḤAMMAD 'ALĪ.

INTRODUCTION

I. THE HOLY QUR'ĀN AND ITS DIVISIONS.

Al-Qur'ān.

The name *Al-Qur'ān,* the proper name of the Sacred Book of the Muslims, occurs several times in the Book itself (2:185, etc.). The word *Qur'ān* is an infinitive noun from the root *qara'a* meaning, primarily, *he collected things together,* and also, *he read* or *recited*; and the Book is so called both because it is a collection of the best religious teachings and because it is a Book that is or should be read; as a matter of fact, it is *the most widely read book* in the whole world. It is plainly stated to be a revelation from the Lord of the worlds (26:192), or a revelation from Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise (39:1, etc.), and so on. It was sent down to the Prophet Muḥammad (47:2), having been revealed to his heart through the Holy Spirit (26:193, 194). The first revelation came to the Prophet in the month of Ramaḍān (2:185), on the 25th or 27th night, which is known as *Lailat al-Qadr* (97:1), in the Arabic language (44:58; 43:3).

Other names and Epithets.

The Holy Book speaks of itself by the following additional names: *al-Kitāb* (2:2), a writing which is complete in itself; *al-Furqān* (25:1), that which distinguishes between truth and falsehood, between right and wrong; *al-Dhikr* (15:9), the Reminder or a source of eminence and glory to mankind; *al-Mau'iẓah* (10:57), the Admonition; *al-Ḥukm* (13:37), the Judgment; *al-Ḥikmat* (17:39), the Wisdom; *al-Shifā'* (10:57), that which heals; *al-Hudā* (72:13), that which guides or makes one attain the goal; *al-Tanzīl* (26:192), the Revelation; *al-Raḥmat* (2:105), the Mercy; *al-Rūḥ* (42:52), the *Spirit* or that which gives life; *al-Khair* (3:103), the Goodness; *al-Bayān* (3:137), that which explains all things; *al-Ni'mat* (93:11), the Favour; *al-Burhān* (4:175), the clear Argument; *al-Qayyim* (18:2), the Maintainer; *al-Muhaimin* (5:48), the Guardian (of previous revelation); *al-Nūr* (7:157), the Light; *al-Ḥaqq* (17:81), the Truth; *Ḥabl-Allāh* (3:102), the Covenant of Allāh. In addition to these, many qualifying epithets are applied to the Holy Book, such as *al-Mubīn* (12:1), one that explains; *al-Karīm* (56:77), the Bounteous; *al-Majīd* (50:1), the Glorious; *al-Hakim* (36:2), full of Wisdom; *al-'Azīz* (41:41), the Mighty; *al-Mukarramah* (80:13), the Honoured; *al-Marfū'ah* (80:14), the Exalted; *al-Muṭahharah* (80:14), the Purified; *al-'Ajab* (72:1), the Wonderful; *Mubārak* (6:93), Blessed; and *Muṣaddiq* (6:93), confirming the truth of previous revelation.

Divisions.

The Holy Qur'ān is divided into 114 chapters, each of which is called a *sūrah* (2:23). The word *sūrah* means literally *eminence* or *high degree,* and also *any step of a structure,* and in the Book itself it is applied to a chapter of the Qur'ān either because of its eminence or because each chapter is, as it were, a distinct degree or step in the whole Book, which is thus compared to a structure. The chapters of the Holy Qur'ān are of varying length, the largest comprising fully one twelfth of the entire Book — 286 verses — and the smallest containing only three verses. Each chapter is, however, complete in itself and is, therefore, called a book, and the whole of the Qur'ān is said to contain many books: "Pure pages wherein are rightly-directing books" (98:2, 3). The longer chapters are divided into *rukū's* or sections, each section generally dealing with one subject, the different sections being interrelated. Again, each section contains a number of *āyats* or verses. The word *āyat* means, originally, an *apparent sign* or *mark* and,

in this sense, it comes to mean *a miracle,* but it also signifies *a communication* or *a message from God* and is applied as such to a verse of the Holy Qur'ān as well as to a revelation or a law. Each chapter, with the exception of the concluding 35 chapters, is divided into sections, the largest number of sections in a chapter being 40; and each section, as also each single-section chapter, is divided into a number of verses. The total number of verses in the Holy Qur'ān is **6237**, or **6350**, if we add to each chapter the common opening verse of *Bismillāh.* For the purposes of recitation, the Holy Qur'ān is divided into 30 parts of equal length to enable the reciter to complete its recitation in one month, each such part is called a *juz'* (part), every part being again sub-divided into four parts. Another division of the Book, traceable to the Prophet himself, is into seven *manzils* or portions to enable the reciter to complete its recitation in seven days. These divisions, however, have nothing to do with the subject-matter of the Qur'ān.

Revealed piecemeal but collected and arranged from the first.

The Qur'ān was revealed piecemeal (25:32) during a period of 23 years, the shorter chapters generally, and some of the larger ones, being revealed entire and at one time, while the revelation of the majority of the larger chapters and some of the shorter chapters extended over many years. The practice was, as will be shown later on, that when a chapter was revealed in parts, the Holy Prophet specified, under Divine guidance, the place of the verse revealed, and thus the arrangement of verses in each chapter was entirely his work. Similarly, later on when a considerable portion had been revealed, the arrangement of the chapters was also the work of the Holy Prophet himself. It is in one of the earliest revelations that the Holy Qur'ān speaks of its collection as well as its revelation as being a part of the Divine scheme: "On Us rests the collecting of it and the recitation of it" (75:17). The collection of the Holy Qur'ān — which means the arrangement of its verses and chapters — was, therefore, a work which was performed by the Holy Prophet himself under Divine guidance, and it is a mistake to think that either Abū Bakr or 'Uthmān was the collector of the Qur'ān, though both of them did important work in connection with the dissemination of the written copies of the sacred text. Abū Bakr made the first complete written copy, by arranging the manuscripts written in the time of the Holy Prophet, in the order of the oral recitation of the Prophet's time. 'Uthmān's work, on the other hand, was only the ordering of copies to be made from the written manuscript of Abū Bakr's time and the placing of these copies in the various centres of Islamic learning, so that those who wrote the Holy Qur'ān might be able to follow the standard copy. The text of the Holy Qur'ān has thus been safeguarded from all alterations or corruptions in accordance with the Divine promise contained in one of the earliest revelations: "Surely We have revealed the Reminder and We are surely its Guardian" (15:9). The subject of the purity of the text of the Holy Qur'ān has been fully discussed further on.

Makkan and Madīnan Revelations.

Another Division of the Holy Book concerns the Makkan and Madīnan revelations. Of the 23 years over which the revelation of the entire Book is spread, 13 years were passed by the Holy Prophet at Makkah and 10 were passed at Madīnah, to which city he had to flee for the safety of his own life and the lives of his followers. Of the entire number of chapters, 93 were revealed at Makkah and 21 were revealed at Madīnah, but the 110th chapter, though belonging to the Madīnah period, was revealed at Makkah during the well-known farewell pilgrimage. The Madīnan chapters, being generally longer, contain really about a third of the entire Qur'ān. In arrangement, the Makkan revelation is intermixed with the Madīnan revelation. Thus the Holy Qur'ān opens with a Makkan revelation which is entitled the "Opening.", and is followed by four chapters revealed at Madīnah, which take up over one fifth of the whole Book. Then follow alternately Makkan and Madīnan revelations.

As regards the dates of the revelation of the various Makkan chapters, it is difficult to assign a particular year to a particular chapter, except in rare cases, but broadly they may be divided into three groups: those revealed in the early Makkan period, i.e., during the first five years; those revealed in the middle Makkan period, i.e., from the sixth to the tenth year; and those revealed during the late Makkan

period, i.e., from the 11th year to the Flight. The dates of the Madīnan chapters, on the other hand, are tolerably certain and definite, but in this case the difficulty is that the revelation of the longer chapters extended over lengthy periods, and a chapter which undoubtedly belongs to the earliest days at Madīnah sometimes contains verses which were revealed in the closing days of the Prophet's life.

Subject to the remarks made above, the following dates may approximately be assigned to the different chapters or groups of chapters: —

Early Makkan period -	60 chapters:	1, 17-21, 50-56, 67-109, 111-114.
Middle Makkan period -	17 chapters:	29-32, 34-39, 40-46.
Late Makkan period -	15 chapters:	6, 7, 10-16, 22, 23, 25-28.
A.H. 1-2 - - - - -	6 chapters:	2, 8, 47, 61, 62, 64.
A.H. 3-4 - - - - -	3 chapters:	3, 58, 59.
A.H. 5-8 - - - - -	9 chapters:	4, 5, 24, 33, 48, 57, 60, 63, 65.
A.H. 9-10 - - - - -	4 chapters:	9, 49, 66, 110.

Chronological order.

The first five verses of the 96th chapter were undoubtedly the first revelation, and these were equally certainly followed by the first part of the 74th chapter, which again was, in all probability, followed by the first chapter, after which came the first part of the 73rd chapter. Beyond this, it is impossible to give a tolerably certain order. The attempt to give a chronological order is an undoubted failure, as even the shorter chapters were not revealed entire. For instance, chronological order would place the 96th chapter first, while, as a matter of fact, every historian of Islām knows that only the first five verses were revealed first, vv. 6-19 coming long afterwards, when persecution of the Prophet had actually begun, as is made clear by vv. 9, 10, which speak of the Prophet being prohibited from saying his prayers, and must be referred to about the time when Arqam's house was chosen for saying prayers, an event belonging to the fourth year of the Call. If, then, we are confronted with such a serious difficulty in giving the first place to a chapter with which the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān undoubtedly began, what about the later chapters, and especially the longer ones? Take the second chapter in the present order as another example. There is not the least doubt that its revelation began in the first or, at the latest, in the second year of the Hijrah, but it is equally certain that it contains verses which were revealed in 10 A.H. A chronological order of the different chapters is, therefore, an impossibility, and all that we can say with tolerable certainty is that the greater part of a certain chapter was revealed during a certain period, and this is my reason for assigning particular periods to particular chapters.

Makkan and Madīnan Revelations intermingled in the final arrangement.

The first thing that strikes us in the present arrangement is the intermingling of Makkan and Madīnan revelations. Surely there must have been some reason underlying this arrangement and to discover this we must find the chief features which distinguish the Makkan from the Madīnan revelations. A contrast of the two makes it clear that, while the Makkan revelations grounded the Muslims in faith in God, the Madīnan revelation was meant to translate the faith into action. It is true that exhortations for good and noble deeds are met with in the Makkan revelations and that faith is still shown in the Madīnan revelations to be the foundation on which the structure of deeds should be built, but, in the main, stress is laid in the former on faith in an Omnipresent and Omnipotent God Who requites every good and evil deed, while the latter deals chiefly with what is good and what is evil; in other words, with the details of the law. Another feature distinguishing the two revelations is that, while the Makkan revelation is generally prophetical, the revelation that came down at Madīnah deals with the fulfilment of prophecy. Again, if the Makkan revelation shows how true happiness of mind may be sought in communion with God, the Madīnan revelation points out how man's dealing with man may be a source of bliss and comfort to him. Hence, a scientific arrangement of the Holy Qur'ān could be made to rest only on the intermingling of the two revelations — the intermingling of faith with deeds, of prophecy with the fulfilment of prophecy, of Divine communion with man's relation to and treatment of man.

A cursory view of the present arrangement.

A detailed view of the order in which the chapters follow one another shows the truth of the remarks made above; and for this the reader is referred to the introductory notes prefacing each chapter. A brief outline, however, may be given here. The Holy Book is prefaced with a short Makkan chapter which, in its seven short verses, contains the essence of the whole of the Qur'ān, and teaches a prayer which is admittedly the most beautiful of all prayers taught by any religion, and which sets before man an ideal greater than any other which can be conceived. If the preface is the quintessence of the Qur'ān and places before man the highest ideal, the commencement of the Book is equally scientific, for the second chapter opens with a clear statement as to its aims and objects. The first four chapters all belong to the Madīnan revelation and, occupying as they do over a fifth of the whole Qur'ān, deal in detail with the teachings of Islām, comparing them with the previously existing teachings, particularly Jewish and Christian, which had by that time become the prototypes of error in religion, the former laying too much stress on outward ritual, while utterly neglecting the spirit, and the latter condemning law itself, trusting to faith in Christ alone. The greater part of Islamic law dealing with the individual, home and civic life of man is contained in these four chapters. These are followed by two of the longest Makkan chapters, the first of which deals in detail with the doctrine of Divine Unity, and the second with that of prophethood. This latter chapter illustrates the doctrine of prophethood with reference to the histories of some well-known prophets. These two are again followed by two Madīnan chapters, which fit in with the context, as they show how opposition to Truth as revealed to the Prophet was dealt with: the first of these — the 8th — deals with their discomfiture in the first struggle in the battle of Badr and the second — the 9th — with their final vanquishment. Then follows a group of seven Makkan chapters, the *Alif Lām Rā* group, dealing with the truth of the Prophet's revelations, internal evidence, evidence from man's nature, from the histories of the previous prophets and from external nature, being produced to establish that truth. Another group of five Makkan chapters follows it, all dealing with the greatness to which Islām was destined to rise, with special reference to Jewish history in ch. 17, to Christian history and doctrine in ch. 18 and ch. 19, to the history of Moses in ch. 20, and to the history of prophets in general and their deliverance in ch. 21. Two more Makkan chapters follow, the first showing that the Prophet's cause must triumph, though the faithful would be required to make great sacrifices for the cause of Truth, and the second showing that the foundation on which the greatness of the Muslim nation rested was moral, not material. A Madīnan chapter — the 24th — is then brought in to show how the prophecies of the Makkan revelations were being brought to fulfilment by the establishment of a Muslim kingdom and the dissemination of the spiritual light of Islām. The 25th chapter is again a Makkan revelation, which shows, as its name indicates, that the distinction between truth and falsehood which the Holy Qur'ān was to establish was witnessed in the lives of the Companions of the Holy Prophet. A group of three more Makkan chapters, the *Ṭā Sīn* group, is then introduced, prophesying the ultimate triumph of the Holy Prophet with special reference to the triumph of Moses over a powerful enemy who was bent upon destroying the Israelites. Another group of four Makkan chapters, the *Alif Lām Mīm* group, follows and shows that the state of helplessness and utter weakness in which the Muslims were at the time would soon be changed. A Madīnan chapter — the 33rd — is again inserted showing how the combined forces of the enemies of Islām in the Battle of the Confederates failed to crush Islām. The utmost simplicity of the Holy Prophet's domestic life is here brought in to show that the attractions of this world, such as wealth or kingdom, had no charm for him, notwithstanding that he then ruled Arabia, and that thenceforward he was a model for all nations and for all ages, no prophet being needed after him, and emphasizing that it was only short-sighted carpers who found fault with one who led a life of such unexampled purity and simplicity. A group of six Makkan chapters follows, showing that the rise and fall of nations are brought about by the good and evil which they do, and that nations which rise to greatness can retain their eminent position only if they are not ungrateful for the favours conferred upon them. The next group of seven Makkan chapters is known as the *Ḥā Mīm* group, and it lays stress on the fact that truth must overcome opposition and that no temporal power with

all the temporal resources at its back can annihilate Truth. This is followed by a group of three Madīnan chapters ; the 47th, which was revealed in the first year of the Hijrah, showing that those who had accepted the truth as revealed to the Prophet, though in great distress, would soon have their condition ameliorated ; the next, which belongs to the sixth year of the Hijrah, predicting in the clearest words the final triumph of Islām over all the religions of the world ; and the last of this group, which was revealed towards the close of the Holy Prophet's life, enjoining on the Muslims the duty of respect for one another. From the 50th to the 56th, is another group of seven Makkan chapters pointing out the great spiritual awakening which was to be brought about by the Holy Qur'ān. Then comes the last group of Madīnan revelations, ten chapters in all, from the 57th to the 66th, which supplement what has already been said in the previous Madīnan chapters, the last of these, the 65th and the 66th, being clearly a supplement to the second chapter, *al-Baqarah,* and dealing with the subject of divorce and temporary separation. Then follow 48 short Makkan chapters, showing how men and nations can rise to eminence by following the Truth which is revealed in the Holy Qur'ān, and how they suffer loss by rejecting the Truth. The Holy Book ends with a concise but clear declaration of Divine Unity, in chapter 112 ; the last two chapters tell a man how to seek refuge in Divine protection against all kinds of mischief.

II. WORLD'S GREATEST SPIRITUAL FORCE

Object to bring humanity to perfection.

The Holy Qur'ān claims to be the greatest spiritual force which is ultimately destined to bring the whole of humanity to perfection. Anyone who will simply cast a glance at its opening and closing verses will not fail to see this. It opens thus:

> "Praise be to Allāh, the Nourisher of the worlds to perfection" (1:1).

And it ends thus:

> "Say, I seek refuge with the Nourisher of mankind to perfection" (114:1).

And this is the theme of the Holy Book throughout. It calls itself *al-Rūḥ* (42:52) or *the Spirit* which gives life to humanity, and time and again compares itself to the water which gives life to a dead earth:

> "And among His signs is that thou seest the earth still, but when We send down on it water, it stirs and swells. Surely He Who gives life to it, is the Giver of Life to the dead" (41:39).

This giving of life to the dead earth is a constant theme of the Qur'ān and it is full of repeated assurances that the dead earth will be raised to life spiritual:

> "Know that Allāh gives life to the earth after its death. Indeed We have made (Our) messages clear to you that you may understand" (57:17).

It calls itself *Shifā'* or *Healing* (10:57) to show that it heals all the spiritual diseases of humanity. It calls itself *al-Dhikr* or *a source of eminence* to mankind (15:9). It calls itself *al-Nūr* or *the Light* (7:157) which will ultimately dispel all darkness from the surface of the earth. It calls itself *al-Ḥaqq* or *the Truth* (17:81) which will ultimately take hold of the minds of men and before which falsehood will vanish. It calls itself *al-Hudā* or *the Guidance* (72:13) which will make men ultimately attain the goal of life.

A spiritual force which will ultimately overcome all.

It goes further and lays claim to the fact that it is the only spiritual force which will ultimately conquer the whole world and that the whole of humanity cannot produce a force like it.

> "And if there were a Qur'ān with which the mountains could be made to pass away or the earth could be travelled over or the dead were made to speak — nay, the command is entirely Allāh's" (13:31).
>
> "Had We sent down this Qur'ān on a mountain, thou wouldst certainly have seen it falling down, splitting asunder" (59:21).

All opposition to it was to be swept away:

> "Leave me and those who reject the Truth, the possessors of ease and plenty, and give them a little respite" (73:10, 11).

Not the whole world could produce a book like it:

> "If men and jinn should combine together to produce the like of this Qur'ān, they could not produce the like of it, though some of them were the aiders of others" (17:88).
>
> "And if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant, produce a chapter like it, and call on your helpers besides Allāh, if you are truthful" (2:23).

And it is repeated thrice that the Qur'ān was ultimately to prevail over the whole world:

> "He it is Who has sent His Messenger with the Guidance and the religion of Truth that He may cause it to prevail over all the religions" (61:9; 48:28; 9:33).

Unparalleled transformation wrought by the Qur'ān.

In fact, the transformation wrought by the Holy Qur'ān is unparalleled in the history of the world. No other reformer brought about such an entire change in the lives of a whole nation in his lifetime. The Qur'ān found the Arabs worshippers of idols, stones, trees, heaps of sand, and yet, within less than a quarter of a century, the worship of the One God ruled the whole country, idolatry being wiped out from one end to the other. It swept away all superstitions and gave in their place the most rational religion that the world could imagine. The Arab who prided himself in his ignorance had, as if by a magician's wand, become the lover of knowledge, drinking deep at every fountain of learning to which he could get access. This was the direct effect of the teachings of the Qur'ān, which not only appealed to reason, ever and anon, but declared man's thirst for knowledge to be insatiable, when it directed the Prophet himself to pray: "O my Lord, increase me in knowledge" (20:114). Not only had the Qur'ān swept away the deep vices and barefaced immorality of the Arab; it had also inspired him with a burning desire for the best and noblest deeds in the service of humanity. The burying alive of the daughter, the marriage with a step-mother, and loose sex relations had given place to equal respect for the offspring, whether male or female, to equal rights of inheritance for father and mother, son and daughter, brother and sister, husband and wife, to the chastest relations of sex and to placing the highest value on sexual morality and the chastity of woman. Drunkenness, to which Arabia had been addicted from time immemorial, disappeared so entirely that the very goblets and the vessels which were used for drinking and keeping wine could no more be found and, greatest of all, from an Arabia, the various elements of which were so constantly at war with one another that the whole country was about to perish, being "on the brink of a pit of fire" (3:102), as the Qur'ān so beautifully and so tersely puts it — from an Arabia full of these jarring and warring elements, the Qur'ān welded together a nation, a united nation full of life and vigour, before whose onward march the greatest kingdoms of the world crumbled as if they were but toys before the reality of the new faith. No faith ever imparted such a new life to its votaries on such a wide scale — a life affecting all branches of human activity; a transformation of the individual, of the family, of the society, of the nation, of the country; an awakening material as well as moral, intellectual as well as spiritual. The Qur'ān effected a transformation of humanity from the lowest depths of degradation to the highest pinnacle of civilization within an incredibly short time where centuries of reformation work had proved fruitless. To its unparalleled nature, testimony is borne by the non-Muslim, sometimes anti-Muslim, historian. Here are a few instances:

> "From time beyond memory, Mecca and the whole Peninsula had been steeped in spiritual torpor. The slight and transient influences of Judaism, Christianity, or philosophical inquiry upon the Arab mind had been but as the ruffling here and there of the surface of a quiet lake; all remained still and motionless below. The people were sunk in superstition, cruelty and vice. . . . Their religion was a gross idolatry; and their faith the dark superstitious dread of unseen things. . . . Thirteen years before the Hejira, Mecca lay lifeless in this debased state. What a change had these thirteen years now produced! . . . Jewish truth had long sounded in the ears of the men of Medina; but it was not until they heard the spirit-stirring strains of the Arabian Prophet that they too awoke from their slumber, and sprang suddenly into a new and earnest life" (Muir's *Life of Mahomet*, ch. vii).
>
> "A more disunited people it would be hard to find, till suddenly, the miracle took place! A man arose who, by his personality and by his claim to direct Divine guidance, actually brought about the impossible — namely, the union of all these warring factions" (*The Ins and Outs of Mesopotamia*, p. 99).

"And yet we may truly say that no history can boast events that strike the imagination in a more lively manner, or can be more surprising in themselves, than those we meet with in the lives of the first Musalmans; whether we consider the Great Chief, or his ministers, the most illustrious of men; or whether we take an account of the manners of the several countries he conquered; or observe the courage, virtue, and sentiments that equally prevailed among his generals and soldiers" (*The Life of Mahomet* by the Count of Boulainvilliers, English Translation, p. 5).

"That the best of Arab writers has never succeeded in producing anything equal in merit to the Qur'ān itself is not surprising" (Palmer's *Introduction to English Translation of the Quran*, p. iv).

"It is the one miracle claimed by Muhammad — his standing miracle, he called it — and a miracle indeed it is" (Bosworth Smith's *Life of Muhammad*).

"Never has a people been led more rapidly to civilization, such as it was, than were the Arabs through Islam" (*New Researches*, by H. Hirschfeld, p. 5).

"The Quran is unapproachable as regards convincing power, eloquence, and even composition" (*Ibid*, p. 8).

"And to it was also indirectly due the marvellous development of all branches of science in the Moslem world" (*Ibid*, p. 9).

"Here, therefore, its merits as a literary production should, perhaps, not be measured by some preconceived maxims of subjective and aesthetic taste, but by the effects which it produced in Muhammad's contemporaries and fellow-countrymen. If it spoke so powerfully and convincingly to the hearts of his hearers as to weld hitherto centrifugal and antagonistic elements into one compact and well-organized body, animated by ideas far beyond those which had until now ruled the Arabian mind, then its eloquence was perfect, simply because it created a civilized nation out of savage tribes, and shot a fresh woof into the old warp of history" (Dr. Steingass, in Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, art. "Quran").

Two other unique characteristics.

The marvellous effect produced by the Holy Qur'ān on the minds of those who first came into contact with it, the unparalleled revolution brought about in the world, the uplift of not one but many nations from the depth of degradation to the height of civilization is, however, not the only characteristic which establishes its claim to uniqueness. It possesses two other characteristics equally unique — the wealth of ideas and the beauty of style — and these two combined with the effect it produced are the three things which raise the Qur'ān to an eminence to which no other book has ever aspired and which make an imitation of it impossible. In fact, the effect produced by the Holy Qur'ān is not a magical mystery. It was merely the greatness and reasonableness of the ideas clothed in the best of forms that appealed to the heart of man and, taking deep root in it, became the driving power to the great goal of life. A blaze of light was cast on all the great questions which had hitherto puzzled man, and the way was thus cleared for onward march and progress. Hence it is, that one of the names by which the Holy Book speaks of itself is *al-Burhān*, or the Clear Argument, showing that argument was the weapon which it used to conquer the heart of man; and, as it appealed to reason and not to sentiment, its conquests were so far-reaching and permanent that it swept away all mysteries and dispelled all darkness. It is also called *al-Bayān*, or the Explanation, indicating that it had removed all obscurities in religious problems. It claimed not only to have perfected religion (5:3), and thus to have stated all religious truths needed for the moral and spiritual advancement of man, but also to have dealt with all objections to its truth: "And they shall not bring to thee any argument, but We have brought to thee one with truth and best in explanation" (25:33).

Style and Diction.

A few more words on the outer garb in which the grand life-giving ideas of the Qur'ān are clothed and I shall have done with this subject. The style and

diction of the Qur'ān have been universally praised. In the introduction to his translation of the Holy Qur'ān, Sale says:

> "The Koran is universally allowed to be written with the utmost elegance and purity of language in the dialect of the tribe of the Koreish, the most noble and polite of all the Arabians, but with some mixture, though very rare, of other dialects. It is confessedly the standard of the Arabic tongue."

And again:

> "The style of the Koran is generally beautiful and fluent . . . and in many places, especially where the majesty and the attributes of God are described, sublime and magnificent."

What, however, establishes the Qur'ān's claim to uniqueness even in the outward form, apart from its subject and the effect produced, is the permanent hold that it has kept on the Arabic language itself, the fact that it remains forever the standard by which the beauty of style and diction may be judged in Arabic literature. No other book in the world can be credited with even the achievement of keeping alive a language for thirteen centuries; the Qur'ān has done this, attaining to the eminence of being the standard of eloquence for so long, and of retaining that position while the nation speaking it emerged from oblivion to become the leader of civilization in the world, leaving its home to settle in far distant lands where Arabic became either the spoken language of the masses or at least their literary language. Such is the incredible achievement of the Holy Qur'ān. It is true that the Arabs had a literary language before the Qur'ān — the language of poetry, which, notwithstanding slight dialectic differences, conformed to one standard — but the scope of that poetry was very limited. Their most eloquent themes rarely went beyond the praise of wine or woman and horse or sword. In the condition in which Arabic was before the advent of Islām, it would soon have shared the fate of the sister languages of the Semitic group. It was the Qur'ān which made it the language of a civilized world from the Oxus to the Atlantic. Whatever changes spoken Arabic, like any other language, may have undergone, literary Arabic is to this day the Arabic of the Qur'ān, and the Qur'ān remains its one masterpiece.

III. RELATION TO EARLIER SCRIPTURES

Previous Scriptures recognized.

The Holy Qur'ān requires a belief not only in its own truth but also in the truth of previous scriptures delivered to the prophets of different nations of the world. At its commencement, it lays down clearly:

> "And those who believe in that which has been revealed to thee and that which was revealed before thee" (2:4).

The universality of what was revealed before is clearly accepted:

> "And there is not a people but a warner has gone among them" (35:24).
>
> "And every nation had a messenger" (10:47).

Lest anyone should be misled by the names of a few prophets mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān, it is stated:

> "And certainly We sent messengers before thee: there are some of them that We have mentioned to thee and there are others whom We have not mentioned to thee" (40:78; 4:164).

Thus the Holy Qur'ān accepts the truth of the sacred books of the world, and hence it is again and again spoken of as a Book verifying that which is before it. The basis of the relation in which the Holy Qur'ān stands to other scriptures is, therefore, that they are all members of one family; they all have a Divine origin.

Guardian of previous scriptures.

The Verifier of the sacred books of the world, however, occupies a unique position among them. The relation in which the Holy Qur'ān stands to earlier scriptures is thus lucidly set forth by the Holy Book itself:

> "And We have revealed to thee the Book with the truth, verifying that which is before it of the Book and a guardian over it" (5:48).

The Qur'ān is thus not only a verifier of the sacred books of all nations as stated above; it is also a guardian over them. In other words, it guards the original teachings of the prophets of God, for, as elsewhere stated, those teachings had undergone alterations, and only a revelation from God could separate the pure Divine teaching from the mass of error which had grown around it. This was the work done by the Holy Qur'ān, and hence it is called a guardian over the earlier scriptures. Of all the scriptures, it has particularly chosen the Gospels to show in what ways erroneous doctrines had almost entirely suppressed the truth preached by a prophet of God. They seem, moreover, to have been chosen as an example, for how could earlier scriptures escape alterations, if the teachings of so recent a prophet as Jesus Christ could not be handed over intact to posterity?

The Qur'ān as a judge in existing differences.

The Holy Qur'ān further claims that it came as a judge to decide the differences between the various religions:

> "Certainly We sent messengers to nations before thee. . . . And We have not revealed to thee the Book except that thou mayest make clear to them that about which they differ" (16:63, 64).

As already stated, the Qur'ān proclaimed that prophets had been raised in every nation, and, therefore, that every nation had received guidance from God, yet nation differed from nation even in the essentials of faith. The position of the Holy Qur'ān was, therefore, essentially that of a judge deciding between these various claimants.

It explains all obscurities.

The most important point to be borne in mind in connection with the relation of the Holy Qur'ān to the earlier scriptures is that it makes clear what is obscure in them and explains fully what is there stated briefly. Revelation, according to the Holy Qur'ān, is not only universal but also progressive, and it attains perfection in the Final Revelation. A revelation was granted to each nation according to its requirements, and in each age in accordance with the capacity of the people of that age. As the human brain became more and more developed, more and more light was cast by revelation on matters relating to the unseen, on the existence and attributes of the Divine Being, on the nature of revelation from Him, on the requital of good and evil, on life after death, and on paradise and hell. It is for this reason that the Holy Qur'ān is again and again called a Book "that makes manifest". It shed complete light on the essentials of the faith and made manifest what had hitherto of necessity remained obscure.

Perfect Revelation of Divine Will.

Further, as a result of what has been said above, the Holy Qur'ān claims that it came as a perfect revelation of Divine will:

> "This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour to you and chosen for you Islām as a religion" (5:3).

The finality of the Quranic revelation is, therefore, based on its perfection. New scriptures were revealed as long as they were needed, but when perfect light was cast on all essentials of religion in the Holy Qur'ān, no prophet was needed after Muḥammad. Six hundred years before him, Jesus Christ, who was the last among these national prophets — the Holy Prophet Muḥammad being the prophet not of one nation but of the whole world — had declared in plain words that he could not guide the world to Perfect Truth, because the world at that stage was not in a fit condition to receive that truth:

> "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:12, 13).

Among the scriptures of the world the Holy Qur'ān, therefore, occupies a unique position as a perfect revelation of the Divine will.

A correct history.

The idea that the Qur'ān has merely borrowed something from the earlier scriptures, especially from the Torah and the Gospels, must be examined in the light of facts. That the Qur'ān deals with the religious topics which are dealt with in those books goes without saying; that it relates the history of some of the prophets whose history is also related in the Bible is also a fact, but to say that it borrows from those books is entirely wrong. Take first the essentials of religion as they are dealt with in the Holy Qur'ān. Neither the Old nor the New Testament, nor any other sacred book, makes any approach to the grand and noble truths that find expression in the Holy Qur'ān. Take next the histories of the prophets, as they are narrated in the Bible and as they are narrated in the Holy Qur'ān, and you will find that the latter corrects the errors of the former as it does in the matter of religious doctrines. The Bible speaks of many of the prophets of God as committing the most heinous sins; it speaks of Abraham as telling lies and casting away Hagar and her son; it speaks of Lot as committing incest with his own daughters; it speaks of Aaron as making a calf for worship and leading the Israelites to its worship; it speaks of David as committing adultery with Uriah's wife; it speaks of Solomon as worshipping idols; but the Holy Qur'ān accepts none of these statements, definitely rejects most of them and clears these prophets of the false charges against them. The unlearned Prophet of Arabia swept away the errors which were a blot on the face of prophethood.

IV. LIBERAL VIEW OF OTHER RELIGIONS

Faith in all prophets.

There is a very general and very deep-rooted misconception that the Qur'ān preaches intolerance, and that Muḥammad preached his faith with the sword in one hand and the Qur'ān in the other. Misrepresentation could go no further. The basic principle of Islām, a faith in all the prophets of the world, is enough to give the lie to this allegation. The great and liberal mind that preached not only love and respect for the founders of the great religions of the world but much more than that, faith in them, could not shrink to the narrowness of intolerance for those very religions. Tolerance is not, in fact, the word that can sufficiently indicate the breadth of the attitude of Islām towards other religions. It preaches equal love for all, equal respect for all, and equal faith in all.

No Compulsion in Religion.

Again, intolerance could not be ascribed to a book which altogether excludes compulsion from the sphere of religion. "There is no compulsion in religion" (2:256), it lays down in the clearest words. In fact, the Holy Qur'ān is full of statements showing that belief in this or that religion is a person's own concern, and that he is given the choice of adopting one way or another: that, if he accepts truth, it is for his own good, and that, if he sticks to error, it is to his own detriment. I give below a few of these quotations:

> "We have shown him the way, he may be thankful or unthankful" (76:3).
>
> "The Truth is from your Lord, so let him who wishes believe and let him who wishes disbelieve" (18:29).
>
> "Indeed there have come to you clear proofs from your Lord: whoever will therefore see, it is for the good of his own soul, and whoever will disbelieve, it shall be against himself" (6:105).
>
> "If you do good, you will do good for your own souls; and if you do evil, it shall be for them" (17:7).

Why fighting was allowed.

The Muslims were allowed to fight indeed, but what was the object? Not to compel the unbelievers to accept Islām, for it was against all the broad principles in which they had hitherto been brought up. No, it was to establish religious freedom, to stop all religious persecution, to protect the houses of worship of all religions, mosques among them. Here are a few quotations:

> "And had there not been Allāh's repelling some people by others, there would have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques in which God's name is much remembered" (22:40).
>
> "And fight against them until there is no more persecution, and religion is only for Allāh" (2:193).
>
> "And fight against them until there is no more persecution, and all religions should be for Allāh" (8:39).

Under what conditions was the permission to fight given to the Muslims? Every student of Islamic history knows that the Holy Prophet and his companions were subjected to the severest persecution, as Islām began to gain ground at

Makkah; over a hundred of them fled to Abyssinia, but persecution grew still more relentless. Ultimately, the Muslims had to take refuge in Madīnah, but they were not left alone even there, and the sword was taken up by the enemy to annihilate Islām and the Muslims. The Qur'ān bears express testimony to this:

> "Permission to fight is given to those upon whom war is made because they are oppressed, and Allāh is well able to assist them; those who have been expelled from their homes without a just cause except that they say, Our Lord is Allāh" (22: 39, 40).

Later, the express condition was laid down:

> "And fight in the way of Allāh against those who fight against you, and do not exceed the limits, for Allāh loves not those who exceed the limits" (2: 190).

The Qur'ān, therefore, allowed fighting only to save a persecuted community from powerful oppressors, and hence the condition was laid down that fighting was to be stopped as soon as persecution ceased:

> "But if they desist, then Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful. And fight against them until there is no more persecution" (2: 192, 193).

If the enemy offered peace, peace was to be accepted, though the enemy's intention might be only to deceive the Muslims:

> "And if they incline to peace, do thou incline to it and trust in Allāh; He is the Hearing, the Knowing. And if they intend to deceive thee, then surely Allāh is sufficient for thee" (8: 61, 62).

The Prophet made treaties of peace with his enemies; one such treaty brought about the famous truce of Ḥudaibiyah, the terms of which were not only disadvantageous, but also humiliating to the Muslims. According to the terms of this treaty "if an unbeliever, being converted to Islām, went over to the Muslims, he was to be returned, but if a Muslim went over to the unbelievers, he was not to be given back to the Muslims". This clause of the treaty cuts at the root of all allegations of the use of force by the Holy Prophet. It also shows the strong conviction of the Holy Prophet that neither would Muslims go back to unbelief, nor would the new converts to Islām be deterred from embracing Islām because the Prophet gave them no shelter. And these expectations proved true, for while not a single Muslim deserted Islām, a large number came over to Islām, and, being refused shelter at Madīnah, formed a colony of their own in neutral territory.

It is a mistake to suppose that the conditions related above were abrogated at any time. The condition to fight "against those who fight against you" remained in force to the last. The last expedition led by the Holy Prophet was the famous Tabūk expedition, and every historian of Islām knows that, though the Prophet had marched a very long distance to Tabūk at the head of an army of thirty thousand, yet, when he found that the enemy did not fulfil the condition laid down above, he returned, and did not allow his troops to attack the enemy territory. Nor is there a single direction in the latest revelation on this subject, in ch. 9, the Immunity, that goes against this condition. The opening verse of that chapter speaks expressly of "idolaters with whom you made an agreement", and then, v. 4, excepts from its purview "those of the idolaters with whom you made an agreement, then they have not failed you in anything and have not backed up anyone against you", thus showing clearly that the "immunity" related only to such idolatrous tribes as had first made agreements with the Muslims and then, violating them, killed and persecuted the Muslims wherever they found them, as v. 10 says expressly: "They pay no regard to ties of relationship nor to those of covenant in the case of a believer". Such people are also spoken of in an earlier revelation: "Those with whom thou makest an agreement, then they break their agreement every time and they keep not their duty" (8: 56). Further on, in ch. 9, the condition of the enemy attacking the Muslims first is plainly repeated: "What! will you not fight a people who broke their oaths and aimed at the expulsion of the Messenger, and they attacked you first?" (9: 13). So from first to last, the Holy Qur'ān allowed fighting only against those who fought the Muslims first; it allowed expressly only fighting in defence without which the Muslims could not live and it clearly forbade aggressive war. The waging of war on unbelievers to compel them to accept Islām is a myth pure and simple,

a thing unknown to the Holy Qur'ān. It was the enemy that waged war on the Muslims to turn them away from their religion, as the Holy Book so clearly asserts: "And they will not cease fighting against you until they turn you back from your religion, if they can" (2:217).

Relations of friendship with others.

It is sometimes asserted that the Qur'ān forbids relations of friendship with the followers of other religions. How could a Book which allows a man to have as his comrade in life a woman following another religion (5:5), say in the same breath that no friendly relations can be had with the followers of other religions? The loving relation of husband and wife is the friendliest of all relations and, when this is expressly permitted, there is not the least reason to suppose that other friendly relations are forbidden. The fact is that, wherever there is prohibition against making friends with other people, it relates only to the people who were at war with the Muslims, and this is plainly stated in the Qur'ān: "Allāh forbids you not respecting those who have not made war against you on account of your religion, and have not driven you forth from your homes, that you show them kindness and deal with them justly; for Allāh loves the doers of justice. Allāh forbids you respecting only those who made war upon you on account of your religion, and drove you forth from your homes and backed up others in your expulsion that you should make friends with them, and whoever makes friends with them, these are the unjust" (60:8, 9).

No punishment for apostasy.

Another widely prevailing misconception may also be noted here. It is generally thought that the Qur'ān provides a death sentence for those who desert the religion of Islām. Anyone who takes the trouble to read the Qur'ān will see that there is not the least ground for such a supposition. The Qur'ān speaks repeatedly of people going back to unbelief after believing, but never once does it say that they should be killed or punished. I give here a few quotations:

> "And whoever of you turns back from his religion, then he dies while an unbeliever — these it is whose deeds go for nothing in this world and the Hereafter" (2:217).
>
> "O you who believe, should one of you turn back from his religion, then Allāh will bring a people whom He shall love and they too shall love Him" (5:54).
>
> "Those who disbelieve after their believing, then increase in disbelief, their repentance shall not be accepted, and these are they that go astray" (3:89).

On the other hand, the Qur'ān speaks of a plan of the Jews to adopt Islām first and then desert it, thus creating the impression that Islām was not a religion worth having (3:71). Such a scheme could never have entered their heads while living at Madīnah, where the Government was Muslim, if apostasy, according to the Quranic law, were punishable with death. The misconception seems to have risen from the fact that people who, after becoming apostates, joined the enemy, were treated as enemies, or that, where an apostate took the life of a Muslim, he was put to death, not for changing his religion, but for committing murder.

V. LIFE AFTER DEATH

Death a stage in Evolution.

Though this subject has been dealt with fully in the footnotes under appropriate verses, I am dealing with it in the Introduction for two reasons. In the first place, because there are many misunderstandings about it, and secondly, because it is in the Holy Qur'ān that full light is cast on this subject and no other sacred Book makes any approach to the wonderful disclosures made in the Qur'ān. According to the Holy Qur'ān, death does not bring the life of man to an end; it only opens the door to a higher form of life. Just as from dust is evolved the man, from the deeds which he does is evolved the higher man. As from the small life-germ grows up the man and he does not lose his individuality for all the changes which he undergoes, so from this man is made the higher man, his attributes being changed and he being made to grow into what he cannot conceive at present.

Connection between the two Lives.

The life after death, according to the Holy Qur'ān, opens out a wide vista of progress before man, a new world of advancement before which the progress of this life sinks into insignificance: "And certainly the Hereafter is much superior in respect of degrees and much superior in respect of excellence" (17:21). The connection between the two lives, the life on this earth and the life after death, is established in the clearest words. Heaven and hell are not places of enjoyment and torture to be met with only after death; they are realities even here. The Hereafter is not a mystery beyond the grave; it begins in this very life. For the good, the heavenly life, and for the wicked, a life in hell, begins even here:

> "And for him who fears to stand before his Lord are two Gardens" (55:46).
>
> "O soul that art at rest, return to thy Lord, well-pleased with Him, well-pleasing Him: so enter among My servants and enter into My paradise" (89:27-30).
>
> "It is the Fire kindled by Allāh, which rises above the hearts" (104:6, 7).
>
> "And whoever is blind in this, shall also be blind in the Hereafter" (17:72).

The Resurrection or the Hour.

While the life after death is spoken of as a continuation of this life, a particular day is repeatedly mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān, under various names, as the day on which that life finds a complete manifestation. It is generally called *yaum al-qiyāmat* or the day of the great rising or the Resurrection (2:113), and is also spoken of as the day of Decision (77:13), the day of Reckoning (38:26), the day of Judgment (51:12), or the day of Meeting (with God) (40:15), the day of the Gathering together (42:7) etc.

The most frequently occurring word for the Resurrection is *al-Sā'ah,* which originally means *any portion of time*, and is, therefore, generally rendered as *the Hour.* Rāghib, the well-known lexicographer of the Qur'ān, says that there are three *sā'ahs* (hours) in the sense of resurrection, viz., (1) *kubrā* (or *the greater*), which is the rising up of the people for reckoning; (2) *wusṭā* (or *the middle*),

which is the passing away of a nation; and (3) *ṣughrā* (or *the minor*), which is the death of the individual. The word is used in all these senses in the Holy Qur'ān. An example of the last occurs in 6:31: "They are indeed in loss who give the lie to the meeting with Allāh until when the hour comes upon them all of a sudden," where *the hour* clearly stands for the death of the person who gives the lie. As regards the use of the word in the other two senses, it is very frequent, and the two significances are often interchangeable, either sense being applicable.

Resurrection in this life.

The different words which stand for the Resurrection are in some sense also applicable to this life; the rising of the dead is sometimes their spiritual resurrection which was to be brought about by the preaching of the Prophet; *the day of Decision* also signifies the triumph of Truth and the vanquishment of falsehood; *the day of Reckoning* is equally the reckoning in this life, and so is *the day of Requital*. The law of the requital of good and evil affects this life as much as the next, a complete manifestation taking place when the limitations of the body of clay are removed by death, which thus becomes a starting-point for a new and higher life. It is a law that works every moment and will not come into operation on a particular day; even paradise and hell are spoken of as originating with this life. Hence God is repeatedly described as *Quick in Reckoning* (2:202; 3:18, 198, etc.), meaning that His reckoning is working every moment. Every evil deed leaves its impress on the human mind: "Nay, rather what they did has become like rust upon their hearts" (83:14), so that the consequence follows as soon as a deed is done. Still more plainly: "And We have made every man's actions to cling to his neck, and We shall bring forth to him on the day of Resurrection a book which he will find wide open" (17:13). Thus an action leaves its effect upon man as soon as it is done; only it is not seen by the human eye, but will be palpably manifest in the form of a wide-open book on the day of Resurrection, for the veil which covers the eye now, so that it cannot see the finer things, shall then be removed: "Certainly thou wert heedless of it, but now We have removed from thee thy veil, so thy sight to-day is sharp" (50:22). The law of the requital of good and evil is thus working all the time; only the consequences cannot be seen by the physical eye, but the finer senses granted at the Resurrection will see them clearly: "On the day when hidden things are made manifest" (86:9).

The Balance.

The law of the requital of good and evil is a comprehensive one: "He who has done an atom's weight of good shall see it. And he who has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it" (99:7, 8). So every good deed bears fruit, and every evil deed bears an evil consequence, whether the doer is a Muslim or a non-Muslim; but, owing to the preponderance of mercy in Divine nature, good brings tenfold fruit, even seven hundredfold; see 6:161; 2:261; 28:84; 42:30, etc.

A man is judged by the preponderance of good or evil in him and it is in this connection that the setting up of a *mīzān*, or a *balance*, is spoken of. The words *wazn* and *mīzān*, as used in the Holy Qur'ān in this connection, do not indicate weighing with a pair of scales; it is in the wider sense of fulfilling the requirements of justice that they are used. For instance, 57:25 speaks of messengers being sent with the Book and the *mīzān*, where the *mīzān* clearly stands for rules of justice or principles of equity — "that men may conduct themselves with equity". Again, 55:7 speaks of a *mīzān* being set up in nature: "And the heaven, He raised it high, and He made the *mīzān*". Here the *mīzān* stands for justice, according to well-known commentators. A similar measure or balance is spoken of as being set up to judge man, whether it is good that preponderates in him or evil. Here are a few quotations:

> "And We will set up a just balance on the day of Resurrection, so no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least; and though there be the weight of a grain of mustard seed, We will bring it; and Sufficient are We to take account" (21:47).
>
> "And the measuring out on that Day will be just; then as for those whose measure of good deeds is heavy, they shall be successful.

And as for those whose measure of good deeds is light, these it is that have made their souls suffer loss" (7:8, 9).

The Book of Deeds.

A few words may be added as to *the book of deeds*. We are told that every action, however great or small, is written down:

"And the book shall be placed, then thou wilt see the guilty fearing from what is in it; and they will say: Ah! Woe to us! What a book is this! It omits not a small one nor a great one, but numbers them all" (18:49).

"So whoever shall do of good deeds and he is a believer, there shall be no denying of his exertion, and We write it down for him" (21:94).

"He utters not a word but there is by him a watcher at hand" (50:18).

"Or do they think that We hear not what they conceal and their secret discourses? Aye! and Our messengers with them write down" (43:80).

"And surely there are keepers over you, honourable recorders — they know what you do" (82:10-12).

"This is Our book that speaks against you with justice; surely We wrote what you did" (45:29).

Not only has every individual his book of deeds, but even nations are spoken of as having their books of deeds:

"And thou shalt see every nation kneeling down; every nation shall be called to its book — to-day you shall be rewarded for what you did" (45:28).

It must, however, be borne in mind that the word *kitāb* (translated as *book*) or *kataba* (*he wrote*) is used in a very wide sense in the Holy Qur'ān. As Rāghib says, *kitāb* (*book*) does not always mean a collection of written leaves; it sometimes signifies *the knowledge of God*, or *His command*, or *what He has made obligatory*. Nor does *kataba* always signify that he wrote certain words on paper with ink and pen; it also means *he made a thing obligatory*, or *decreed, ordained*, or *prescribed a thing*. Let us see now what is meant by the writing of the deeds and the book of deeds. The above quotations show that by the writing of the deeds is meant their preserving and guarding, the angels being called both *keepers* and *recorders*. The following verses throw additional light on this subject:

"And We have made every man's actions to cling to his neck, and We will bring forth to him on the Resurrection day a book which he will find wide open. Read thy book, thine own self is sufficient as a reckoner against thee this day" (17:13, 14).

"There are (angels) following him closely, before him and behind him, who guard him by Allāh's command" (13:11).

"Nay! the book of the wicked is in the prison. And what will make thee know what the prison is? It is a written book" (83:7-9).

"Nay! the book of the righteous is in the highest places. And what will make thee know what the highest places are? It is a written book" (83:18-20).

The first of these quotations shows that the book of deeds which a man will find on the Resurrection day is nothing but the effect of the deeds he has done. In the second, it is not what a man does that is spoken of as being guarded, but it is clearly the doer who is guarded, and, reading it with the first quotation, the conclusion is evident that man's deeds are guarded by the impress which they make upon him. The third and the fourth quotations show that the book of deeds is identical with the place where it is kept; in the former, the book of deeds is in a prison and the prison is a written book; in the latter, the book of deeds is in the highest places and the highest places are a written book. The book of deeds is, therefore, within man because the deeds are preserved by the effect which they leave on man. It is said to be in a prison, in one case, because

the evil deeds hamper a man's progress, and keep his faculties for the doing of great and good deeds shut up, as it were, within a prison; and, in the other case, it is said to be in the highest places, because by good deeds the faculties given to man find their highest development. It is quite in consonance with this that we are told that a man himself will make his own account: "Read thy book; thine own self is sufficient as a reckoner against thee this day" (17:14). It is sometimes the doer that reads his own book, while on another occasion he invites others to read the same: "Lo! Read my book" (69:19). Such is the doer of good, while the evildoer is made to say: "O would that my book had never been given me, and I had not known what my account was!" (69:25, 26). That each nation has also a book, as already pointed out, bears out the truth of what has been said here, for the impress of what a people do is equally left on their national life, and nations like individuals are judged by what they do.

Paradise.

The life after death takes two forms: a life in paradise for those in whom the good preponderates over the evil, and a life in hell for those in whom the evil preponderates over the good. The word *paradise* (Ar. *firdaus*) occurs only twice in the Holy Qur'ān — in 18:107 and 23:11. It is the word *Jannat* (Garden) or its plural *Jannāt* that is generally used to indicate the abiding-place of the righteous, who are generally described as those who believe and do good deeds, while their abiding-place is generally said to be Gardens in which rivers flow, the rivers corresponding to faith, and the trees of the Garden corresponding to the good which a man does. The word *Jannat* is derived from *jann*, which means *to conceal a thing so that it is not perceived by the senses*, and *jannat* means *a garden* because its ground is covered by trees. The description of paradise as a garden with rivers flowing in it is, however, only a parable: "A parable of the Garden which the righteous are promised: therein are rivers of water" (47:15). The blessings of paradise cannot be conceived in this life, and are not, therefore, things of this world: "No soul knows what is hidden for it of that which will refresh the eyes: a reward for what they did" (32:17). An explanation of these words by the Holy Prophet is given in *Bukhārī* as follows: "Allāh says, I have prepared for My righteous servants what no eye has seen and no ear has heard, and what the mind of man has not conceived" (B. 59:8). Therefore paradise and what it contains cannot even be conceived by the mind of man. Ibn 'Abbās is reported to have said that "nothing that is in paradise resembles anything that is in this world except in name" (RM., vol. 1, p. 172). For instance, the word *ẓill* (lit., *shade*) occurs very often in the Holy Qur'ān in connection with the blessings of paradise, but a shade is not what is really meant, for there is no sun: "They shall see therein neither sun, nor intense cold" (76:13). The word is there, but the significance underlying it is different. According to Rāghib, it stands for *plenty* or *protection*. Such is also *rizq* (*sustenance*) in paradise; it cannot be what sustains the body here; in fact, prayer itself is called a sustenance in 20:131. Nor are the fruits of paradise like the fruits of this life, because these are the fruits of deeds done: "Whenever they shall be given a portion of the fruits thereof, they shall say, That is what was given to us before" (2:25). Evidently the fruits of the deeds are meant here, and not the fruits that the earth grows, because the latter are not given to all the faithful here, while the former are. Similar is the case with the water, the milk, the honey, the cushions, the thrones, the clothes and the adornments of the next life; these descriptions are of the nature of similes as the Qur'ān expressly calls them a *mathal* or *simile*.

In fact, a little consideration would show that even our ideas of place and time are not applicable to the next life. It is said in the Qur'ān that paradise extends over the whole of the heavens and the earth: "And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden the extensiveness of which is as the heavens and the earth" (3:132; 57:21); and when the Prophet was asked where hell was, if paradise extends over the whole of the heavens and the earth, he replied: "Where is the night when the day comes?" (RM, vol. 1, p. 670). This shows clearly that paradise and hell are more like two conditions than two places. Again, notwithstanding that the two are poles asunder, the one being the highest of the high and the other the lowest of the low, they are separated only by a wall: "Then a separation would be brought between them by a wall having a door in

it; on the inside of it there shall be mercy and before the outside of it there shall be chastisement" (57:13). Elsewhere, speaking of the inmates of paradise and the inmates of hell, it says: "And between the two there shall be a veil" (7:46). Again, a "vehement raging and roaring" of hell-fire is mentioned repeatedly (25:12; 67:7), but those in paradise shall "not hear its faintest sound" (21:102), while we are told that those in hell shall talk with those in heaven and the two shall hear each other; see 7:44-50. I quote only the concluding verse: "And the inmates of the Fire shall call out to the dwellers of the Garden, saying: Pour on us some water or of that which Allāh has given you. They shall say: Allāh has prohibited them both to the disbelievers". Thus those in paradise shall hear the talk of those in hell, but they shall not hear the roaring of the fire of hell. This shows that hell is a condition which shall be perceived only by those in it, and similar is the case with paradise.

Paradise and Hell begin in this life.

As I have already pointed out, the Holy Qur'ān says that paradise and hell begin in this very life. Read the following verses along with those already quoted:

> "And convey good news to those who believe and do good deeds that they shall have gardens in which rivers flow; whenever they shall be given a portion of the fruits thereof, they shall say, This is what was given to us before; and they shall be given the like of it" (2:25).
>
> "For them is a known sustenance" (37:41).
>
> "And He shall cause them to enter the Garden, which He has made known to them" (47:6).

The first of these verses shows that the fruits which the righteous shall find in paradise shall be the same as were given to them in this life; the second and the third show that the sustenance which shall be given to them in paradise is made known to them in this very life. It is clear that the sustenance and the fruits spoken of here are not those which the righteous have in common with the evildoers, the fruits and the sustenance that the earth grows, which is needed for the support of the body of both. The things meant are those which are granted specially to the righteous, to which the evildoers have no access; in fact, they remain quite blind to them in this life and are, therefore, deprived of them in the Hereafter: "And whoever is blind in this life shall also be blind in the Hereafter" (17:72). These are the fruits of good deeds and the sustenance which the righteous find in the remembrance of God; see further 20:130, 131.

It is in accordance with this that the soul that has found rest in God is admitted to paradise in this life: "O soul that art at rest, return to thy Lord, well-pleased with Him, well-pleasing Him; so enter among My servants and enter into My Garden" (89:27-30).

Highest bliss of Paradise.

It is quite in accordance with this conclusion that we find that the highest bliss of paradise is plainly stated to be the pleasure of God, the greatest spiritual blessing which the righteous strive for in this life, and by attaining which they enter into paradise in this very life, as has just been shown:

> "Allāh has promised to the believing men and the believing women Gardens in which rivers flow, to abide in them, and goodly dwellings in Gardens of perpetual abode; and greatest of all is Allāh's goodly pleasure — that is the grand achievement" (9:72).

Those in paradise shall be occupied with and find delight in the praise of God and in His glorification; in what is declared to be a spiritual sustenance for the righteous in this life (20:131):

> "Their cry in it shall be, Glory to Thee, O Allāh! and their greeting in it shall be, Peace! and the last of their cry shall be, Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds!" (10:10).

There is no grief, fatigue or toil therein, and the heart is purified of all rancour and jealousy, peace and security reigning on all sides:

> "The righteous shall be in the midst of Gardens and fountains. Enter them in peace, secure. And We will root out whatever of rancour is in their breasts — they shall be as brethren on raised couches, face to face. Toil shall not afflict them therein, nor shall they be ever ejected therefrom" (15:45-48).
>
> "They shall not hear therein vain or sinful discourse, only the word peace, peace" (56:25, 26).
>
> "And they shall say: All praise is due to Allāh, Who has made grief to depart from us; surely our Lord is Forgiving, Multiplier of reward, Who has made us alight in a house abiding for ever out of His grace; toil shall not touch us therein, nor shall fatigue therein afflict us" (35:34, 35).

Paradise is meant for further advancement.

Notwithstanding all this, paradise, according to the Holy Qur'ān, is not a place for simple enjoyment or rest; it is essentially a place for advancement to higher and higher stages: "But those who keep their duty to their Lord, shall have high places, above them higher places, built (for them)" (39:20). This shows that not only does paradise admit the righteous to high places, but it is, in fact, the starting-point for a new advancement, there being higher and higher places still, and it is in accordance with this that they are spoken of as having an unceasing desire for attaining to higher and higher excellences, their prayer in paradise being: "Our Lord, make perfect for us our light" (66:8). This idea of a ceaseless advancement in paradise is one which is peculiar to the Holy Qur'ān, and not the least trace of it is to be met with in any other scripture.

Hell is meant for purification.

Quite in accordance with the idea of paradise as a place of unending progress to higher stages of life is the idea of hell, where punishment is not meant for torture but for purification, in order to make a man fit for spiritual advancement. The idea underlying hell is that those who wasted their opportunity in this life shall, under the inevitable law which makes every man taste of what he has done, be subjected to a course of treatment for the spiritual diseases which they have brought about with their own hands. It is for this reason that the Holy Qur'ān makes a difference between the abiding in paradise and the abiding in hell, allowing a termination in the latter case but not in the former.

As I have already noted, punishment for evil deeds sometimes takes effect in this very life, and the Holy Qur'ān lays down the principle in clear words that every such punishment is a remedial measure:

> "And We did not send a prophet into a town but We overtook its people with distress and affliction in order that they might humble themselves" (7:94).
>
> "And certainly We sent messengers to nations before thee, then We seized them with distress and affliction in order that they might humble themselves" (6:42).

It is clear from this that God brings down His punishment upon a sinning people in order that they may turn to Him; in other words, that they may be awakened to the higher life. The same must, therefore, be the object of the punishment in hell. That this is really so is made clear, in the first place, by giving the utmost prominence to the quality of mercy in God, as already pointed out, and then by stating clearly that all men have been created for mercy: "Except those on whom thy Lord has mercy and for this He created them" (11:119). The purpose of God must be ultimately fulfilled and, though man may bring down punishment on himself by his deeds, yet as God has created him for mercy, mercy is the ultimate end in the Divine scheme. Elsewhere we are told: "And I have not created the jinn and the men except that they should serve Me" (51:56). They must, therefore, ultimately be made fit for the service of God, and that is the higher life. With all its fearfulness, hell is called a *maulā* (*patron*) of the sinners, in one place (57:15), and their *umm* (*mother*), in another (101:9). Both these descriptions of hell are a clear indication that hell is meant only to purify a man of the dross which he has accumulated with his own hands, just

as fire purifies gold of dross. In fact, it is to point to this truth that the Holy Qur'ān uses the word *fitnah* (which originally means *the assaying of gold, or casting it into fire to purify it of dross*), both of the persecutions which the faithful are made to suffer (2:191; 29:2; 29:10) and of the punishment which the evildoers shall suffer in hell (37:63), where the food which those in hell shall be given is called *fitnah*, because the object in both cases is the same, the faithful being purified through persecutions and the evildoers by hell-fire. Therefore hell is called a *patron* of the sinners, because, through suffering, it will make them fit for spiritual progress; and it is called a *mother* of the sinners to show that its connection with them is that of a mother with her child, the sinners being brought up, as it were, in the bosom of hell. The fire is a source of torment, but it is also a purifier. The keenness of the torments of the other life is due to the keener perception of the soul, which is the necessary result of its separation from the earthly vessel. Bliss and torment, therefore, grow equally keener in that life.

Punishment of hell not everlasting.

It is in consonance with its remedial nature that we find it stated that the sinners shall ultimately be taken out of hell. It is true that the word *abad* is thrice used in the Holy Qur'ān in connection with the abiding in hell (4:169; 33:65; 72:23), but *abad* indicates *eternity* as well as *long time*, and that the latter significance must be taken in this case is made clear by the use, in the same connection, of the word *aḥqāb* (78:23), meaning *years* or *long years*. Besides this, a limitation is placed on the abiding in hell by the addition of the words *except as thy Lord please*, the exception clearly indicating the ultimate deliverance of those in hell. The following two verses may be noted in this connection:

> "He shall say, The Fire is your abode, to abide in it, except as Allāh please; for thy Lord is Knowing, Wise" (6:129).
>
> "So as for those who are unhappy, they shall be in the Fire: for them shall be sighing and groaning in it: Abiding therein as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as thy Lord please: for thy Lord is the Mighty Doer of what He intends" (11:106, 107).

Both these verses show clearly that the punishment of hell is not everlasting. To make this conclusion clearer still the latter of these occasions may be compared with the next verse which describes the abiding in paradise: "And as to those who are made happy, they shall be in the Garden, abiding in it as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as thy Lord please: a gift never to be cut off" (11:108). The two expressions are similar: those in hell and those in paradise abide in it as long as the heavens and the earth endure, with an exception added in each case showing that they may be taken out of it. The concluding statements are, however, different. In the case of paradise, the idea that those in it may be taken out of it, if God pleases, is immediately followed by the statement that it is a gift which shall never be cut off, showing that they shall never be taken out of paradise: while, in the case of hell, the idea of those in it being taken out of it is confirmed by the concluding statement — "for thy Lord is the Mighty Doer of what He intends".

The conclusion drawn above is corroborated by the sayings of the Holy Prophet. Thus a saying reported in the *Muslim* concludes: "Then will Allāh say, The angels and the prophets and the faithful have all in their turn interceded for the sinners and now there remains none to intercede for them except the Most Merciful of all merciful ones. So He will take out a handful from the Fire and bring out a people who never worked any good" (Ms. 1:72). Further, Bukhārī records a saying to the effect that, when the sinners are taken out from hell, they shall be thrown into "the river of life, and they will grow as grows a seed by the side of a river" (B. 2:15), which clearly indicates that they shall be made fit for a higher life. The *Kanz al-'Ummāl* records the following: "Surely a day will come over hell, when it will be like a field of corn that has dried up, after flourishing for a while" (KU, vol. vii, p. 245); "Surely a day will come over hell, when there shall not be a single human being in it" (*Ibid*). A saying of 'Umar is recorded as follows: "Even if the dwellers in hell may be numberless as the sands of the desert, a day will come, when they will be taken out of it" (*Fatḥ al-Bayān*).

VI. THE POSITION OF WOMAN

Spiritually woman raised to the position of man.

This is another subject on which great misunderstanding prevails. The belief that, according to the Qur'ān, woman has no soul is almost general in the West. Probably it took hold of the mind of Europe at a time when Europeans had no access to the Qur'ān. No other religious book and no other reformer has done one-tenth of what the Holy Qur'ān or the Holy Prophet Muḥammad has done to raise the position of woman. Read the Qur'ān and you find good and righteous women being given the same position as good and righteous men. Both sexes are spoken of in the same terms. The highest favour which God has bestowed upon man is the gift of Divine revelation, and we find women, to whom Divine revelation came, spoken of along with men:

> "And We revealed to Moses' mother, saying, Give him suck, then when thou fearest for him, cast him into the river and fear not, nor grieve, for We will bring him back to thee and make him one of the apostles" (28:7).
>
> "When We revealed to thy mother what was revealed" (20:38).
>
> "And when the angels said, O Mary, Allāh has chosen thee and purified thee and chosen thee above the women of the world" (3:41).

Further, where the Holy Qur'ān speaks of the great prophets of God, saying: "And mention Abraham in the Book" (19:41), "And mention Moses in the Book" (19:51), and so on, it speaks of a woman in exactly the same terms: "And mention Mary in the Book" (19:16). No other religious book has given such a high spiritual position to woman.

The Qur'ān makes no difference between man and woman in the bestowal of reward for the good he or she does:

> "I will not waste the work of a worker among you, whether male or female, the one of you being from the other" (3:194).
>
> "And whoever does good deeds, whether male or female, and he is a believer — these shall enter the Garden, and they shall not be dealt with a jot unjustly" (4:124).
>
> "Whoever does good, whether male or female, and he is a believer, We will certainly make him live a happy life, and We will certainly give them their reward for the best of what they did" (16:97).
>
> "And whoever does good, whether male or female, and he is a believer, these shall enter the Garden, in which they shall be given sustenance without measure" (40:40).

Also, 33:35, speaking of good women alongside of good men, enumerates every good quality as being possessed by women exactly as it is possessed by men, and ends with the words, "Allāh has prepared for them forgiveness and a mighty reward". With God, therefore, according to the Qur'ān, there is no difference between men and women, and morally and spiritually they can rise to the same eminence.

Woman is the equal of man in rights of property.

On the material side, too, we find no difference, except what nature requires for its own ends. A woman can earn, inherit and own property and dispose of it

just as a man can, and the Holy Qur'ān is explicit on all these points:

> "Men shall have the benefit of what they earn and women shall have the benefit of what they earn" (4:32).
>
> "Men shall have a portion of what the parents and the near relatives leave, and women shall have a portion of what the parents and the near relatives leave" (4:7).
>
> "But if they (the women) of themselves be pleased to give up to you a portion of dowry, then use it with enjoyment and with wholesome result" (4:4).

Woman, in Arabia, had no rights of property; nay, she herself was part of the inheritance, and was taken possession of along with other property. She had no right to the property of her deceased husband or father. The Qur'ān took her from this low position and raised her to a position of perfect freedom as regards her property rights and her right to inheritance, a position which, among other nations, she has only partly attained and that after centuries of hard struggle.

Polygamy.

It is, however, asserted that *polygamy* and the seclusion of women, as enjoined in the Holy Qur'ān, have done more harm to woman than the benefit conferred on her by bestowal of property rights. The fact is that a great misunderstanding exists on these two points. Monogamy is the rule in Islām and polygamy only an exception allowed subject to certain conditions. The following two verses are the only authority for the sanction of polygamy, and let us see how far they carry us:

> "And if you fear that you cannot act equitably towards orphans, marry such women as seem good to you, two and three and four; but if you fear that you will not do justice between them, then marry only one or what your right hands possess: this is more proper that you may not deviate from the right course" (4:3).
>
> "And they ask thee a decision about women. Say, Allāh makes known to you His decision concerning them, and that which is recited to you in the Book concerning orphans of the women to whom you do not give what is appointed for them while you are disinclined to marry them" (4:127).

Now the first of these verses allows polygamy on the express condition that "you cannot act equitably towards orphans", and what is meant is made clear by the second verse, which contains a clear reference to the first verse in the words, "that which is recited to you in the Book concerning orphans of women". The Arabs were guilty of a double injustice to widows: they did not give them and their children a share in the inheritance of their husbands, nor were they inclined to marry widows who had children, because the responsibility for the maintenance of the children would in that case devolve upon them. The Qur'ān remedied both these evils; it gave a share of inheritance to the widow with a share also for the orphans, and it commended the taking of such widows in marriage, and allowed polygamy expressly for this purpose. It should, therefore, be clearly understood that monogamy is the rule in Islām and polygamy is allowed only as a remedial measure, and that, not for the sake of the man, but for the sake of the widow and her children. This permission was given at a time when the wars, which were forced on the Muslims, had decimated the men, so that many widows and orphans were left for whom it was necessary to provide. A provision was made in the form of polygamy so that the widow should find a home and protector and the orphans should have paternal care and affection. Europe to-day has its problem of the excess of women, and let it consider if it can solve that problem otherwise than by sanctioning a limited polygamy. Perhaps the only other way is prostitution, which prevails widely in all European countries and, where the law of the country does not recognize it, it is recognized in practice. Nature will have its course, and allowing illicit intercourse is the only other alternative to a limited polygamy.

Seclusion.

As regards the seclusion of women, the Qur'ān never prohibited women from

going out of their houses for their needs. In the time of the Prophet, women went regularly to mosques, and said their prayers along with men, standing in a separate row. They also joined their husbands in the labour of the field; they even went with the army to the field of battle, and looked after the wounded, removing them from the field, if necessary, and helped fighting-men in many other ways. They could even fight the enemy in an emergency. No occupation was prohibited to them, and they could do any work they chose. The only restrictions on their liberty are contained in the following verses:

> "Say to the believing men that they lower their gaze and guard their chastity, that is purer for them; Allāh is Aware of what they do. Say to the believing women that they lower their gaze, and guard their chastity and do not display their ornaments except what appears thereof; and let them wear their head-coverings over their bosoms" (24:30, 31).

Now the real restriction contained in these verses is that both men and women should, when they meet each other, cast down their looks, but there is an additional restriction in the case of women that *they should not display their ornaments* with the exception of "what appears thereof". The exception has been explained as meaning "what is customary and natural to uncover". That women went to mosques with their faces uncovered is recognized on all hands, and there is also a saying of the Holy Prophet that, when a woman reaches the age of puberty, she should cover her body *except the face and the hands.* The majority of the commentators are also of opinion that the exception relates to the face and the hands. Hence, while a display of beauty is forbidden, the restriction does not interfere with the necessary activities of woman. She can do any work that she likes to earn her livelihood, for the Holy Qur'ān says plainly, as already quoted, that women shall have the benefit of *what they earn.* A limited seclusion and a limited polygamy do not, therefore, interfere with the necessary activities of woman; they are both meant for her protection and as preventives against loose sexual relations, which ultimately undermine society.

VII. PURITY OF THE QURANIC TEXT

Among all the religious books of the world, the Holy Qur'ān is the only Book which enjoys the distinction of having a pure text. Every word and letter of the Holy Book, as we have it to-day, is as it left the lips of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad to whom the Book was revealed, and it is for this reason that, through all the centuries since it was revealed and among all the Muslims from East to West, among the numerous contending sects, there is only one Qur'ān. It is the only revealed Book in which one can have access, with the fullest certainty, to that Divine light which was revealed to the heart of a prophet of God. The factors which contributed to this safe preservation of the text are its being reduced to writing under the direction of the Prophet himself and its being committed to memory by a large number of people, at the time of its revelation.

1. EVERY PORTION OF THE HOLY QUR'ĀN WAS WRITTEN AS IT WAS REVEALED

Writing known at Makkah.

The first and the most important circumstance which assisted in the preservation of the text of the Holy Qur'ān is that every verse of it was put into writing in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet before his own eyes. Writing was known at Makkah and Madīnah before the advent of Islām, and though the Arabs generally relied upon a wonderfully retentive memory for the preservation of thousands of verses and long lists of genealogies, yet they reduced to writing their more important compositions, and hung them in some public place where their compatriots could see and admire them. Hence their seven famous odes are known as *Al-Sab' al-Mu'allaqāt — The Seven Suspended Ones*. These odes were so named from the circumstance that they were suspended in the Ka'bah by their authors at the pilgrimage season as odes of unequalled poetic beauty, and there they remained placarded for some time.

Muir bears testimony to both facts, to writing being known at Makkah and Madīnah, and to the Qur'ān being written:

> "But there is good reason for believing that many fragmentary copies, embracing amongst them the whole Qur'ān, or nearly the whole, were during his lifetime made by the prophet's followers. Writing was without doubt generally known at Mecca long before Muhammad assumed the prophetical office. And at Medina many of his followers were employed by the Prophet in writing his letters or despatches. . . . The poorer captives taken at Badr were offered their release on condition that they taught a certain number of Medina citizens to write. And although the people of Medina were not so generally educated as those of Mecca, yet many are noticed as having been able to write before Islam" (Muir's *Life of Muhammad*, Intro., p. xviii).

Internal evidence as to the writing of the Qur'ān.

The first thing we notice about the Holy Book is that there is a hint as to the use of the pen in the very first revelation that came to the Prophet. The first five short sentences revealed to the Prophet were:

> "Read in the name of thy Lord Who created —
> "Created man from a clot —

"Read and thy Lord is most Bounteous
"Who taught by the pen —
"Taught man that which he knew not" (96:1-5).

It is an established fact that the Prophet knew neither reading nor writing. Strange as it may appear, in the very first message that he received from On High, he is told not only to read but also to seek the help of the pen, which was the only means of the preservation of knowledge. It was due to this that from the very first he made arrangements to have every revelation reduced to writing as it came down to him, in addition to having committed it to memory, which he did by reading it out to those around him. Moreover, the Holy Qur'ān itself furnishes abundant evidence that it existed in a written form. It again and again calls itself a *kitāb*, which means *a book*, or *a writing which is complete in itself* (see 13). The Qur'ān is also designated as *ṣuḥuf*, which means *written pages*: "A Messenger from Allāh reciting pure pages, wherein are the right books" (98:2). The *pure pages* are the pages of the Holy Qur'ān, and the right books are its chapters; for not only is the entire Qur'ān called *al-Kitāb* or *the Book*, but its different chapters are also called *books*. Again: "Nay! surely it is a source of eminence — so let him who pleases mind it — in honoured pages, exalted, purified, in the hands of scribes, noble, virtuous" (80:11-33). The word *ṣaḥīfah* (plural *ṣuḥuf*) as used here, is the very word applied to the collection made by Zaid in the Caliphate of Abu Bakr and later in that of 'Uthmān. Thus we see that the Holy Qur'ān describes itself in clear and unmistakable words both as a *kitāb* and as a *ṣaḥīfah*, words used in the Arabic language to denote a written book, a fact to which every dictionary of the Arabic language testifies. From the same root *ṣaḥaf* is derived the word *Muṣḥaf*, a name to this day applied to the Holy Qur'ān, which means a book or a volume consisting of a collection of *ṣaḥīfahs* or *written pages*.

There are many other references in the Holy Qur'ān showing that its chapters existed in a written form at an early date. Thus: "Surely it is a bounteous Qur'ān, in a Book that is protected: none shall touch it save the purified ones" (56:77-79). The chapter in which these verses occur is one of the earliest revelations. Rodwell gives the following footnote under this passage: "This passage implies the existence of copies of portions at least of the Qur'ān in common use. It was quoted by the sister of 'Umar when, at his conversion, he desired to take her copy of sūrah 20 into his hands. Verses 78, 79 were directed by the Caliph Muḥammad Abu-l-Qāsim ibn 'Abd Allāh to be inscribed on all copies of the Qur'ān". It is an admitted fact that every portion of the Holy Qur'ān was regarded with equal reverence by the Muslims, and every word of it was believed to be the Word of God. It is, therefore, quite unreasonable to suppose that some portions of the Holy Qur'ān were written, while others were not. There is not a single circumstance in the whole history of Islām which can entitle us to make any such distinction between the different portions of the Holy Qur'ān, and to suppose that while some chapters were written, others were not thought fit to be written, or that equal care was not taken of all the parts. Again, it is in a chapter revealed at Makkah that we meet with the following challenge to the unbelievers: "Or say they, He has forged it? Say, Then bring ten forged chapters like it, and call upon whom you can besides Allāh, if you are truthful" (11:13). A similar challenge is contained in a chapter of a still earlier date: "Say, if men and jinn should combine together to bring the like of this Qur'ān, they could not bring the like of it, though some of them were aiders of others" (17:88). And in a chapter revealed at Madīnah we have: "And if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it, and call on your helpers besides Allāh, if you are truthful. But if you do it not — and never shall you do it — then be on your guard against the Fire" (2:23, 24). Now, all these challenges to the opponents to produce one *sūrah* or ten *sūrahs* like the Qur'ān imply that the sūrahs of the Holy Qur'ān existed in a written form at the time of the challenge; otherwise the challenge would have been meaningless.

Historical evidence as to the writing of the Qur'ān.

There are numerous anecdotes showing that when the Holy Prophet received a revelation, it was immediately reduced to writing. The general practice is thus described, by no less a personage than 'Uthmān, the third Caliph whose name is in particular associated with the collection of the Qur'ān and who being one

of the earliest converts to Islām remained with the Prophet almost since the Call: "It was customary with the Messenger of Allāh that when portions of different chapters were revealed to him, and when any verse was revealed, he called one of those persons who used to write the Holy Qur'ān and said to him, Write these verses in the chapter where such and such verses occur" (AD. 2:123). This report mentions, not what the Holy Prophet did on one occasion, but what he always used to do whenever any verse of the Holy Qur'ān was revealed to him. Thus we have the clearest testimony that every verse of the Divine revelation was put into writing by the order and in the presence of the Holy Prophet, while additional care was taken by him to point out the place and chapter of a verse, when there were two or more unfinished chapters, so that the scribes might not confuse the verses of one chapter with those of another.

The Prophet's Scribes.

Other reports of the highest authority support the evidence of 'Uthmān. Thus Bukhārī narrates under the heading *The Amanuenses of the Prophet*: "When the verse *lā yastawi-l-qā'idūn* . . . (4:95) was revealed, the Prophet (peace and the blessing of Allāh be upon him!) said, 'Bring Zaid to me, and let him bring the tablet and the inkstand'. Then he said to him (Zaid), 'Write *lā yastawī* . . .' (the verse revealed)" (B. 66:4). According to another report under the same heading, Abū Bakr sent for Zaid and said to him: "You used to write the revelation for the Messenger of Allāh (peace and the blessings of Allāh be upon him!)" (B. 65:ix, 20). Besides Zaid, who did by far the greater part of the work of writing the revelations of the Holy Prophet at Madīnah, many other persons are mentioned who did this work at Makkah and, in the absence of Zaid, at Madīnah. Among these are mentioned Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, 'Alī, Zubair ibn 'Awām, 'Abd Allāh ibn Sa'd, Khālid and Abān, sons of Sa'īd, Ubayy ibn Ka'b, Ḥanẓalah ibn Rabī', Mu'aiqab ibn Abū Fāṭimah, 'Abd Allāh ibn Arqam ibn Shuraḥbīl, and 'Abd Allāh ibn Rawāḥah (FB., vol. ix, p. 19). In fact as many as forty-two of the Companions are related to have acted as scribes for the Holy Prophet. The importance given to the writing down of the revelations as they came down to the Prophet was so great that in the historic Flight of the Prophet from Makkah to Madīnah, pen, inkstand and writing material were among the essential necessities of the journey. There was no paucity of scribes as besides the Holy Qur'ān many other things were written. Some of the Companions used to write the words uttered by the Holy Prophet, which were generally reported only orally (B. 3:39). Letters were written by order of the Holy Prophet to several potentates (B. 64:84). The truce at Ḥudaibiyah was also written (B. 54:15). Correspondence was also kept up with the Jews in Hebrew (B.94:40). Not only could men read and write, but even women were taught the art. Among the wives of the Holy Prophet, at least 'Ā'ishah and Ḥafṣah could read and write, as many reliable reports show. But it is not to be supposed that these were the only persons among the Companions who could write, or who actually transcribed copies of the Holy Qur'ān. These were the men who performed the work of amanuenses for the Holy Prophet. There were many others who wrote copies of the Holy Qur'ān for their own use.

Besides these reports, which directly establish the fact that every verse of the Holy Qur'ān was written at the time of its revelation, there are many other anecdotes indirectly supporting the same conclusion. For instance, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "Do not write from me anything except the Qur'ān" (FB., vol. ix, p. 10). This direction, which was meant as a precautionary step against the confusion of the Holy Qur'ān with what the Holy Prophet spoke on other occasions, takes it for granted that the Holy Qur'ān was written. This conclusion is further corroborated by the circumstance that where there was no danger of confusion on the part of the writers, the writing of certain ḥadīth was also allowed (B. 3:39).

There is another report mentioned by Ibn Hishām, in the story of the conversion of 'Umar, which shows that written copies of the chapters of the Holy Qur'ān were in common use among the early Muslim converts at Makkah. 'Umar, with a drawn sword in his hand, one day left his house with the intention of murdering the Holy Prophet. On the way he learnt that his own sister and brother-in-law were secret converts to Islām. So he turned his steps to his sister' house. "At that time there was in the house a third man, Khabbāb, who had

with him a book containing *Ṭā Hā* (the 20th chapter of the Holy Qur'ān), which he was teaching to 'Umar's sister and her husband. When they perceived 'Umar coming, Khabbāb hid himself in a corner of the house, and Fāṭimah, 'Umar's sister, took the book and hid it. But 'Umar had already so far approached them that he had heard the voice of Khabbāb reciting the Holy Qur'ān. So the first question he asked, when he entered the house, was as to what they were reading. They replied, 'You have not heard anything'. He said, 'Yes, I have heard, and I have been informed that you have followed Muḥammad in his religion'. Then he caught hold of his brother-in-law Sa'īd son of Zaid. His sister advanced towards him to protect her husband and was severely hurt in the struggle. Then 'Umar's sister and her husband told him that they were really converts to Islām and that he might do what he liked. When 'Umar saw his sister bleeding, he was sorry for what he had done, and asked her to let him have the book which they had been reading, so that he might see what it was that Muḥammad had brought to them. 'Umar himself could read and write. On hearing his demand, his sister expressed the fear that he might destroy the volume. 'Umar gave her his word, and swore by his idols that he would return the volume to her after perusing it. Then she told him that, being a *mushrik* (one who set up false gods with God), he was impure and could not touch the Qur'ān, because there was a verse in it to the effect that none should touch it except the pure. Then 'Umar washed himself, and his sister handed over to him the book which had *Ṭā Hā* written in it. 'Umar read a portion of it, and began to admire it and showed a reverence for the book. Thereupon Khabbāb, seeing that he was well disposed towards Islām, asked him to accept Islām" (IH). This long quotation, which is a part of the lengthy report of the conversion of 'Umar, shows conclusively that at that early period copies of the Qur'ān were commonly used by the believers, *Ṭā Hā* being a revelation of the early Makkan period.

It is sometimes argued that such anecdotes only show that *some* chapters were written, and that therefore there is no evidence that every verse of the Holy Qur'ān was reduced to writing. But there is a fallacy in this argument. The statement that the 20th chapter of the Holy Qur'ān existed in a written form before the conversion of 'Umar is not made for the purpose of giving any importance to that chapter, or to show that the reporter mentioned it because of its peculiarity. It is made incidentally in a narrative reported with quite a different object, and hence it is only illustrative of the practice of the Holy Prophet and the Muslims at that early date. Even if there were no other evidence of the writing of the Holy Qur'ān except this anecdote, still we should be justified in drawing from it the conclusion that the portions of the Holy Qur'ān revealed up to that time existed in a written form, and that it was the practice to write the revelation. The existence of the 20th chapter in a written form, and the use made of the manuscript in 'Umar's sister's family, shows that similar use was made of this and other chapters among the believers. They were also aware that the sacred manuscripts could not be touched by impure hands.

The above conclusion is corroborated by another report: "We were forbidden to travel to the enemy's land with the Qur'ān" (B. 56:129). This report conclusively proves that written copies of the Holy Qur'ān existed in abundance, and Muslims were forbidden to take such copies to the enemy's country, for fear lest they should fall into the hands of men who might spitefully treat them with disrespect.

Abū Bakr collected Manuscripts of the Qur'ān written under the Prophet's Directions.

The circumstances attending the collection of the Holy Qur'ān in the time of Abū Bakr also show that every verse of the revelation had been written down in the presence of the Holy Prophet. Thus we read of two verses which, in spite of Zaid's knowledge that they formed part of the Holy Qur'ān, were not admitted until a written copy of them was found with one of the Companions. "So I searched the Qur'ān . . . until I found the last portion of the chapter entitled *Immunity* with Abū Khuzaimah, one of the Anṣār" (B. 66:3). In explaining the report, part of which has been quoted here, the famous commentator of *Bukhārī*, the author of *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, says "Abū Bakr did not order the writing of anything (i.e., any verse) which was not already written (i.e., in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet), and it was for this reason that Zaid hesitated to write

the concluding portion of the chapter *Barā'at* (Immunity) until he found it written, though it was known to him and to those who are mentioned with him". And a little further on: "And the whole Qur'ān was written in manuscripts, but the manuscripts were dispersed, and Abū Bakr collected them in one volume" (FB., vol. ix, p. 10). Another report by Ibn Abī Dāwūd is also mentioned, according to which "'Umar publicly announced (when the collection of the Qur'ān was taken in hand by Abū Bakr) that whoever possessed any portion of the Qur'ān, which he had directly received from the Messenger of Allāh (may peace and the blessings of Allāh be upon him!) should bring it; and they used to write these on paper and tablets and palm-stems shorn of leaves. Nothing was accepted from anybody until two witnesses bore witness"; to which it is added: "And this shows that Zaid did not deem it sufficient that a verse was written until somebody bore witness who had heard it directly from the Holy Prophet's mouth, though Zaid himself remembered it. This he did for greater precaution" (FB., vol. ix, p. 12). There is another report mentioned by Zuhrī, which says: "The Messenger of Allāh died while the Qur'ān was written upon palm-stems shorn of leaves and skins (N. under *'asb*). After mentioning some of these reports the commentator adds: "And their object was that nothing should be copied except from what had been written in the presence of the Prophet, not from memory only" (FB., vol. ix, p. 12). All these reports point to the certain conclusion that every verse and chapter of the Holy Qur'ān had been written by the direction of the Holy Prophet in his own presence.

2. ALL REVELATION WAS COMMITTED TO MEMORY

Memory safest of repositories with the Arabs.

Every portion of the Qur'ān was committed to memory as soon as it was revealed. With the Arabs memory was the safest of repositories. In fact, they placed so great a reliance upon memory that they took a pride in being called *ummīs,* i.e., men who did not know reading or writing, and for whom, therefore, memory served the purpose of writing. They had all their poems and long genealogies by heart. We learn from numerous reports that whenever a passage was revealed, it was recited by the Holy Prophet to those who happened to be present at the time and many of his followers committed it to memory at once, others again learning it from those who heard it from the mouth of the Prophet. The importance of the Holy Qur'ān for the Companions lay not only in the fact that for them it was a code of moral and social laws; it was not sufficient for them to know only its general purport. They believed every word and every letter of it to proceed from no other than the Divine source, and hence every word of it was for them a heavenly treasure they had on earth, so they secured it in the securest of places, viz., their hearts. For its sake they suffered all kinds of persecution and forsook their friends, their relatives, their properties, and their homes. Every new verse revealed breathed new life into them. Hence they tried their utmost to keep themselves acquainted with every fresh revelation. Those among them who followed trade or any other profession spent a part of the day in the transaction of their affairs and the rest in the company of the Holy Prophet. Those who lived at a distance from the mosque used to go to the Prophet by turns. Thus 'Umar says: "When I went to the Holy Prophet, I returned to bring him (his neighbour) the news of that day relating to revelation and other things, and when he went, then he brought me the news" (B. 3:27). There were also the *Aṣḥāb al-Ṣuffah* who passed their whole time in the mosque, and were ever ready to commit to memory any fresh revelation that the Holy Prophet announced.

Stress laid by the Prophet on learning and teaching the Qur'ān.

The Holy Prophet himself laid the greatest stress upon the learning, reciting, and teaching of the Holy Qur'ān. According to one report "the Holy Prophet came out and we were in the *ṣuffah* (annexe) of the mosque, and he asked, 'Which of you likes to go every day to Baṭḥā' or 'Aqīq and bring two female camels with large humps upon their backs, without doing any wrong to anybody or to a relative?'. We replied, 'O Messenger of Allāh, we all like it'. He said, 'Does not one of you come in the morning to the mosque, and teach or

repeat two verses of the Book of Allāh, which is better for him than two camels? And three verses are better than three camels, and four verses better than four camels: in this way is any number of verses better than the same number of camels'" (Ms. 6, *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān,* 7). 'Uthmān reported: The Holy Prophet said: "The best man among you is he who has learnt the Qur'ān and teaches it". Some other reports run as follows: "'Ā'ishah says that the Holy Prophet said: The skilful in reciting the Qur'ān are classed with the scribes, who are honoured and virtuous; and he who reiterates in reciting the Qur'ān, on account of his inability to recite it, has a double reward" (Ms. 6, *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān,* 4). Ibn 'Umar reported that the Messenger of Allāh said: "No one is to be envied but two persons — one, a man to whom Allāh has given the Qur'ān, and he recites it day and night and acts upon it, and the other a man whom Allāh has given wealth, and he spends it in the way of Allāh day and night" (B. 95:5). Hence the Companions of the Prophet not only acted upon the Qur'ān but they also recited it aloud. This fact is specially mentioned in connection with Abū Bakr, of whom it is related that he recited the Holy Qur'ān aloud in the compound of his house, which was situated on a public thoroughfare, and the disbelievers objected to this on the ground that he thus influenced the minds of others and persuaded them in favour of the Qur'ān (B. 39:4).

Various other reports of undoubted authenticity, showing that the recitation of the Holy Qur'ān was an important obligation which rested upon every Muslim, are contained in the collections of reports. *Bukhārī* has a chapter named *The chapter on the istidhkār of the Qur'ān and its ta'āhud* (B. 66:23), that is, "Reciting the Qur'ān frequently and recurring to it time after time". In this chapter various reports are narrated enjoining the frequent recitation of the Holy Qur'ān. The same renowned collection has another chapter headed *The teaching of the Qur'ān to children* (B. 66:25), a third with the heading *The most excellent of men is he who learns and teaches the Qur'ān* (B. 66:21), and a fourth which is headed *The reciting of the Qur'ān from memory* (B. 66:22). For the sake of brevity I give simply the headings of the chapters. These headings are sufficient to show that committing the Qur'ān to memory was enjoined by the Holy Prophet upon all his followers, and it was considered by his Companions to be a duty fraught with great religious merit. Hence it was necessary that every-one of them should commit to memory at least some parts of the Holy Book. Though even now there are thousands of men in every Muslim country who can repeat the whole of the Qur'ān from memory, the peculiar conditions existing in Arabia facilitated the task to a far greater extent. This is admitted even by a hostile critic: "Passionately fond of poetry, but without the ready means of committing to writing the effusions of their bards, the Arabs had long been used to imprint these, as well as the traditions of genealogical and tribal events, on the living tablets of the heart. The recollective faculty was thus cultivated to the highest pitch; and it was applied, with all the ardour of an awakened spirit, to the Qur'ān" (Muir).

Greater knowledge of the Qur'ān entitled a person to be Imām.

There were other reasons which made the Companions vie one with another in committing the Holy Book to memory. The office of *imāmat,* or leading of public prayers, was as a rule bestowed upon the man who had the greater know-ledge of the Holy Qur'ān (Tr. 2:61). All authentic reports establish this point. One report tells us that in a certain tribe a boy eight years old used to lead the prayers because he knew a greater portion of the Holy Qur'ān than any other member of that tribe. This boy, 'Amr ibn Salamah, thus relates his own story: "We (i.e., the tribe to which the narrator belonged) had alighted in a place by water, and people who went to the Holy Prophet passed by us. When they returned they used to repeat to us the revelations which they heard from the Holy Prophet. I had a good memory, and so, while there, I committed to memory a great portion of the Holy Qur'ān from the visitors. After a time my father also went to the Holy Prophet with some people of his tribe to declare their acceptance of Islām. The Holy Prophet taught them the prayers, and told them that the prayers should be led by a person who knew more of the Qur'ān than others. On account of what I had already committed to memory, I satisfied this condition. So they made me their *imām*" (Msh. 4:26). The distinction of having the office of *imāmat* conferred on one was a practical incentive to a greater

knowledge of the Qur'ān. Similarly, when a new tribe accepted Islām, the man who was chosen to be sent to them to teach them the doctrines and principles of the new faith was one who was most acquainted with the Qur'ān. There are many reports which show that the reciters of the Qur'ān were highly honoured and respected in every way among the Companions.

The Prophet himself recited the Qur'ān frequently.

These were the reasons which led a great number of the Companions of the Holy Prophet to engrave the words of the Qur'ān on the tablets of their hearts. The Holy Prophet himself set an example in frequently reciting the Holy Qur'ān in public as well as in private. It was not only in prayers that long portions of the Holy Book were recited. We have on record instances showing that the Prophet recited the Holy Qur'ān when travelling on the back of a camel (B. 66:24). He also loved to hear others recite the Holy Word. Still another reports a Companion as saying: "The Messenger of Allāh said to me, 'Recite to me the Qur'ān'. I replied, 'Shall I recite to thee and to thee it has been revealed?' He said, 'I love to hear others recite it'. Thereupon I began to recite the chapter entitled *Women*" (B. 66:33).

These anecdotes show that the Holy Prophet induced his Companions by his own example to recite the Holy Qur'ān. These inducements were not without their effect. The Muslims treasured up the Word of God in their hearts, and its reading and teaching became very common. So common, indeed, had the recitation of the Qur'ān become, that when the Holy Prophet spoke of the disappearance of the knowledge of the Qur'ān at some future time, Ziyād, son of Labīd, one of the Companions, at once cried out: "How could knowledge disappear, O Messenger of Allāh, when we read the Qur'ān and teach it to our women and children" (Tr. 39:5). This question arose out of a misapprehension of the words of the Holy Prophet, who meant, not that the words of the Holy Qur'ān would disappear, but that people would not act in accordance with the spirit of those words.

Limits placed on recital of the Qur'ān.

Eagerness to commit the Holy Qur'ān to memory and recite it frequently was in fact so great that the Prophet had to place a limit as to the number of days in which the whole Qur'ān should be recited. According to one ḥadīth the Prophet on being asked as to how much time one should take to finish one reading of the Qur'ān laid down the limit of thirty days (B. 66:34). The division of the Qur'ān into thirty parts seems to be based on this direction. This ḥadīth goes on to say that the minimum limit allowed was seven days. It is stated that one of the Companions who finished the recitation of the whole of the Qur'ān once every night, was expressly enjoined by him not to finish it in less than seven days, and was forbidden to go through the whole once every night (B. 66:34). In fact, the Prophet himself apportioned the Holy Qur'ān into seven *manzils* (FB., vol. ix, p. 39), and thus practically laid down the restriction that the Holy Qur'ān should not be recited in less than seven days. Ibn Mas'ūd relates that the Holy Prophet said: "Read the Qur'ān in seven days, and do not read it in less than three days" (FB., vol. ix, p. 83). According to another report, 'Ā'ishah said that "the Holy Prophet did not usually finish the Qur'ān in less than three days" (FB., vol. ix, p. 83). All these reports show clearly that the Companions vied one with another in the frequent recitation of the Qur'ān. In fact, so frequently was the recitation of the Holy Qur'ān resorted to, that injunctions became necessary to stop a too rapid recitation. It is also clear from these reports that the whole of the Qur'ān was committed to memory by many of the Companions, otherwise it could not be spoken of as being *finished* in a stated interval of time. That it was recited from memory is clear from the fact that it was recited at night.

Persons who knew the whole Qur'ān by heart.

These conclusions are further supported by many trustworthy reports, which show that there were numerous men among the Companions who could recite the whole Qur'ān from memory. These men were called *qurrā'* (pl. of *Qāri'*) or the reciters, and they were known to have committed the whole Qur'ān to

memory. FB explains the word *qurrā'* as meaning "persons noted for committing the Qur'ān to memory and for teaching it to others". Of course, the word also signified persons having a sound knowledge of the Qur'ān. Seventy of the *qurrā'* were treacherously put to death at the Bi'r Ma'ūnah by a tribe of the unbelievers (B. 64:30). The fact that such a large number of them were murdered in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet shows that there were hundreds of them among the Companions. In the chapter headed *The Qurrā' from among the Companions of the Holy Prophet,* Bukhārī relates several anecdotes. In the first of these, 'Abd Allāh, son of 'Amr (who, as we have already seen, had committed the whole of the Qur'ān to memory), is reported to have said, when speaking of 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd: "I shall ever love him, for I heard the Holy Prophet say, 'Learn the Qur'ān from four men, from 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd, Sālim, Mu'ādh, and Ubayy ibn Ka'b'." This, of course, did not imply inability on the part of the other Companions to teach the Holy Qur'ān, nor did the words mean that none of the Companions besides these four retained the whole of the Qur'ān in their memory. In fact, to be a good teacher of the Holy Qur'ān, it was not sufficient that a person should be able to recite the Holy Book from memory. It was absolutely necessary that he should have a good understanding and a sound knowledge of the Holy Qur'ān. Probably they were named because they always tried to learn the revelations directly from the Holy Prophet. One of them, 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd, it is reported, used to say that he received over seventy chapters of the Holy Qur'ān directly from the mouth of the Holy Prophet (B. 44:8). Other reports tell us that there were many other Companions who could recite the whole of the Qur'ān from memory.

To take an example, Abū Bakr is not named in the above report, but it is a fact that he retained the whole of the Qur'ān in his memory. It was Abū Bakr whom the Holy Prophet appointed on his death-bed to lead the public prayers. Authentic reports as already stated show that the person appointed to lead the prayers was always one who knew the Qur'ān most. In cases where several persons had equal knowledge, as, for instance, when they all knew the whole of the Qur'ān by heart, other tests were applied. Now, it is certain that there were men among the Companions who could recite the whole of the Qur'ān from memory. Therefore Abū Bakr could not be appointed to lead the prayers, if he did not know the whole of the Qur'ān by heart. Hence it follows that Abū Bakr also could recite the whole of the Qur'ān from memory. Similarly 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar retained the whole of the Qur'ān in his memory, finishing its recital every night, whereupon the Holy Prophet told him to finish the recital once in a month (B. 30:38). In fact, many persons are mentioned as being able to recite the whole of the Qur'ān from memory in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet, among these being the four Caliphs, viz., Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān, and 'Alī, and such renowned Companions as Ṭalḥah, Sa'd, Ibn Mas'ūd, Sālim, Abū Hurairah, etc., while three women, viz., 'Ā'ishah, Ḥafṣah and Umm Salamah are also named in the same category. Several other persons are also named from among the *Anṣār* as being able to recite the whole of the Qur'ān from memory. But it is not to be supposed that only those persons were the reciters whose names have been preserved to us in reports. Seventy of them were killed by treachery in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet, and about the same number fell in the battle of Yamāmah, which was fought a few months after his death.

Recital of the Qur'ān was necessary in public as well as private prayers.

The recitation of the Qur'ān and its committal to memory were not, however, only optional, for the Qur'ān formed a part of public as well as private prayers. Five times a day had the Muslims to pray publicly, but every public service had an additional part, called sunnah, to be performed privately, while prayers in the later portion of the night were purely of a private nature. The recitation of portions of the Holy Qur'ān in all these prayers was obligatory, and thus every Muslim had of necessity to repeat certain portions of it every day. Now, it is an established fact that generally very long portions were recited in the prayers, especially in those said during the latter part of the night. The Holy Prophet himself is related to have often recited the long chapters in the beginning of the Qur'ān in his *tahajjud* prayers. His Companions also followed his example. Thus one Companion is said, in an anecdote left of him, to have recited in his *tahajjud* prayers the second chapter, which forms a twelfth part of the Qur'ān. Even in

the public prayers long chapters were recited. The evening prayers are the least suited for the recitation of the longer chapters, but even in these the Holy Prophet recited such chapters as the Ṭūr, ch. 52 (B. 10:99). One Companion recited the second chapter in prayers at the nightfall, and a complaint was made against him by one who was tired by a whole day's labour (B. 10:60). In their private prayers also, the Companions recited long chapters. Thus not only was it necessary that every one of them should commit the whole or a certain portion of the Holy Qur'ān to memory, but the part so committed was always kept fresh in the mind by constant recitation in prayers. One ḥadīth relates how a certain chapter, Qāf, was learned by heart by a Companion from its frequent recitation in the Friday gatherings (Ms. 7:13). In fact, if there had been no other means of giving publicity to the Qur'ān, its mere recitation in prayers was sufficient to give it such publication as would have guarded it against any possible alteration or loss.

There is only one ḥadīth the evidence of which is considered to be conflicting with that furnished by all the ḥadīth cited above. It runs as follows: "Anas reported that the Holy Prophet died while none had collected the Qur'ān with the exception of four men, Abū Dardā' and Mu'ādh ibn Jabal, and Zaid ibn Thābit and Abū Sa'īd" (B. 66:8). In a report to the same effect narrated by the same authority, the name of Ubayy is mentioned instead of Abū Dardā'. This ḥadīth does not speak of committing the Qur'ān to memory but of the collection of its manuscripts. There is no doubt that the word *jam'* (collecting) is used in Ḥadīth in both senses, *collection of the manuscripts* and *the retaining of the whole of the Qur'ān in memory*, but the latter significance is out of the question here, for it is a fact established beyond all doubt that a very large number of Companions knew the whole of the Qur'ān by heart. Nor can an objection be raised to the first significance on the ground that, if the manuscripts of the Holy Qur'ān had already been collected by these four men, why Abū Bakr and 'Umar were so anxious for its collection when many of the *qurrā'* fell in the battle of Yamāmah and why Zaid considered it a very heavy task, when he was chosen for collecting the scattered manuscripts of the Holy Qur'ān into one volume. The fact is that Zaid sought the manuscripts that were written in the presence and by the direction of the Holy Prophet.

Even if we admit, for the sake of argument, the existence of certain differences in the various reports quoted above, the one conclusion upon which they all agree is absolutely certain, viz., that among the Companions of the Holy Prophet there were persons who retained in memory the whole of the Qur'ān as taught by the Holy Prophet, and who at his death had the whole of it engraved on the tablets of their hearts. All this was done in obedience to the injunctions of the Holy Prophet, who laid great stress upon the reciting of the Qur'ān and the committing of it to memory. And these measures to guard the text of the Holy Qur'ān were in addition to writing. It may also be pointed out here that the gradual revelation of the Qur'ān afforded great facility in committing it to memory. The interval between the revelation of two verses or two chapters afforded the Companions an opportunity to repeat it as often as they liked. The entire Qur'ān was revealed in the long period of twenty-three years, and if Muslim boys of the age of ten or twelve years can even now commit the whole Qur'ān to memory within one or two years, the Arab possessors of wonderfully retentive memories, to whom the importance of the Qur'ān was far greater than to any Muslim of a later age, would not find it difficult to memorize it within the long period of twenty-three years, especially when it was given to them gradually.

3. ARRANGEMENT OF VERSES AND CHAPTERS WAS THE PROPHET'S OWN WORK

The Holy Qur'ān was revealed piecemeal during a long period extending over twenty-three years, some of the chapters were revealed complete, but the revelation of many others was fragmentary and extended over long periods. Now, the arrangement of chapters and verses in the copies of the Holy Qur'ān at present in the hands of the Muslims does not follow the order of revelation. The important question before us, therefore, is whether the Holy Prophet himself arranged the verses and chapters in an order different from that of their revela-

tion, and, if so, whether the present arrangement is the work of the Holy Prophet? In other words, was the Holy Qur'ān left by the Holy Prophet in the same condition, as regards the arrangement of its verses and chapters, as that in which we now find it, or is its present condition different from that in which the Holy Prophet left it?

Internal evidence about the arrangement.

That the arrangement of the verses and chapters of the Holy Qur'ān was effected by the Holy Prophet under the guidance of Divine revelation is shown in the first place by the Holy Qur'ān itself. There we read: "Surely on Us (rests) the collecting of it and the reciting of it. So when We have recited it, follow its recitation" (75:17, 18). This is one of the very earliest revelations, showing that the collection of the Holy Qur'ān, that is, its gathering into one whole, with an arrangement of its various parts, was according to the Divine scheme to be brought about by the guidance of Divine revelation. Arrangement and collection were, therefore, as much the work of Divine revelation as the reading of a verse to the Holy Prophet, i.e., its revelation. In another chapter, revealed a little later, we have: "And those who disbelieve say, Why has not the Qur'ān been revealed to him all at once? Thus, that We may establish thy heart by it — and We have arranged it well in arranging" (25:32). The Qur'ān itself, therefore, makes it clear that its collection and arrangement were also brought about by Divine revelation. It should be borne in mind that the word *jam'* in the above verse implies both *collection* and *arrangement,* since no collection could be brought about without an arrangement. These verses describe the arrangement and collection as a process different from the revelation of a verse to the Holy Prophet, thus showing that from the first it was meant that the verses and the chapters of the Holy Qur'ān should be arranged in an order different from that of their revelation. If the order in collection were to be the same as the order of the reading of the different verses to the Holy Prophet, i.e., the order of their revelation, collection and reading would not have been described as two different things.

Historical evidence as to arrangement.

History bears ample testimony to the truth of the above assertion made in the Holy Qur'ān, and we meet with the clearest proof in authentic and reliable reports that the Holy Prophet left at his death the complete Qur'ān with the same arrangement of the verses and chapters as we have now in every Arabic Qur'ān. We will consider the arrangement of verses and that of chapters separately, and in each enquiry we shall have to discuss the following points:

(1) Was any arrangement followed by the Prophet himself and by his Companions in his lifetime?

(2) Was that arrangement different from the order in which the verses of the chapters were revealed?

(3) Does the present arrangement differ from that followed by, or which existed in the lifetime of, the Holy Prophet?

That such a large book, treating of so many and such varied subjects, should have been committed to memory and regularly recited in and outside prayers, and taught by one man to another, without there being any settled arrangement of its parts, is a most preposterous proposition, but there is hardly a Christian critic of Islām who has not advanced it. The grounds for this assertion are the same in every case. Not the least regard is paid to historical evidence, and mere assertion that no arrangement is discoverable in the verses and chapters is made the basis on which the proposition rests. The following short paragraph from Muir's Introduction to his *Life of Muḥammad* is not only illustrative of the assertions of Christian critics in general, but it also shows how the author himself has evaded the historical evidence:

> "We are not, however, to assume that the entire Qur'ān was at this period repeated in any fixed order. The present compilation, indeed, is held by the Muslims to follow the arrangement prescribed by Muhammad; *and early traditions might appear to imply some known sequence.** But this cannot be admitted; for had any fixed order been

* Italics are mine (MA).

observed or sanctioned by the Prophet, it would unquestionably have been preserved in the subsequent collection. Now the Qur'ān, as handed down to our time, follows in the disposition of its several parts no intelligible arrangement whatever, either of subject or time; and it is inconceivable that Muhammad should have enjoined its recital invariably in this order. We must even doubt whether the number of suras, or chapters, was determined by Muhammad as we now have them. The internal sequence at any rate of the contents of the several suras cannot, in most cases, have been that intended by the Prophet".

Some of the footnotes given under this paragraph show the struggle in the writer's mind between historical facts and religious prejudice. Thus, while denying the existence of any fixed order in the Qur'ān in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet, Muir had to admit that "We read of certain Companions who could repeat the whole Qur'ān in a given time, which might be held to imply some usual connection of the parts". In another footnote it is admitted that there were four or five persons who could repeat "with scrupulous accuracy" the whole of the Qur'ān, and "several others who could very nearly repeat the whole, before Muhammad's death". Again, while denying that even the number of *sūrahs* was determined by the Holy Prophet, he adds the following footnote:

> "But there is reason to believe that the chief suras, including all passages in most common use, were fixed and known by name or other distinctive mark. Some are spoken of, in early and well-authenticated traditions, as having been so referred to by Muhammad himself. Thus he recalled his fugitive followers at the discomfiture of Honein by shouting to them as 'the men of the *sura Bacr*' (i.e., Sura ii).
>
> "Several persons are stated by tradition to have learnt by heart a *certain number of suras* in Muhammad's lifetime. Thus 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd learned seventy *suras* from the Prophet's own mouth, and Muhammad on his deathbed repeated seventy *suras*, among which were the seven long ones'. These traditions signify a recognized division of at least some part of the revelation into suras, if not a usual order in repeating the suras themselves.
>
> "The liturgical use of the suras by Muhammad must, no doubt, have in some measure fixed their form, and probably also their sequence."

In connection with the same subject it is said in another footnote that "the traditions just cited as to the number of *suras* which some of the Companions could repeat, and which Muhammad himself repeated on his deathbed, also imply the existence of such *suras* in a complete and finished form".

Thus almost every remark made in the paragraph quoted first is contradicted in the footnotes on the basis of historical facts met with in authentic reports. Though the statements in the footnotes are made reservedly, yet the contradictions are too clear to escape unnoticed by any careful reader, and the struggle in the writer's mind can be easily discerned. In the text it is asserted that there was no fixed order or arrangement of the verses and chapters of the Holy Qur'ān, and historical evidence is produced in the footnotes showing that there was a connection. The text makes the allegation that even the sūrahs were not distinctly marked out by the Holy Prophet and their number was not determined by him, and the footnote brings forward historical testimony to the effect that there was a recognized division and that the form of the chapters was no doubt fixed. The reservations contained in such expressions as "some part" and "some measure" were only natural, considering the allegations in the text. It can easily be seen that if "seventy suras, including the seven long ones", existed "in a complete and finished form", as the footnote admits — and there is no evidence showing that the remaining forty-four short sūrahs, which were, no doubt, generally recited in prayers, did not exist in the same form — the presumption will be that all the sūrahs existed "in a complete and finished form". This conclusion becomes clearer still, when it is borne in mind that the same writer has

also admitted that there were several Companions who could repeat, not only seventy sūrahs, but the *whole Qur'ān,* and that too "*with scrupulous accuracy*"

Without a known order of verses the Qur'ān could not be committed to memory.

The assertion that no arrangement was followed in the case of single verses revealed at different times is so absurd on the very face of it that it hardly requires a refutation. How was it possible for anybody to commit the Holy Qur'ān to memory, if there was no settled order in which the verses were read? What order did the different copies follow? Or was it that each copy of the Holy Qur'ān current at the time followed a different order? And every man who knew any portion of the Holy Qur'ān — and every one of the Companions knew some portion — followed a different arrangement? Does any evidence support these assertions? Or did each reciter follow a different order? What, again, was the order of the verses followed by those who led the public prayers? Is it conceivable that a book which was so widely committed to memory, and which was so frequently recited by thousands of men, existed in such an orderless state?

If there were no other evidence to show that the verses in the different chapters of the Holy Qur'ān followed some arrangement, the mere fact that the Holy Book was committed to memory by the Companions would be sufficient to establish that conclusion. There are many chapters containing more than a hundred verses each, and unless these were arranged in a settled order, no one could be said to have committed to memory the whole of any chapter. Take the different permutations of only a hundred verses, and you will see that no two out of a hundred thousand men could have agreed upon one arrangement. In such a case there would have been not one Qur'ān, which the Companions could learn from each other, but everybody would have his own Qur'ān, and no one would be certain of the correctness of what his brother recited. Moreover, we learn from authentic reports that when any person, while reciting a portion of the Holy Qur'ān from memory in prayers, made a mistake or left out a verse, some one of those who listened to him corrected the mistake or pointed out the particular verse. Now, this could not be done unless the same arrangement of verses was followed by all. In fact, it was simply impossible to commit the whole Qur'ān or any part of it to memory unless there was some arrangement to be followed.

Chronological order could not be observed.

Considerations such as the above clearly show that some arrangement of verses was necessarily followed. Was it the order of revelation? There is clear historical evidence that the Holy Prophet arranged the verses, not according to their chronological order, but according to matter. There were, no doubt, many chapters that were revealed complete, but there were others, particularly the longer ones, that were revealed by portions. Chronologically, verses of one chapter were followed by those of another, and hence in the arrangement of verses in chapters the chronological order could not be observed. The practice of the Holy Prophet in such cases is clearly stated in authentic reports. As 'Uthmān tells us, in a report already quoted: "It was customary with the Messenger of Allāh, when portions of different chapters were revealed to him, that, when any verse was revealed, he called one of the amanuenses and said to him, 'Write these verses in the chapter where such and such verses occur'." From this it appears that the place and chapter for every verse were pointed out by the Holy Prophet himself. With such obviously conclusive testimony before him, no sensible person would deny that the work of the arrangement of the verses in every chapter was done by the Holy Prophet himself, and, as the Holy Qur'ān tells us, it was done under the guidance of Divine revelation, and the arrangement did not follow the chronological order of the revelation of verses.

No change was ever introduced by 'Uthmān or anybody else.

If the arrangement of verses was different from the order of their revelation, the next question that arises is, was the arrangement different from the one upon which the whole Muslim world is now agreed? We must answer this question in the negative. The arrangement of the verses in the Qur'ān we have in our hands is not in accordance with the order of revelation; and hence, if there

is no trace in the history of the Qur'ān of any change having been brought about in the arrangement of its verses at any time, the conclusion that the present arrangement is exactly the same as that followed by the Holy Prophet is absolutely certain and final. Now, it is admitted on all hands, and the truth of the fact has not been questioned by the most hostile critics of Islām, that there has not been the slightest change in any word or letter of the Qur'ān or in the arrangement of its verses or chapters since the time of 'Uthmān, the third Caliph. Our copies of the Qur'ān are admittedly exact copies, true and authentic in every way, of the copies made by 'Uthmān, and hence, to prove that the arrangement of verses and chapters at present is the same as that followed by the Holy Prophet, we have only to show that the collection made by 'Uthmān followed the original arrangement. It can easily be seen that at the time of his making the collection 'Uthmān had no motive for changing the fixed arrangement which up to that time was followed by the Companions of the Holy Prophet. That an arrangement different from the chronological order of revelation was followed by the Holy Prophet and that the same arrangement was followed by the Companions in the learning and teaching of the Holy Qur'ān, has already been shown. That that arrangement was changed by 'Uthmān, there is not the slightest evidence to show. When 'Uthmān began to make copies of the Qur'ān from Abū Bakr's collection, thousands of the Companions of the Holy Prophet were still living, and no change in the arrangement of verses could have remained unnoticed. Moreover, the task of making the required copies was not in the charge of 'Uthmān personally, but in that of several of the best-known Companions, reputed for their knowledge of the Qur'ān, and none of these can be shown to have had any motive for altering the arrangement of verses existing at the time. Nor is there the slightest trace in the historical record of the time that the arrangement was altered. No charge has ever been preferred against 'Uthmān by any sect of Islām or any individual that he had changed the arrangement of the verses in the chapters of the Holy Qur'ān. In fact, the only charge against him is that he disallowed certain readings, and the nature of this charge I will describe later on. But of any alteration in the arrangement of verses there is absolutely no mention whatever in any report, authentic or unauthentic.

Positive evidence that the present arrangement is the Prophet's arrangement.
Besides the negative proof cited above, which conclusively shows that at no time in the history of the Qur'ān was the arrangement of its verses altered in the slightest degree, there is positive evidence leading to the same conclusion. This evidence may be gathered from incidental remarks made in certain authentic reports. Bukhārī relates the following: "The Holy Prophet said, 'Whoever reads the last two verses of the chapter entitled *Baqarah* on any night, they are sufficient for him'" (B. 64:12). This shows that the Holy Prophet himself followed an arrangement which he had made known to his Companions, and they all followed the same arrangement; for if such had not been the case, he could not have referred to two verses as the *last two verses* of a certain chapter. The report unmistakably proves that every verse had a known and fixed place in a chapter, which no reciter of the Qur'ān could change. In the second place, it shows that the verses with which the second chapter now ends were also the concluding verses of that chapter in the time of the Holy Prophet, and therefore the arrangement in the copies of the Qur'ān at present is the same as that followed by the Holy Prophet. In support of this, there is another report in which the concluding verses of the second chapter are identified with the 285th and 286th verses of that chapter as enumerated in the present Translation. According to another ḥadīth, the Holy Prophet told his followers to recite the "first ten verses" of the chapter entitled *The Cave* at the appearance of Antichrist (AD. 36:13). Had there been no arrangement of verses, the "first ten verses" would have been a meaningless phrase, because it would not have indicated any particular ten verses. The last ten verses of the same chapter are also mentioned in this connection according to another report (AD. 36:13). A third speaks of the last ten verses of *Āl 'Imrān*, the third chapter, being recited by the Prophet when he got up for his *tahajjud* prayers (B. 65:iii, 19). All these ḥadīth and numerous other similar ḥadīth show conclusively that the arrangement of verses in the chapters was the Prophet's own work. That this arrangement was the same as that followed now in the copies of the Holy Qur'ān is shown by the absence of any other arrangement in the whole Muslim world.

Arrangement of chapters was also the Prophet's own work.

Conclusive evidence that not only the verses but even the chapters were arranged by the Holy Prophet himself is afforded by the following ḥadīth reported by Anas:

> "I was in the Thaqīf embassy at the time of the Banī Thaqīf's conversion to Islām. . . . The Holy Prophet said to us, 'My portion of the Holy Qur'ān has come to me unexpectedly, so I do not intend to go out, until I finish it'. Thereupon we questioned the Companions of the Holy Prophet, as to how they divided the Qur'ān into portions. They said: 'We observe the following division into portions, three chapters and five chapters, and seven chapters, and nine chapters, and eleven chapters, and thirteen chapters, and all the remaining chapters beginning with *Qāf,* which are termed the *mufaṣṣal*'" (FB. vol. ix, p. 39).

There is good reason to believe the authenticity of this report. It divides the Holy Qur'ān into seven *manzils* or portions, each portion to be recited in one day, and the recital of the whole Qur'ān was thus finished in seven days. From other trustworthy ḥadīth already quoted we learn that the Holy Prophet enjoined his Companions not to finish the Holy Qur'ān in less than seven days; and the two reports, communicated through entirely different channels, corroborating as they do the testimony of each other, testify to each other's truth and authenticity. Moreover, they are both accepted by eminent collectors of Ḥadīth. Now, the ḥadīth quoted above shows clearly an arrangement of chapters, for the division into portions mentioned in this report is observed to this day by the whole Muslim world. The seven portions are called the seven *manzils,* or stages, and they include the same number of chapters as is mentioned in the ḥadīth. The seventh portion begins with the chapter entitled *Qāf,* as stated in the report, and the total number of chapters contained in the first six portions is forty-eight, as in the copies of the Qur'ān in our hands. It should be borne in mind that in our copies, *Qāf* is the fiftieth chapter, the difference arising from the fact that in the report quoted above the *Fātiḥah,* or the Opening Chapter, is not included. This report affords the clearest and most conclusive testimony that the arrangement of the chapters of the Holy Qur'ān was brought about by the Holy Prophet himself, like that of its verses, and their present arrangement does not differ in the least from the original.

It may perhaps be objected that such an arrangement was not possible, as the Qur'ān was not complete till the death of the Holy Prophet, and verses and chapters were constantly being revealed. It is quite true that the Qur'ān could not be said to be complete so long as the recipient of the Divine revelation lived, but this could not interfere with the arrangement of verses and chapters. The word "Qur'ān" signified the part of the Qur'ān that had been revealed. The report quoted above speaks of the conversion to Islām of the *Banī Thaqīf,* which happened in the ninth year of the Hijrah, in which year the chapter entitled *The Immunity,* which is looked upon as the latest in chronological order, was revealed. Hence at the time of which the report speaks, almost the whole of the Qur'ān had been revealed, and the division into seven portions, which speaks of the number of chapters in each portion, has in its favour the authority of the Holy Prophet himself. The verses that were revealed afterwards were put in their proper place in the chapters to which they belonged. Only one short *sūrah* entitled the *Help* (ch. 110) was revealed afterwards and it found its proper place in the arrangement of chapters, without interfering with the enumeration of the chapters as contained in the first six portions, as it is placed in the seventh portion, the number of chapters in which is not specified.

Tālīf Ibn Mas'ūd.

As regards the suggestion that some of the Companions followed a different arrangement of chapters, it is simply a misconception. The best-known of these is what is known as the Tālīf Ibn Mas'ūd or the Combination of Ibn Mas'ūd. The fact is simply this that the Holy Prophet sometimes combined certain shorter chapters in his *tahajjud* prayers and Ibn Mas'ūd had a particular liking for that combination. But it should be borne in mind that in prayers everybody was free, as every Muslim even now is free, to recite any portion of the Qur'ān he

liked. This fredom is expressly given in a ḥadīth which says that the recital of the *Fātiḥah* which is obligatory in every *rak'ah* of the prayer may be followed by the recital of any other portion of the Qur'ān which one chooses (AD. 2 : 134). Similarly, two or more chapters could be read in a single *rak'at,* and in some cases there were combinations of such chapters for recital in prayers. In his *tahajjud* prayers, for instance, the Holy Prophet used sometimes to recite twenty chapters, eighteen of which were termed the *mufaṣṣal,* or the shorter chapters towards the close of the Qur'ān, beginning with *Qāf* (ch. 50) and two *Ḥā Mīms,* or chapters commencing with *Ḥā Mīm.* Thus in each *rak'at* two of these chapters were recited, the total number of *rak'ats* being ten. The Holy Prophet made a peculiar combination which has been preserved to us through Ibn Mas'ūd, and accordingly it is known as the *Tālīf Ibn Mas'ūd* or the Combination of Ibn Mas'ūd. Now, this combination has nothing to do with the arrangement of chapters of the Qur'ān, nor was it followed on all occasions. This peculiar combination was, in fact, preserved and mentioned only on account of peculiarity and departure from the original arrangement of chapters. Even in the public prayers the arrangement of chapters was not necessarily followed. On one occasion the Holy Prophet recited the fourth chapter in the first *rak'at* and the third in the second, and the incident has been preserved to us in a report only because a departure was made in this case from the recognized arrangement (FB, vol. ix, p. 36). Many other instances of the same kind are on record. It is related for instance that the Prophet used to recite the 32nd chapter in the first *rak'at* and the 76th chapter in the second *rak'at* in his morning prayers on Fridays (B. 11 : 10). Another Ḥadīth shows that a person had a special liking for the 112th chapter of the Qur'ān and he recited it in every *rak'at* of prayer, following it with any other chapter that he liked and the Prophet did not object to it (Tr. 43 : 11). The so-called *Tālīf Ibn Mas'ūd* has therefore nothing to do with the arrangement of chapters in the Qur'ān.

Ubayy and 'Alī's Collections.

Two other persons are named as having followed a different arrangement of chapters in the collection of the Qur'ān, Ubayy ibn Ka'b and 'Alī. The case of the former may be disposed of at once, as there is no testimony worth the name which shows that Ubayy followed a different arrangement of chapters. The only thing stated about him is that he placed the fourth chapter before the third. If that was the only difference of arrangement, it is quite immaterial, and the error may, as in the case of Ibn Mas'ūd, be due to the reason that the Holy Prophet himself once recited the fourth chapter before the third in one of his prayers. As regards 'Alī, he is said to have collected the chapters in order of revelation, and there is a report stating that he did not rest after the Holy Prophet's death, until he had collected the Qur'ān, arranging its chapters in chronological order. The authenticity of this report has been questioned, for such a Qur'ān was never handed down to posterity, though 'Alī reigned as Caliph immediately after 'Uthmān. And according to one report 'Alī himself said that "the greatest of men as regards the collection of the Qur'ān is Abū Bakr ; he is the first man who collected the Qur'ān" (FB. vol. ix, p. 10). Besides this, Ubayy and 'Alī were among the men under whose directions the copies of the Qur'ān were written in the time of 'Uthmān and this is conclusive testimony that they considered the present arrangement of chapters as the right one.

Why the Ninth Chapter does not commence with *Bismillāh.*

There is one ḥadīth more which may be mentioned in connection with the arrangement of chapters. Ibn 'Abbās says: "I said to 'Uthmān, 'What led you to put *al-Anfāl* (the eighth chapter) in juxtaposition with *al-Barā'at* (the ninth chapter) and you did not write between them the *Bismillāh,* thus classing these two chapters with the seven long ones ?' 'Uthmān said: 'It was customary with the Holy Prophet, when many chapters were being revealed to him, that when any portion of any chapter was revealed, he sent for one of his amanuenses and told him to write down those verses in the chapter where such and such things were spoken of. Now *al-Anfāl* was one of the chapters revealed early at Madīnah, and *al-Barā'at* was one of the latest revealed chapters, and the subject-matter of these two chapters was identical. Therefore I believed that the latter chapter was a part of the former chapter, and the Holy Prophet died, and he did not distinctly

say to us that it was a part'" (AD. 2:123). This report, far from ascribing the arrangement of chapters to the judgment of 'Uthmān makes it clear that the arrangement of chapters was effected by none other than the Holy Prophet. It shows that, except in the case mentioned in the report, the Holy Prophet had "distinctly" told his Companions where a verse was to be placed in a chapter, or where a chapter was to be placed in the whole. It also shows that the arrangement was effected according to subject-matter by the Holy Prophet himself. In this particular case the Prophet did not distinctly state that the *Barā'at* was a continuation of the *Anfāl*, therefore the two were treated as two chapters, though the *Bismillāh*, not being revealed at the commencement of the *Barā'at*, the latter appeared to be a continuation of the preceding chapter. It only shows how scrupulous the Companions of the Prophet were in carrying out his directions.

4. ABŪ BAKR COLLECTED ORIGINAL WRITTEN MANUSCRIPTS OF THE QUR'ĀN

No written collection of the Qur'ān could be made while the Prophet was alive.

The primary work of the collection of the Holy Qur'ān, as shown above, was done by the Holy Prophet himself under the guidance of Divine revelation. But we have seen that such collection was needed only by those who wished to commit the whole of the Qur'ān to memory and that it was in reciting the whole that the arrangement of chapters was needed. Hence, though the whole Qur'ān existed in a complete and arranged form in the memories of the Companions, yet there did not exist an authorized collection of it in writing. Every verse and every chapter was, no doubt, committed to writing as soon as it was revealed, but so long as the recipient of the Divine revelation lived, the whole could not be written in a single volume. At any time a verse might be revealed which it was necessary to place in the middle of a chapter, and hence the very circumstances of the case made the existence of a complete written volume impossible. Such a collection became, however, a necessity after the death of the Holy Prophet. It was also needed to facilitate reference to and circulation of the Holy Word, and to give it a more permanent form than was secured to it in being consigned to memory. Such was the object with which the collection of the Holy Qur'ān was taken in hand by Abū Bakr.

Need of a written collection first felt by 'Umar.

A reference to the report which describes the circumstances necessitating the collection of the Qur'ān in the time of Abū Bakr confirms the statement made above. The account is given by Zaid ibn Thābit. Soon after the death of the Holy Prophet, Abū Bakr had to send an expedition against Musailimah. A battle was fought at Yamāmah, in which great carnage occurred among the Muslims, and many of the *qurrā'** (reciters) of the Holy Qur'ān lost their lives. 'Umar apprehended great danger, if more reciters fell in some other battle. Straightway he went to Abū Bakr and advised him to give immediate orders for the collection of the written portions of the Qur'ān into one volume. "A great number of the reciters of the Qur'ān have been slain in the battle of Yamāmah," he said, "and I fear that slaughter may again wax hot among the reciters of the Qur'ān in other fields of battle, and that much of the Qur'ān may thus be lost. In my opinion it is absolutely necessary that thou shouldst give immediate orders for the collection of the Qur'ān". "How can I do a thing," replied Abū Bakr, "which the Holy Prophet (peace and the blessings of Allāh be on him!) has not done?" "But," urged 'Umar, "that is the best course under the circumstances." Abū Bakr was convinced, after some discussion, and Zaid was sent for. "Thou wast wont to write the revelations of the Prophet. Search, therefore, for (the written portions of) the Qur'ān and collect it (into one volume)." The first impulse of Zaid was the same as that of Abū Bakr. "How canst thou do a thing," said he, "which the Holy Prophet (peace and the blessings of Allāh be on him!) has not done?" And so heavy did the task appear to him, that at that time he thought: "It would not have been more difficult for me, if I had been asked to remove a mountain". But at last he was prevailed upon, and began the search (B. 65:ix, 20).

* By the *qurrā'*, or reciters, are meant people who had committed the whole Qur'ān to memory.

Written collection was necessary to supplement its preservation in memory.

The report quoted above proves several points. Firstly, it shows that the whole of the Qur'ān was safe in the memories of the reciters who had learned it in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. There was nothing to be feared so long as the reciters were safe, but, if they perished in battles, then, it was feared, certain portions of the Holy Qur'ān might be lost, because the manuscripts of different chapters and verses had not been up to that time collected in one place. Secondly, it appears from it that the collection of the Qur'ān undertaken in the time of Abū Bakr was meant only to supplement its preservation in memory. The apprehensions in the mind of 'Umar arose because he feared that, as many reciters had perished in the battle of Yamāmah, many others might be lost in some other battle. Memory was a good repository, no doubt, but such a collection could at any time be entirely lost by the loss of those who retained the Holy Book in memory. Thirdly, the report proves that up to the time when Abū Bakr took in hand the collection of the written Qur'ān no portion of it had been lost, and that there were still many reciters who had it safe in their memories. To sum up, the report shows that the entire Qur'ān was safe in the memories of the reciters, and that 'Umar only desired to make a collection of the Qur'ān in writing in addition to the collection existing in the memories of the reciters.

We have now to explain what was meant by Abū Bakr when he said that he could not do a thing which had not been done by the Holy Prophet. 'Umar's question related, not to the mere collection of the Qur'ān, but to the collection of the Qur'ān in writing. The complete Qur'ān with a perfect arrangement of its chapters and verses existed in the safest of repositories, the memories of men, but the different writings containing different portions of the Qur'ān had never been collected together and arranged. 'Umar asked Abū Bakr to collect these writings, and this was what the Holy Prophet had not done, and therefore, in the first instance, Abū Bakr refused to do it. But 'Umar's case was based on strong and sound reasoning. The Prophet himself had done both works: he had every portion revealed to him reduced to writing and committed to memory. Abū Bakr was thus convinced of the truth and advisibility of what 'Umar said.

Original manuscripts made in the Prophet's presence were to be collected.

Another point to be elucidated in the report quoted above is the statement of Zaid as to the great difficulty which he thought he was likely to experience in the performance of the task with which he was entrusted. Indeed, he thought that it would not have been more difficult for him if he had been asked to remove a mountain. What were his difficulties? A report narrated by Ibn Abī Dāwūd makes it clear. "'Umar rose and declared that whoever had received anything directly from the Holy Prophet should bring it (to Zaid), and they (i.e., the Companions) used to write it upon papers and tablets and palm-stems in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet, and nothing was accepted from anybody until two witnesses bore testimony" (FB. vol. ix., p. 12). The object of the collection undertaken by Abū Bakr was to gather together what had been written in the presence of the Holy Prophet. Zaid's collection was meant to secure the original writings, and this was the great difficulty to which Zaid alluded. A great portion of the Holy Qur'ān had been revealed at Makkah, and even the portion that was revealed at Madīnah was not wholly in the possession of Zaid. Zaid had to search writings made *in the presence of the Holy Prophet*. He was chosen for the task because he had written the greater portion of the revelation at Madīnah and was presumed to have all those copies safe in his custody. But the task before him was a very difficult one. He had to search all the original writings and then give them an arrangement in accordance with that of the verses and chapters as followed in the recitation of the entire Qur'ān from memory, in obedience to the directions given by the Holy Prophet. That these writings were safe cannot be doubted. Everything relating to Divine revelation was preserved with the utmost care. But the task was no doubt an arduous one, and required hard labour and diligent search; hence Zaid, with a true appreciation of the difficulties before him, said that it was equivalent to the removing of a mountain.

Abū Bakr's orders.

There are clear considerations showing that the service with which Zaid was entrusted was the collection and arrangement of the original manuscripts of the

different verses and chapters made in the presence of the Holy Prophet. The object of Abū Bakr and 'Umar was not to have a volume of the Holy Qur'ān prepared by Zaid writing down the Holy Book as recited by the reciters, but to prepare a book by collecting the original writings. This is the reason that the word *collection* (Ar. *jam'*) is always used in connection with this task, not arrangement or compilation. Hence also the first direction of Abū Bakr to Zaid was to "*search* for the Qur'ān and collect it", and it is easy to see that a search had only to be made for writings. If the object of the new collection for which 'Umar contended were simply to reduce the Qur'ān to writing as recited by the *qurrā'*, sufficient accuracy could have been obtained by gathering together a few reciters, and Zaid had only to write out the Holy Qur'ān as dictated by them and approved by the Companions. But 'Umar's object and Abū Bakr's orders were to gather the original writings which had been written according to the directions of the Holy Prophet himself, and thus to make the accuracy of the text doubly certain.

Zaid made a complete search and collected the original manuscripts.

The report further tells us that Zaid actually followed this course; for, after being convinced that Abū Bakr and 'Umar were right, he thus describes what was done: "Then I began to search for the Qur'ān, and to collect it from palm-stems and tablets of stone and the hearts of men, until I found the concluding verses of the chapter entitled *The Immunity* in the possession of Abū Khuzaimah Anṣārī, and I did not find them in the possession of anybody else" (B. 65: ix, 20). This shows that Zaid had two things to do; to search for the writings and to collect them into a single volume. Now, collection required an arrangement of verses and chapters, for the writings themselves were found in the possession of different men, and they could give no clue to the arrangement that was to be followed. It was for the sake of arrangement that Zaid had to resort to the reciters, and it is to this that the words "hearts of men" refer in the report quoted above. In fact, without the help of reciters the collection of the writings in the form of a complete volume was not possible. It was for this reason that 'Umar urged that the collection should be commenced whilst a large number of reciters were still alive, and it is for this reason that Zaid mentions that in collecting the writings he had to resort to memory, or "the hearts of men", as he puts it. The words do not indicate that he sought for some chapters from writings and for others from memory, for if he could trust memory alone in the case of one part of the revelation, he had no need to search for writings for the rest, and the whole could have been easily written down from the dictation of the reciters.

Abū Bakr's collection in writing accorded with the Prophet's collection as preserved in memory.

The most important question with regard to the collection made under the orders of Abū Bakr is: Did it accord in every respect with the Qur'ān as stored and collected in the memories of the Companions, and as repeated and recited, publicly as well as privately, in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet? There is not the least reason to believe that it did not. In the first place, none of the compilers was actuated by any motive to make any change in the text. The earnest desire of all those engaged in the task was to have a complete and faithful collection of what had been revealed to the Holy Prophet, and Zaid had only undertaken the task after a full appreciation of the difficulties. Secondly, the collection began only six months after the death of the Holy Prophet, while almost all of those who had heard the Qur'ān from his lips were still alive. The Qur'ān, as recited by the Holy Prophet, was still fresh in the memories of the Companions, and any tampering with the text could have been easily brought to notice. Thirdly, there were many among them who could repeat the whole of the Qur'ān from memory. There were others who knew large portions, and these were kept fresh in memory by constant recitation in and apart from prayers. It was impossible that any variation from the text as prevalent in the time of the Holy Prophet should have found its way into the collection in the presence of such men. Fourthly, there were many transcripts of the revelations current among the Companions. And since every verse was written at the time of its revelation, and copies of it were then made by the Companions, there were ample means of testing the accuracy of the collection of Zaid. These writings were in

the possession of different Companions, and so they all had a chance to see for themselves that the collection made by Zaid was a faithful collection of the original writings. Moreover, the writings in the possession of one man could be compared with those in the possession of another, and thus, as in the case of recitation, there was no possibility of any error creeping into the text. Memory and writing thus corroborated the already unimpeachable testimony afforded by each. Fifthly, there is no mention at all in any report whatever that anything was left out of the collection made under the orders of Abū Bakr, or that anything had been added to it which was not considered to be part of the Divine revelation. As Muir says: "We hear of no fragments, sentences, or words omitted by the compilers, nor of any that differed from the received edition. Any such would undoubtedly have been preserved and noticed in those traditional repositories which treasured up the minutest and most trivial acts and sayings of the Prophet."

5. 'UTHMĀN ORDERED FURTHER COPIES FROM ABŪ BAKR'S ORIGINAL COLLECTION

Circumstances which necessitated 'Uthmān's making further copies of the Qur'ān.

As shown above, there are strong and conclusive arguments showing that the collection made under the orders of Abū Bakr agreed in every way, in text as well as in arrangement, with the collection made under the direction of the Holy Prophet himself and preserved in memory by the reciters. The collection thus made remained, we are told, in the possession of Abū Bakr, and after his death in that of 'Umar. After the latter's death, the copy was transferred to the custody of Ḥafṣah, the daughter of 'Umar, and a widow of the Holy Prophet. Thus the collection made by the orders of Abū Bakr came down to the reign of 'Uthmān without any alteration in its text or arrangement. But some circumstances coming to the notice of 'Uthmān, he deemed it necessary to circulate official copies, transcribed by official scribes, and suppress all those made by private persons, either from the collection of Zaid or from other writings still prevalent among them.

The circumstances which made it necessary are thus described:

> "Anas relates that there came to 'Uthmān, Ḥudhaifah who had been fighting with the people of Syria in the conquest of Armenia and with the people of 'Irāq in Azarbaijan, and who was alarmed at their variations in the modes of reading, and he said to 'Uthmān: 'O Commander of the Faithful, stop the people before they differ in the Holy Book as the Jews and the Christians differ in their Scriptures'. So 'Uthmān sent word to Ḥafṣah asking her to send him the Qur'ān in her possession, so that they might make other copies of it and then send the original copy back to her. Thereupon Ḥafṣah sent the copy to 'Uthmān, and he ordered Zaid ibn Thābit and 'Abd Allāh ibn Zubair and Sa'īd ibn al 'Āṣ and 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ḥārith ibn Hishām, and they made copies from the original copy. 'Uthmān also said to the three men who belonged to the Quraish (Zaid only being a Madīnite): 'When you differ with Zaid in anything concerning the Qur'ān, then write it in the language of the Quraish, for it is in their language that it was revealed'. They obeyed these instructions, and when they had made the required number of copies from the original copy, 'Uthmān returned the original to Ḥafṣah and sent to every quarter one of the copies thus made, and ordered all other copies or leaves on which the Qur'ān was written to be burned" (B. 66:3).

The Caliph was told by one of his generals that there were variations in the modes of reading the Qur'ān in such distant parts of the kingdom as Syria and Armenia. No such differences are pointed out to have existed at Madīnah or Makkah, or anywhere within Arabia. It was only in newly converted countries, where Arabic was not spoken, that these differences were noticed. As to the nature of these differences, it is stated in clear words that they were only differences in *qirā'at*, or modes of *reading*. But it was feared that, if nothing was done to put a stop to the *slight* differences existing at that time, they might,

after the lapse of a few generations, develop into serious ones. What the differences exactly were it is difficult to say, but a reference to earlier anecdotes casts some further light upon their nature. We are told in authentic ḥadīth that different modes of reading certain words were allowed by the Holy Prophet himself, and some Companions, unacquainted with the permission, at first severely took to task anybody whom they heard reading any word of the Holy Qur'ān in a different method. The reason for this permission was that people belonging to certain tribes could not pronounce certain words in the ordinary way. These people were allowed to read them in the manner in which they could easily pronounce them. This subject has been more fully discussed further on.

Unnecessary variations in readings were forbidden by 'Umar before.

The permission to read any word in a different method was based on a necessity. Only those could avail themselves of this permission who, on account of their being accustomed from their very childhood to pronounce certain words in a certain manner, could not pronounce them in the pure dialect of the Quraish. But when Islām spread beyond Arabia, the need to read certain words in a different method disappeared, for the foreigners could pronounce a word in the dialect of the Quraish with the same facility as in any other dialect. Some people, however, still taught the Qur'ān adhering to certain readings which were not in accordance with the pure style of the Quraish. Some of them may even have abused the permission and favoured certain readings, though they had no need for them. This evil seems to have spread at Kūfah, and it was to this that Ḥudhaifah referred when he was alarmed at the variation in the readings. This conclusion is corroborated by an anecdote relating to a period earlier than the time of 'Uthmān. 'Umar was told that Ibn Mas'ūd read *'attā ḥīn* instead of *ḥattā ḥīn,* both meaning *till a time* (FB., vol. ix, p. 24). Now, in the dialect of the Hudhail and the Thaqīf, *ḥattā* was pronounced *'attā* (LL under *'attā*). Ibn Mas'ūd did not belong to either of these tribes, but he favoured a peculiar reading which had been permitted only because people belonging to certain tribes could not utter the word otherwise. When 'Umar was told that Ibn Mas'ūd taught *'attā* instead of *ḥattā,* the Caliph wrote to him that the Qur'ān was revealed in the language of the Quraish, and that he should not read it in the dialect of the Hudhail; "so teach it to the people in the language of the Quraish and not in that of the Hudhail" (FB., vol. ix, p. 24).

'Uthmān only followed 'Umar's action.

It was to put a stop once for all to the continuity of such variations that 'Uthmān ordered the burning of all private copies of the Qur'ān. The instructions which 'Uthmān gave to the syndicate of the scribes further supports this conclusion. To the members of the committee who belonged to the Quraish he gave the direction: "When you differ with Zaid in anything concerning the Qur'ān, then write it in the language of the Quraish, for it is in their language that it was revealed" (B. 61:3). This direction, we are told, was obeyed. 'Uthmān then went no further than 'Umar. Only the variations of readings became more pronounced in his time, and became the source of much evil, and he took a step which was calculated to wipe out once for all those variations which 'Umar also wanted to put a stop to. The significance of the differences alluded to in the above report is explained by another report, where the words are: "When you differ with Zaid in an *'arabiyyat* in the *'arabiyyāt* of the Qur'ān" (B. 66:2). The word *'arabiyyat* signifies the Arabic language. The word clearly implies that by difference in the report is meant difference in the method of pronouncing a word in different dialects. Zaid did not belong to the tribe of the Quraish, and hence, when there was a difference in the manner of reading or writing a word, the decision of the Quraish members was to be accepted. The only example of the difference alluded to has been preserved to us in the following anecdote: "And they differed on that occasion as to *tābūt* and *tābuh.* The Quraish members said that it was *tābūt,* and Zaid said that it was *tābuh.* The difference was reported to 'Uthmān, and he directed them to write it *tābūt,* adding that the Qur'ān was revealed in the dialect of the Quraish" (FB., vol. ix, p. 17). This anecdote shows that the differences were really of a very trivial nature, but even such trivial differences had to be removed.

The copies made under 'Uthmān's orders were faithful copies of Abū Bakr's collection.

Did the copies transcribed under the orders of 'Uthmān differ from the original collection made by Zaid in the time of Abū Bakr? The report tells us that, when variations of readings were brought to the notice of 'Uthmān, the only action that he took was to obtain the collection made in the time of Abū Bakr, and to have other copies transcribed from it for circulation. Thus copies of the Qur'ān transcribed under his orders were true and faithful copies of the collection of Abū Bakr, which, as we have seen, was in the custody of Ḥafṣah after the death of 'Umar. Zaid was one of the men who were now called upon to make fresh copies from it. To remove any difference of dialect or variation in the mode of writing certain words that might possibly arise, 'Uthmān gave the orders that the reading of the Quraish should be adopted in preference to any other reading. But the only example of such variation that has been preserved to us in reports is that Zaid read a word as *tābuh* and the Quraish read it as *tābūt,* there being a very slight difference as to the manner in which the final letter of the word was to be written, without there being the slightest change in significance; and such importance was given to this trifling difference that the matter was reported to 'Uthmān for decision. Hence we have conclusive testimony in our hands showing that the copies of the Qur'ān made and circulated under the orders of 'Uthmān were exact and faithful copies of the original collection of Zaid made in the time of Abū Bakr. Had there been any difference between the original and the copies made, it would no doubt have come to light in the long reign of 'Uthmān or in that of 'Alī, when Muslims had been divided into factions, and that copy was still in the possession of Ḥafṣah. The men who murdered the aged and venerable Caliph could not have failed to bring to light any difference that might have existed between the copy of Ḥafṣah and the copies made under his orders. But there is nothing on record to show that any such charge was brought against 'Uthmān even by his murderers.

'Uthmān's action in burning private copies supported by all.

Had the action of 'Uthmān in destroying all private copies of the Holy Qur'ān been arbitrary or unjustifiable, the Companions of the Holy Prophet would never have yielded to it. They, however, not only approved of his action, but also willingly carried out his orders. A request had come to him from distant Syria that he should take immediate steps to put a stop to variations in readings, and this he could not do except by issuing official copies of the Holy Qur'ān as collected by Abū Bakr and suppressing all private copies, which were perhaps not made with sufficient care and might have contained any variation of reading. Nor did 'Uthmān take this step without consulting the Companions. 'Alī is reported to have said: "Do not say aught of 'Uthmān but what is good, for he did not take the step with regard to the suppression of the private copies of the Qur'ān except after consultation with us. He spoke to us, saying, What do you think of this reading? I have been informed that some of them say to others, my reading is better than thine. This, I think, may amount to heresy. We asked him what steps he thought advisable to take in this matter. He replied that he thought it necessary to gather people on one reading. To this we all heartily agreed" (FB., vol. ix, p. 16). Thus it was only after consultation with the general body of the Companions that 'Uthmān took this step.

There are said to have been twelve members in the syndicate which superintended the transcription of the copies. Among these were Zaid, Sa'īd, Ubayy, Anas ibn Mālik, 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Abbās, and others. It appears that originally there were four members only, but that others were added later on, perhaps because a larger number of copies than that imagined at first was required. 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd was the only Companion noted for his knowledge of the Qur'ān, who was not included in the Committee, but his exclusion was not due to any prejudice against him, but to his residence at Kūfah, a considerable distance from Madīnah. 'Uthmān began his work after due consultation with the general body of the Companions, and they approved of his action after its completion. According to a report, Muṣ'ab ibn Sa'd said that he met many Companions when 'Uthmān gave order for burning all private copies of the Qur'ān, and they were all pleased with it, and none of them took exception to it (FB., vol. ix, p. 18). In fact, 'Uthmān's apprehensions and those of the Companions, as the words of

'Alī reported above show, were not due so much to the existence of variations in readings as to the differences resulting from these variations.

The present Quranic Text is exactly as the Prophet left it.

The work of collecting the written manuscripts of the Qur'ān was thus carried out by Abū Bakr after the death of the Holy Prophet, and 'Uthmān did nothing but order the necessary number of copies to be made from Abū Bakr's collection. He acted after consultation with the Companions, securing the services of the most eminent men who were noted for their knowledge of the Qur'ān to carry out and superintend the work of the transcription. The copies made by his orders were recognized as true copies by the whole Muslim world. The bitterest foes of 'Uthmān, who cut off his head while he was reading the Qur'ān and who had the whole power in their hands, never charged him with having tampered with the Qur'ān, though ordering the burning of the copies of the Holy Book was one of their charges against him. Even during the reign of 'Alī, no one pointed out a word which had been omitted by 'Uthmān, and 'Alī is himself stated to have transcribed copies of the Qur'ān from the official copies circulated by 'Uthmān.

The purity of the text of the Qur'ān is thus conclusively demonstrated. The collection of Abū Bakr was a faithful reproduction of the revelation as reduced to writing in the presence of the Holy Prophet, and agreed every whit in text as well as in arrangement, with the Holy Qur'ān as preserved in the memories of the Companions; the copies circulated by 'Uthmān were true and faithful copies of Abū Bakr's collection, and these copies have admittedly remained unaltered through the thirteen hundred years that have since elapsed.

6. DIFFERENCES OF READINGS

The significance of differences of readings.

Alleged differences of readings are said to interfere with the purity of the Quranic text in two ways. It is alleged that certain readings which had been permitted by the Holy Prophet were suppressed by 'Uthmān, and thus with their loss a portion of the original text was lost. Another objection is that the variety of readings existing at the present time makes it difficult to decide with any degree of certainty as to which is the original or the authentic reading. These objections really arise out of a misconception of the significance of the word "reading" when used with regard to the Quranic text, and out of confusion between the meanings of *ḥarf* and *qirā'at* when used to denote "reading", and accordingly, it is necessary to inquire first into the true nature of the differences of readings.

In the first place it should be borne in mind that the Arabic word used in the reports to denote *reading* is *ḥarf*. This word means "a dialect, an idiom or a mode of expression, peculiar to certain of the Arabs" (LL). It is this meaning which the word conveys in the reports speaking of the variety of readings, as Lane himself adds: "So in the saying of Muhammad, *the Qur'ān has been revealed according to seven dialects*, of the dialects of the Arabs: or this means, according to seven modes or manners of reading: whence (you say) such a one reads in the manner of reading of Ibn Mas'ūd". These quotations would show that differences spoken of in certain reports were only those arising from the variations of the dialects, which necessitated the reading or expressing of certain words in a different manner by various tribes.

Hadīth on differences of readings.

According to the Ḥadīth, the permission to read the Qur'ān in other dialects was granted when many of the Arabian tribes had embraced Islām, i.e., towards the close of the Holy Prophet's ministry. Conclusive testimony on this point is afforded by B. 66:5, according to which 'Umar was surprised by Hishām, who accepted Islām after the conquest of Makkah, reading certain words in a different manner. And it is a fact that more than nine-tenths of the Qur'ān had been revealed before the conquest of Makkah, and the whole of that was revealed in the language of the Quraish. The differences of the readings were only such as were naturally necessitated by the influx into Islām of unlearned tribes, who spoke an idiom which was Arabic for all practical purposes, but which in the pronunciation of certain words differed slightly from the pure idiom of the Quraish. Examples of these differences have already been given. The Quraish say *ḥattā* (meaning *until*), while the Hudhail pronounce the same word as *'attā*, there being no difference in the significance of the two words. Other variations of the same

kind are *ti'lamūn* instead of *ta'lamūn,* as the tribe of Asad read it; *yāsin* instead of *āsin* in 47 : 15; the reading of *hamzah* (one of the letters of the alphabet), by the Tamīm where the Quraish did not read it; and so on (FB., vol. ix, p. 25).

In support of the above I may quote the following: "The Holy Qur'ān was first revealed in the language of the Quraish and such of the Arabs as were in their neighbourhood and spoke the chaste Arabic idiom; then it was permitted to the other Arab tribes to read it in their own idioms, to the use of which they were habituated from their childhood and they differed (from the pure idiom) in the pronunciation of certain words and the vowel-points. Therefore none of them was compelled to leave his own idiom for that of another, because of the difficulty which they would have experienced in doing so, and because of their great regard for their own idioms, so that they might easily understand the significance of what they read. All this was subject to the condition that there should be no change in the significance" (FB., vol. ix, p. 24).

Reports dealing with this subject point out the reason for which the permission was granted, and in each case we find the reason to be in accordance with what is stated above. For instance, according to one of the reports, the Holy Prophet asked the angel to "make it easy" for his people, showing that they experienced a difficulty in reading it otherwise (Ms. 6:13, *Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān*). According to another, he is made to say that his people "could not bear it" (Ms. 6:13) — in other words, all the Arab tribes could not read in one dialect. According to a third, he pleads for his people, saying that they were unlearned, and among them were the old woman and the old man, and the boy and the girl, and the man who had never learned to read a book (Tr. Abwāb *al-qirā'āt*). Hence they were permitted to read certain words according to their own dialects. We have also one report ending with the words, *therefore read it in the manner in which you find it easy to do so* (B. 66:5), which shows that the permission to read the Qur'ān in dialects other than that of the Quraish was meant to afford facility to certain people.

To what extent the various dialects in which the recital of the Qur'ān was permitted differed from each other is not a question of much importance, but there seems to be no doubt, as many instances preserved in reports show, that the variations were very slight and generally very unimportant. While holding this on the basis of historical evidence, so far as access can be had to it, we have no reason for denying that in certain cases a word of one dialect may have been allowed to be expressed by its equivalent in another dialect, where the latter dialect did not possess the original word. This is what is meant when it is said in certain reports that the expression of meaning by a synonymous word was allowed in certain cases. Such a case is exemplified in one report by the use of any of the words *ta'āli, halumma* and *aqbil,* all meaning "come". This is not an actual case of variation of reading in the Holy Qur'ān but the example is only given to show the nature of variation in such cases. Other variations of reading in these dialects were of a much more insignificant nature, and related to certain changes in vowel-points. Thus the meaning was in no case altered. There were differences in the utterance of certain words, but there was no difference at all in the significance conveyed.

Variations of reading never formed part of the Text.

It must be further borne in mind that the variations at no time formed a part of the text of the Holy Qur'ān, nor were they ever meant for permanent retention. The necessity which had given rise to them was of a purely local and temporary nature. They did not in any way alter the text of the Holy Qur'ān as it was originally revealed. The Holy Prophet himself never recited in his public prayers any portion of the Holy Qur'ān in any dialect other than that of the Quraish, for if he had done so, men like 'Umar and Ubayy, who said their daily prayers with the Holy Prophet, would not have found fault with dialectic variations, as they are reported to have done. The practice of the Holy Prophet, therefore, shows that the permission to use certain dialectic variations did not alter the original text of the Holy Qur'ān in the slightest degree. Another evidence that the Holy Prophet intended only the dialect of the Quraish to be retained for permanent use, and permitted the variations only for a temporary need, is to be met with in the circumstance that the writing of the Qur'ān, even after the permission as to dialectic variations, suffered no change.

No variation is met with in any copy of the Qur'ān.

We may now consider the second objection. It is alleged that the existence of certain readings, which are to be met with in certain ḥadīth and commentaries, makes it uncertain which is the original and the revealed text. Now, whatever may be the nature of the readings referred to above, the one consideration which settles the absolute purity of the text of the Holy Qur'ān is that no different text is met with in any copy of the Holy Qur'ān, anywhere in the world. During all the ages and in all countries, with all the differences, there has been only one text. Not a single one of the alleged various readings has ever replaced any word of the current text anywhere in the Muslim world. There are Muslim countries situated farthest off from each other, there are Muslims who have been separated from each other for long ages, there are Muslim sects bearing the utmost enmity towards each other, yet they have always followed the same text of the Holy Qur'ān, and not a single copy can be produced with a varying text. This certainly is not due to the exercise of any temporal authority for there has never been a single authority over the whole Muslim world. Moreover, if such authority could not or did not interfere with the recital of these readings, there is no reason to believe that it could or did interfere with their writing in the text. Therefore, if the men to whom those readings are attributed had given them the same value as the critics now give, they would certainly have introduced them into their private copies and replaced the text by those readings. But there does not exist a single copy varying from the received edition in the slightest degree. I have dealt with this subject in a separate book, *The Collection and Arrangement of the Holy Qur'ān*, and for further information on the differences of readings, as also regarding certain allegations against the purity of the Quranic text, I would refer the reader to that volume. I may, however, here add that, even if a certain person expressed views which were opposed to the collective testimony of all the Companions, it was the collective testimony that was to be accepted. 'Uthmān, as already shown, worked with the consent of the general body of the Companions. Even if it be admitted for the sake of argument that he suppressed anything, it could not have remained hidden after him. Even the men who murdered 'Uthmān did not interfere with the circulation of 'Uthmān's copy of the Holy Qur'ān, nor did they put into circulation a different edition or a new chapter or even a single new verse. They never pointed out that a single word in the Divine revelation had been changed by 'Uthmān. When 'Uthmān's power ceased to exist or when he himself was murdered in cold blood by the insurgents, what hindrance was there then to the circulation of parts which 'Uthmān might have suppressed ? The end of 'Uthmān's reign would have seen the circulation of all those parts which, it is alleged, had been suppressed by him, and such parts would no doubt have then been embodied in the copies of the Qur'ān. But history shows no trace of any such happening. With all their differences, different men and different sects have always used one and the same copy of the Qur'ān.

There is only one Qur'ān in the whole Muslim world.

It is sometimes asserted that the Shī'ahs regard the Qur'ān as incomplete. The following remarks from Muir's *Life of Muḥammad*, which has raised and answered this question, will be a sufficient answer: "Assuming, then, that we possess unchanged the text of 'Uthman's recension, it remains to inquire whether the text was an honest reproduction of Zaid's, with the simple reconcilement of unimportant variations. There is the fullest ground for believing that it was so. No early or trustworthy tradition throws suspicions upon 'Uthman of tampering with the Qur'ān in order to support his own claims. The Shiahs, indeed, of later times pretend that 'Uthman left out certain *surahs* or passages which favoured 'Ali. But this is incredible. When 'Uthman's edition was prepared, no open breach had taken place between the Omeyyads and the Alyites. The unity of Islam was still unthreatened. 'Ali's pretensions were as yet undeveloped. No sufficient object can, therefore, be assigned for the perpetration by 'Uthman of an offence which Muslims would have regarded as one of the blackest dye. Again, at the time of the recension, there were still multitudes alive who had learnt the Qur'ān by heart as they had heard it originally delivered ; and copies of any passages favouring 'Ali, if any such passages ever existed, must have been in the hands of his numerous adherents, both of which sources would have proved an effectual check upon any attempt at suppression. Further, the party of 'Ali, immediately on 'Uthman's death, assumed an independent attitude, and raised him to the Caliphate. Is it conceivable

that, when thus arrived at power, they would have tolerated a mutilated Qur'an, mutilated expressly to destroy their leader's claim ? Yet we find that they continued to use the same Qur'an as their opponents and raised no shadow of an objection against it."

To this I would add a few words from a Shī'ah commentator of the Holy Qur'ān, Mullā Muḥsin, who says in his *Tafsīr Ṣāfī*: "Certain men from among us and the Ḥashwīyah masses have reported that the Qur'ān has suffered loss and alteration. But the true belief of our friends is against this, and such is the belief of the vast majority. For the Qur'ān is a miracle of the Holy Prophet and the source of all knowledge relating to law and all religious injunctions, and the learned Muslims have taken the utmost pains for its protection, so that there is nothing relating to its vowel-points, its recital, its letters and its verses, which they do not know. With such strong measures of protection and such faithful preservation of the Holy Book (by the Muslims) it cannot be supposed that any alteration or loss could take place" (p. 14).

The learned author goes on to say: "Surely the Qur'ān was collected and arranged in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet exactly as it is in our hands. This is inferred from the fact that the Qur'ān was even then recited and committed to memory as a whole, and there was a body of the Companions whose duty it was to commit it to memory. It was also recited and read out as a whole to the Holy Prophet (by the angel)."

Dr. Mingana's Leaves.

Before concluding this subject, I may make a few remarks about what Dr. Mingana considers a great discovery — *Leaves from three Ancient Qur'āns.* These are certain leaves, none of them being a complete copy of the Qur'ān or even a copy of any substantial portion of the Qur'ān, said to have been brought by Dr. Agnes Lewis Mingana from a commercial antiquary, containing some passages of the Qur'ān. When these passages were written and who wrote them are questions which Dr. Mingana has not answered. All statements to the effect that they are pre-'Uthmānic, or copies made from pre-'Uthmānic manuscripts, are simply conjectures, boldly put forward as "facts". And what are the differences that are shown to exist ? That certain words are written in a different style of writing; that there are some variants (three in all); that there are three omissions, *huwa, kāffah* and *mā-lakum* in three places, and that there is one addition, the word *Allāh*

The bold assertion is made on this basis that 'Uthmān changed the text of the Qur'ān, while even a cursory glance at these "Leaves" shows them to be an additional proof that the text of the Holy Qur'ān is one and the same and has always remained the same, for these leaves do not show the omission, addition or variation of any verse or part of a verse, or any change in the order of chapters or in the order of the verses contained in a chapter, nor do they show that any verse was misplaced. Substantially, the portions of the Qur'ān as found in these manuscripts are the same as in the received text. If there are any differences, they are such as would necessarily arise in the transcription of copies by inexperienced hands. Mistakes would necessarily occur in making transcriptions from other copies and it was to guard against such mistakes that 'Uthmān ordered the official copies to be prepared, so that all copies made should be compared with them and mistakes arising in the transcription should thus be corrected. It is clear that the very few mistakes discovered in these *Leaves* are the mistakes of transcription by inexperienced hands, as the text given by Dr. Mingana clearly shows; for instance writing ضل instead of ضلل ; اعرضن instead of اعرض ; قرن instead of قران ; ينللوا instead of ينالوا ; اذنا instead of اذاننا ; بركنا instead of بَرَكْنَا , and so on. These are clear mistakes of transcription, or perhaps sometimes a small vowel-point or part of a letter was obliterated by the rubbing-off process. It is rather amusing to find the purity of the text of the Holy Qur'ān contested, on the basis of stray leaves, containing unknown and uncultured writing, once obliterated to give place to quite another writing. The alleged variations, it may be said without entering into details, are partly due to a slip of the pen of the scribe, partly to the rubbing-off of the vellum for a second writing, partly to cross super-impositions, and partly, perhaps, to doubtful reading on the part of Dr. Mingana.

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*All references given without an indication of the name are to the Holy Qur'ān when there are two figures separated by a colon, the first figure indicating the number of the Chapter and the second the number of verse in that Chapter; when there is a single figure without an indication of the name, the reference is to the number of the footnote. In the case of Ḥadīth collections the first figure represents the number of *Kitāb* and the second the number of *bāb*, except in B. *Kitāb al-Tafsīr* when a number in Roman is added to show the number of the sūrah. In the case of Ḥadīth collections not divided into *Kitābs* and *bābs*, the first number in Roman refers to the volume and the second to the page; so also in the case of historical and other books. In the case of Lexicons, the reference will be met with under the root of the word. In the case of Commentaries of the Holy Qur'ān the reference given will be met with in the verse under discussion, unless otherwise indicated.

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Tr - - Al-Jāmi' (Ḥadīth), by Abū 'Īsā Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā Tirmidhī.

Zj - - - Zajjāj (Grammarian).

TRANSLITERATION OF ARABIC WORDS

In this book I have adopted the most recent rules of transliteration recognized by European Orientalists, with very slight variation, as explained below, but no transliteration can exactly express the vocalic differences of two languages, and the Roman characters in which Arabic words and phrases have been spelt give the sound of the original only approximately. Besides the inability of the characters of one language to represent the exact pronunciation of the words of another, there is this additional difficulty in romanizing Arabic words that in certain combinations the pronunciation does not follow the written characters; for example, al-Raḥmān is pronounced ar-Raḥmān, the sound of *l* merging in that of the next following letter, r. To this category belong all the letters which are known by the name of *al-ḥurūf al-S̲h̲amsiyyah* (lit., *solar letters*), and they are as follows: tā, t̲h̲ā, dāl, d̲h̲āl, rā, zā, sīn, s̲h̲īn, ṣād, ḍād, ṭā, ẓā, lām, nūn (dentals, sibilants, and liquids). Whenever a word beginning with one of these letters has the prefix *al* (representing the article *the*), the lām is passed over in pronunciation and assimiliated to the following consonant; in the case of all other letters, *al* is pronounced fully. This merging of one letter in another occurs also in certain other cases, for which a grammar of the Arabic language should be referred to.

I have represented the ة (*tā*), added either at the end of a noun for *ta'nīt̲h̲* — *to make a noun feminine* or *to attach to it the sign of the feminine gender* — as in *Makkat* or *Makkah* or *Madīnat* or *Madīnah*, or at the end of a verb to make it a *maṣdar* or infinitive noun, as in *raḥmat* or *raḥmah* either by *t* or by *h*, the latter being the proper way of sounding it when there is a *waqf* or a stop.

The system adopted is as follows:

CONSONANTS

Arabic Letter	*Sound*	*Represented by*
hamzah -	(sounds like *h* in *hour* — a sort of catch in the voice) -	'
bā - -	(same as *b*) - - - - - - -	b
tā - -	(the Italian dental, softer than *t*) - - - -	t
t̲h̲ā -	(between *th* in *thing* and *s*) - - - - -	t̲h̲
jīm -	(like *g* in *gem*) - - - - - -	j*
ḥā - -	(very sharp but smooth guttural aspirate) - - -	ḥ
k̲h̲ā -	(like *ch* in the Scotch word *loch*) - - - -	k̲h̲
dāl - -	(Italian dental, softer than *d*) - - - -	d
d̲h̲āl -	(sounds between *z* and *th* in *that*) - - - -	d̲h̲
rā - -	(same as *r*) - - - - - - -	r

* European Orientalists represent it by *dj*, but I see no reason for adding *d*, as the sound is exactly like *j*.

Arabic Letter	*Sound*	*Represented by*
zā	(same as *z*)	z
sīn	(same as *s*)	s
shīn	(same as *sh* in *she*)	sh
ṣād	(strongly articulated *s*, like *ss* in *hiss*)	ṣ
ḍād	(aspirated *d*, between *d* and *z*)	ḍ
ṭā	(strongly articulated palatal *t*)	ṭ
ẓā	(strongly articulated palatal *z*)	ẓ
'ain	(somewhat like a strong guttural *hamzah*, not a mere vowel)	
ghain	(guttural *g*, but soft)	gh
fā	(same as *f*)	f
qāf	(strongly articulated guttural *k*)	q†
kāf	(same as *k*)	k
lām	(same as *l*)	l
mīm	(same as *m*)	m
nūn	(same as *n*)	n
hā	(same as *h*)	h
wāw	(same as *w*)	w
yā	(same as *y*)	y

† European Orientalists represent it by *ḳ*, perhaps owing to the fact that in the English language *q* requires a *u* after it.

VOWELS

The vowels are represented as follows:

Short vowels:

ʼ	fatḥah, as *u* in tub	a
ˏ	kasrah, as *i* in pin	i
ʼ	dammah, as *u* in pull	u

Long vowels:

ı	long fatḥah, as *a* in father	ā
ı	long kasrah, as *ee* in deep	ī
ʻ	long ḍammah, as *oo* in moot	ū
	fatḥah before wāw	au
	fatḥah before yā	ai

Tanwīn ″ ″ ‹› is represented by *an, in, un,* respectively. The short and long vowels at the end of a word are shown as parts of the words, as *qāla* where the final *a* stands for the *fatḥah* on *lām*, but the tanwīn is shown as a separate syllable, as *Muḥammad-in*.

PROPER NAMES

Biblical proper names are not transliterated, but their Biblical form is adopted ; other names are transliterated according to the rules of transliteration. Hence the reader will notice a change in such names as *Mecca* which should be written as *Makkah, Medina* which should be written as *Madīnah, Yemen* which should be written as *Yaman*, and so on.

The following list shows the Biblical names and their Arabic equivalents:

Biblical Names	*Arabic Form*
Aaron	Hārūn
Abraham	Ibrāhīm
Adam	Ādam
Amran	'Imrān
Babel	Bābil
David	Dāwūd
Egypt	Miṣr
Elias	Ilyās
Ezra	'Uzair
Elisha	Al-Yasha'a
Gabriel	Jibrīl
Gog	Ya'jūj
Goliath	Jālūt
Gospel	Injīl
Isaac	Isḥāq
Ishmael	Ismā'īl
Jacob	Ya'qūb
Jesus	'Īsā
Jew	Yahūdī
Job	Ayyūb
John	Yaḥyā
Jonah	Yūnus
Korah	Qārūn
Lot	Lūṭ
Magog	Ma'jūj
Mary	Maryam
Michael	Mīkāl
Moses	Mūsā
Noah	Nūḥ
Pharaoh	Fir'aun
Saul	Ṭālūt
Sheba	Saba'
Solomon	Sulaimān
Torah	Taurāt
Zacharias	Zakariyyā

Important Points for reciting the Holy Qur'ān

There are some peculiarities in the writing of the Holy Qur'ān which every reader of the Holy Book should bear in mind. The transcription of the Holy Qur'ān as it was written by the scribes in the Prophet's time has in fact been preserved intact, and both the writing and the recitation are the same throughout the Muslim world. For instance, the word *qāla* is generally and on hundreds of occasions written with an *alif* following *qaf* as قَالَ but in four places it is written with an *alif* over the *qāf* as قٰلَ (21 : 4, 112 ; 23 : 112, 114). Similarly the word *bāraka* and *bāraknā*, etc., are always written with an *alif* over *bā* as بٰرَكَ and بٰرَكْنَا. It was this transcription which led Dr. Mingana to misread *bāraknā* as *baraknā* with quite a different meaning, as he has done in his *Leaves From Three Ancient Qur'āns*. It is some such peculiarities of transcription which I want to bring to the reciter's notice.

1. An extra *alif* is sometimes written where *lām* as indicating *certainty* is followed by an *alif* which is a part of the next word. In such cases a novice may read *la* (meaning *certainly*) as *lā*, meaning *not*. The following examples should be noted: *

(a) In 3 : 157 occur the words لا الى الله (*la il-Allāh*) where the extra *alif* connected with *lām* is not read. Thus the phrase is read as *la il-Allāh*, meaning *certainly to Allāh*, not as *lā il-Allāh*, which would mean *not to Allāh*.

(b) 3 : 158 is a similar case. The words are written as لا انفضوا where the *lām* is connected with the *nūn* which has a *jazm* over it, and the word is read as *la-nfaḍḍū*, which means *they would certainly have dispersed*. But in this case there is no likelihood of a mistake being made as the *lām* would naturally be connected to the *nūn* of the next word bearing a *jazm*.

(c) In 3 : 166 occur the words لَّا اتَّبَعْنٰكُمْ, the *lām* indicating *certainty* is connected with the *tā* (bearing *tashdīd*) and the two *alifs* are not read as in (b).

(d) In 9 : 47 occur the words لَا اَوْضَعُوْا which are read as *la-auḍa'ū*, the

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* Sometimes the *alif* connected with *lām* bears the vowel-point, sometimes the other *alif* — the former is preferable as there is no chance of misreading in this case.

alif connected with *lām* is read as it bears a *fatḥah* while the other *alif* forming part of *auḍa'ū* is written but is not read as it bears no vowel-point.

(e) In 27:21 occur the words لَا۟اَذْبَحَنَّهٗٓ meaning *surely I will slay him*, and the case is similar to the last-mentioned.

(f) In 37:68 occur the words لَا۟اِلَى الْجَحِيْمِ which mean *surely to hell*, the *alif* connected with *lām* bearing a *kasrah* beneath it, while an extra *alif* is written being part of *ilā* but is not read. Thus the words لَا۟اِلَى الْجَحِيْمِ are read, as *la ila-l-Jaḥīm*, not as *lā ila-l-Jaḥīm*.

(g) In 59:13 occur the words لَا۟اَنْتُمْ which should be read as *la-antum*, meaning *certainly you*, the *alif* connected with *lām* is read as it bears a *fatḥah*, but the *alif* forming part of *antum* is not pronounced in reading as it bears no vowel-point.

2. Other examples where the *alif* is not read are the following:

(a) The word انا meaning *I*, is throughout the Holy Qur'ān written with an *alif* following nūn, and should according to the ordinary rules be read as *anā*, but it is always read as *ana*.

(b) In one place (18:38) *ana* is connected with *Lākin* and is written لٰكِنَّا۠ which according to the ordinary rules should be read as *lākinnā*, but as it is a combination of *lākin* and *ana*, it is read as *lākinna*.

(c) In 11:68, 25:38, 29:38 and 53:51, an extra *alif* is added to the word ثَمُوْدَ which is written as ثَمُوْدَا۟ but is read as *T̲h̲amūda*.

(d) An *alif* in some cases follows the Aorist, second and third person, plural, as also in the imperative, in Arabic, and is not read, but in the Holy Qur'ān it is written also in some other cases and is not read as in تَبُوْٓاَ۟ (5:29), *tabū'a*.

(e) The words مَلَا۟ئِهٖ and مَلَا۟ئِهِمْ are always written with an extra *alif* which may according to the ordinary rules be read as *malā' i-hī* and *malā' i-him* but are read as *mala' i-hī* and *mala' i-him*.

(f) In 76:4 occurs the word سَلٰسِلَا۟ which according to the rules may be read as *salāsilā*, but it is read as *salāsila*, the final *alif* not being read. In the same chapter occurs the word قَوَارِيْرَا۟ in two places (76:15, 16), in which too the final *alif* is not read, and it is read as *qawārīra*, not as *qawārīrā*.

(g) Other examples of an *alif* being written and not being read are اَفَا۟ئِنْ (as in 3:143, etc.), which is read as *afa-in*, not *afā-in*, and نَبَا۟ئِ (as in 6:34) which is read *naba'*, not as *nabā'*.

3. There is only one place in the Holy Qur'ān where the long *kasrah* — an *alif* under a letter — is written, but a departure is made in reading it according to ordinary rules. This is the word مَجْرٖىهَا in 11:41 which is not read as *majrī-hā* but as *majre-hā*, the long *kasrah* being pronounced as *ai* in *faith* or what is known *yā majhūl* in Persian and Urdu.

CONTENTS

FOREWORD - - - - - - - - - - - i-iv

PREFACE - - - - - - - - - - - - v-x

INTRODUCTION: - - - - - - - - - - - xi-

I. *Holy Qur'ān and its Divisions:*

Al-Qur'ān. Other names and Epithets. Divisions. Arranged simultaneously with Revelation. Makkan and Madīnan Revelation. Chronological order. Makkan and Madīnan Revelations intermingled in arrangement. Cursory view of the present arrangement - - xi-xv

II. *World's Greatest Spiritual Force:*

Object to bring humanity to perfection. Spiritual force which will ultimately overcome all. Unparalleled transformation wrought by the Qur'ān. Two other unique characteristics. Style and Diction - - xvi-xix

III. *Relation to Earlier Scriptures:*

Previous Scriptures recognized. Guardian of previous Scriptures. Qur'ān as a judge in existing differences. Explains all obscurities. Perfect Revelation of Divine Will. A correct history - - - xx, xxi

IV. *Liberal View of Other Religions:*

Faith in all prophets. No compulsion in Religion. Why fighting was allowed. Relations of friendship with others. No punishment for apostasy xxii-xxiv

V. *Life After Death:*

Death a stage in Evolution. Connection between the two Lives. Resurrection or the Hour. Resurrection in this Life. The Balance. Book of Deeds. Paradise: Paradise and Hell begin in this life. Highest bliss of Paradise. Paradise is meant for further advancement. Hell is meant for purification. Punishment of hell not everlasting - - - - xxv-xxxi

VI. *The Position of Woman:*

Spiritually woman raised to the position of man. Woman is equal of man in rights of property. Polygamy. Seclusion - - xxxii-xxxiv

VII. *Purity of the Qurānic Text:*

1. Every portion of the Holy Qur'ān was written as it was revealed. Writing known at Makkah. Internal evidence as to writing of Qur'ān. Historical evidence. Prophet's Scribes. Abū Bakr's collection - xxxv-xxxix
2. All Revelation was committed to memory. Memory safest of repositories with Arabs. Stress laid by Prophet on learning and teaching of Qur'ān. Greater knowledge of Qur'ān entitled a person to be Imām. Prophet recited Qur'ān frequently. Limits on recital of Qur'ān. Persons who knew whole Qur'ān by heart. Recital of Qur'ān necessary in public and private prayers - xxxix-xliii
3. Arrangement of chapters and verses was Prophet's own work: Internal evidence. Historical evidence. Without a known order of verses Qur'ān could not be committed to memory. Chronological order could not be observed. No change introduced by 'Uthmān

or anybody else. Positive evidence that present arrangement is the Prophet's. Arrangement of chapters also Prophet's work. Tālīf ibn Mas'ūd. Ubayy and 'Alī's Collections. Why 9th chapter does not commence with *Bismillāh* - - - xliii-l

4. Abū Bakr collected original written manuscripts of the Qur'ān: Written collection could not be made during the Prophet's life. Need first felt by 'Umar. Was necessary to supplement its preservation in memory. Original manuscripts made in Prophet's presence were to be collected. Abū Bakr's orders. Zaid searched and collected complete original manuscripts. Abū Bakr's collection accorded with Prophet's collection as preserved in memory - - - - l-liii

5. 'Uthmān ordered further copies from Abū Bakr's original collection: Circumstances which necessitated 'Uthmān's making further copies. Unnecessary variations in readings were forbidden by 'Umar first. 'Uthmān followed 'Umar's action. Copies made under 'Uthmān's orders were faithful copies of Abū Bakr's collection. 'Uthmān's action in burning private copies supported by all. Present Quranic text is exactly as the Prophet left it - liii-lvi

6. Differences of Readings: Significance of differences of readings. Ḥadīth on differences of readings. Variations of reading never formed part of Text. No variation in any copy of Qur'ān. Only one Qur'ān in the whole Muslim world. Dr. Mingana's Leaves - - lvi-lix

LIST OF AUTHORITIES AND KEY TO REFERENCES - - lx

TRANSLITERATION OF ARABIC WORDS - - - - - - lxii

PROPER NAMES - - - - - - - - - - lxiv

IMPORTANT POINTS FOR RECITING THE HOLY QUR'ĀN - lxv

CONTENTS OF THE HOLY BOOK - - - - - - lxix-lxxvi

THE HOLY QUR'ĀN - - - - - - - - 1-1222

ARABIC WORDS AND PHRASES - - - - - - - 1223-1229

INDEX - - - - - - - - - - - - 1230-1254

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF SURAHS - - - - - - 1255, 1256

CONTENTS OF THE HOLY BOOK

Section *Page*

Part I - - - - - - 1

Ch. 1.—Al-Fātiḥah : THE OPENING - - - 1-5

Ch. 2.—Al-Baqarah : THE COW - - - - - 6

1. Fundamental Principles of Islām - - - - - 7
2. Lip-profession - - - 10
3. Divine Unity - - - 13
4. Greatness of Man - - 17
5. Israelite Prophecies fulfilled 22
6. Divine favours on Israel - 24
7. Divine favours on Israel - 29
8. Israelites' Degeneration - 31
9. Grow in hard heartedness - 34
10. Violation of Covenant - - 38
11. Reject the Prophet - - 40
12. Enmity to the Prophet - - 43
13. Previous Scriptures abrogated 46
14. Perfect guidance only in Islām - - - - - 49
15. Covenant with Abraham - 53
16. Religion of Abraham - - 57

Part II - - - - - - 60

17. Ka'bah — Spiritual Centre - 60
18. Ka'bah — Spiritual Centre - 63
19. Hard Trials establish Truth - 65
20. Unity must prevail - - 68
21. Prohibited Foods - - 69
22. Retaliation and Bequests - 71
23. Fasting - - - - - 75
24. Fighting in Defence - - 80
25. The Pilgrimage - - - 84
26. Trials and Tribulations - 88
27. Miscellaneous Questions - 91
28. Divorce - - - - - 94
29. Divorce - - - - - 98
30. Remarriage - - - 100
31. Provision for Divorced Women and Widows - 102
32. Fighting for Truth - - 105
33. Fighting for Truth - - 108

Part III - - - - - - 109

34. No Compulsion in Religion 110
35. Dead Nations' Revival - 112
36. Spending for Truth - - 115
37. Spending for Truth - - 117
38. Usury Prohibited - - 119
39. Contracts and Evidence - 122
40. Muslims' Victory Sure - - 124

Ch. 3.—Āl-'Imrān : THE FAMILY OF AMRAN 127

1. Rule of Interpretation - 128
2. Unity—Basis of all Religions 131
3. Kingdom granted to another People - - - - 135
4. Last Members of a Chosen Race - - - - 137
5. Birth and Ministry of Jesus 141
6. Jesus Cleared of False Charges - - - 147
7. Controversy with Jews and Christians - - - 149
8. Devices against Islām - - 151
9. Covenant of Prophets - - 154

Part IV - - - - - - 156

10. Ever-living testimony to Islām - - - - - 156
11. Muslims exhorted to remain united - - - - 159
12. Relations of Jews with Muslims - - - 161
13. Battle of Uḥud - - - 163
14. Success meant for Muslims - 166
15. Perseverance in Sufferings - 168
16. Causes of Misfortune in Uḥud Battle - - - 169
17. Uḥud made a distinction - 173
18. No Gain to Enemy - - 176
19. Carpings of People of Book 178
20. Ultimate Triumph of Faithful - - - - - 180

Ch. 4.—Al-Nisā' : THE WOMEN - - - 184

1. Orphans' Guardians - - 186
2. Law of Inheritance - - 190
3. Treatment of Women - - 193
4. Women who may be married 195

Section	Page
Part V - - - - - -	196
5. Women's Rights over their Earnings - - -	197
6. Disagreement of Husband and Wife - - -	199
7. Purification of Soul - -	202
8. Kingdom for Abraham's Descendants - - -	205
9. Prophet must be obeyed -	208
10. Believers must defend - -	210
11. Hypocrites' Attitude - -	211
12. How to deal with Hypocrites	214
13. Murderer of a Muslim -	216
14. Muslims among enemy -	217
15. Prayer when Fighting - -	218
16. Hypocrites are Dishonest -	220
17. Secret Counsels of Hypocrites	221
18. Idolatry condemned - -	222
19. Equitable Dealings - -	224
20. Hypocrisy Condemned -	226
21. End of Hypocrites - -	228
Part VI - - - - - -	229
22. The Transgressions of the Jews - - - - -	230
23. Previous Revelations Attest Qur'ān - - - - -	233
24. Prophethood of Jesus - -	235
Ch. 5.—Al-Mā'idah: THE FOOD - - - -	237
1. Perfection of Religion in Islām - - - - -	239
2. Duty of Uprightness - -	243
3. Christian Violation of Covenant - - - -	244
4. Israelites' Violation of Covenant - - - -	247
5. Cain and Abel - - - -	249
6. Punishment of Offenders -	251
7. Qur'ān and Previous Scriptures - - - - -	254
8. Relations with Enemies -	257
9. The Mockers - - - -	259
10. Christian Deviation - -	262
11. Christian Nearness to Islām -	264
Part VII	
12. A Warning - - - -	267
13. Inviolability of Ka'bah -	269
14. Some Directions for Muslims	270
15. Christian Love of this Life -	273
16. False Doctrines introduced -	275
Ch. 6.—Al-An'ām: THE CATTLE - - - -	278
1. Ultimate Triumph of Unity	279
2. Greatness of Divine Mercy -	281
3. Polytheists' witness against self - - - - -	282
4. Rejection of Truth - -	284
5. Consequences of Rejection -	286
6. Reward of Believers - -	288
7. Divine Judgment - -	289
8. Divine Judgment - -	290
9. Abraham's Argument for Divine Unity - -	292
10. Prophets among Abraham's Line - - - - -	295
11. Truth of Revelation - -	297
12. Ultimate Triumph of Truth -	298
13. Gradual Progress - -	300
Part VIII - - - - - -	302
14. Polytheists' Opposition -	302
15. The Chief Opponents - -	305
16. Evils of Idolatry - - -	307
17. Idolaters' Self-imposed Prohibitions - - -	309
18. Prohibited Foods - -	310
19. Guiding Rules of Life - -	312
20. Goal for the Faithful - -	313
Ch. 7.—Al-A'rāf: THE ELEVATED PLACES -	317
1. Opponents' Doom - -	318
2. Devil's Opposition to Man -	319
3. Warning against Devil's Insinuations - - -	322
4. Messengers to uplift Humanity - - -	324
5. Acceptors of Message - -	326
6. Helplessness of Opponents -	328
7. Righteous will prosper -	329
8. Noah - - - - -	331
9. Hūd - - - - -	333
10. Ṣāliḥ and Lot - - -	335
11. Shu'aib - - - - -	338
Part IX - - - - - -	338
12. Makkans warned - -	339
13. Moses sent to Pharaoh -	340
14. Pharaoh summons Enchanters	342
15. Israelites' Persecution - -	344
16. Moses shows Signs - -	345
17. Moses receives Law - -	347
18. Israelites worship a calf -	349
19. Torah and the Prophet's Advent - - - - -	350
20. Divine Favours on Israelites	352
21. Israelites' Transgressions -	353
22. Divine Impress on Man's Nature - - - - -	356
23. Coming of Doom - -	358
24. The Final Word - -	359
Ch. 8.—Al-Anfāl: VOLUNTARY GIFTS -	363
1. The Battle of Badr - - -	364
2. The Battle of Badr - -	367
3. The Way to Success - -	369
4. Muslims to be Guardians of the Sacred Mosque - -	371
5. Badr a Sign of Prophet's Truth - - - - -	372

Section	Page
Part X - - - - - -	373
6. Success does not depend on Numbers - - -	375
7. Enemy's Strength weakened -	376
8. Peace to be secured by Strength - - -	377
9. Muslims to meet Overwhelming Numbers -	378
10. Relations of Muslim State with others - - -	381
Ch. 9.—Al-Barā'at: THE IMMUNITY - -	383
1. Declaration of Immunity -	384
2. Reasons for the Immunity -	385
3. Idolaters' Service of the Sacred House - -	387
4. Islām made Triumphant in Arabia - - - -	389
5. Islām will Triumph in the World - - - -	391
6. The Tabūk Expedition -	395
7. The Hypocrites - - -	396
8. The Hypocrites - - -	399
9. The Hypocrites - - -	401
10. The Hypocrites - - -	402
11. The Hypocrites - - -	404
12. The Hypocrites - - -	406
Part XI - - - - - -	407
13. The Hypocrites - - -	409
14. The Faithful - - -	411
15. What Faithful should do -	414
16. Prophet's Great Anxiety -	415
Ch. 10.—Yūnus: JONAH -	417
1. Truth of Revelation - -	418
2. Punishment of Rejection -	420
3. Merciful Dealing - -	422
4. Uniqueness of Divine Gifts	424
5. Reprobates' Punishment -	426
6. Mercy takes Precedence of Punishment - - -	428
7. Good News for Faithful -	429
8. Noah and Moses - -	431
9. End of Opposition to Moses	433
10. Warning benefits the Heedful	434
11. Divine Judgment - -	437
Ch. 11.—Hūd - - - -	438
1. A Warning - - - -	439
Part XII - - - - - -	440
2. Truth of Revelation - -	441
3. History of Noah - -	443
4. History of Noah - -	445
5. History of Hūd - - -	448
6. History of Ṣāliḥ - - -	450
7. Abraham and Lot - -	451
8. History of Shu'aib - -	454
9. Iniquitous and Righteous -	456
10. Believers comforted - -	459
Ch. 12.—Yūsuf: JOSEPH -	462
1. Joseph's Vision - - -	463
2. Brothers' plot against Joseph	464
3. Joseph's Firmness under Temptation - - -	466
4. Joseph is Imprisoned - -	468
5. Joseph Preaches in Prison -	469
6. Joseph interprets King's Vision - - - -	470
7. Joseph cleared of Charges -	471
Part XIII - - - - -	472
8. Joseph helps his Brothers -	473
9. The youngest brother - -	475
10. Joseph discloses his Identity	477
11. Israel goes to Egypt - -	479
12. Lesson for Prophet's Opponents -	481
Ch. 13.—Al-Ra'd: THE THUNDER - -	483
1. Truth of Revelation - -	484
2. Fall and Rise of Nations -	485
3. Good and Evil bear Reward	488
4. Revolution to be brought about by Qur'ān - -	489
5. Opposition will fail - -	491
6. Steady Progress of Truth -	493
Ch. 14.—Ibrāhīm: ABRAHAM	495
1. Revelation dispels darkness -	496
2. Truth is rejected first - -	497
3. Opposition is at last destroyed - - - - -	498
4. Truth is Confirmed - -	500
5. Man's injustice in rejecting Truth - - - - -	502
6. Abraham's prayer - -	503
7. End of Opposition - -	504
Ch. 15.—Al-Ḥijr: THE ROCK	507
1. The Qur'ān is guarded -	508
Part XIV - - - - -	508
2. Evil will be destroyed - -	510
3. Devil's Opposition to Righteous - - -	511
4. Mercy for the Righteous — Abraham - - -	513
5. Lot and Shu'aib - - -	514
6. Warning to Dwellers of Rock	516
Ch. 16.—Al-Naḥl: THE BEE -	518
1. Revelation testified by Nature	519
2. Nature upholds Unity - -	520
3. Denial due to Ignorance -	521
4. Wicked meet Disgrace -	522
5. Prophets raised to explain -	524
6. Opponents' Doom - -	525
7. Human Nature revolts against Polytheism - -	527
8. Iniquity of Deniers - -	528

CONTENTS

Section	Page
9. Parables showing Truth of Revelation	529
10. Recipient of Revelation	530
11. Punishment withheld	532
12. Prophets testify	534
13. Revelation enjoins Good	535
14. Qur'ān not a Forgery	537
15. Fate of Opponents	539
16. Way to Greatness	541
Part XV	543
Ch. 17.—Banī Isrā'īl: THE ISRAELITES	543
1. Israelites Punished Twice	544
2. Every deed has a consequence	546
3. Moral Precepts	548
4. Moral Precepts	550
5. Disbelievers grow harder	551
6. Punishment must follow	553
7. Devil's Opposition to the Righteous	556
8. Opposition to the Prophet	558
9. Truth will prevail	559
10. Qur'ān—a Unique Guidance	561
11. Justice of Retribution	563
12. Comparison with Moses	564
Ch. 18.—Al-Kahf: THE CAVE	567
1. A Warning to Christians	568
2. Dwellers in the Cave	570
3. Dwellers in the Cave	573
4. Qur'ān as a guidance	575
5. A Parable	578
6. Guilty are judged	579
7. Their Helplessness	580
8. Warning is disregarded	581
9. Moses' search of Knowledge	582
10. Moses' search of Knowledge	584
Part XVI	585
11. Dhu-l-qarnain — Gog and Magog	586
12. Christian Nations	592
Ch. 19.—Maryam: MARY	594
1. Zacharias and John	595
2. Mary and Jesus	597
3. Abraham	601
4. Other Prophets are raised	602
5. How Opponents were dealt with	604
6. False doctrine of Sonship	607
Ch. 20.—Ṭā Hā	609
1. Moses is called	610
2. Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh	612
3. Moses and Enchanters	615
4. Israelites worship Calf	617
5. End of Calf-worship	619
6. The Prophet's Opponents	621
7. The Devil's misleading	623
8. Punishment is certain	625
Part XVII	627
Ch. 21.—Al-Anbiyā': THE PROPHETS	627
1. Judgment approaches	628
2. Truth triumphed always	629
3. Truth of Revelation	632
4. Allāh deals Mercifully	634
5. Abraham is Delivered	635
6. Allāh always delivers Prophets	638
7. Righteous will inherit land	642
Ch. 22.—Al-Ḥajj: THE PILGRIMAGE	646
1. The Judgment	647
2. Certainty of Divine Help	649
3. Believers are Triumphant	651
4. Pilgrimage	652
5. Sacrifices	654
6. Believers permitted to fight	655
7. Opposition to the Prophet	657
8. Faithful shall be established	659
9. Divine mercy to men	661
10. Polytheism will be uprooted	662
Part XVIII	664
Ch. 23.—Al-Mu'minūn: THE BELIEVERS	664
1. Success of the Faithful	665
2. Noah	667
3. Prophets after Noah	668
4. Higher Values of Life	670
5. Polytheism is self-condemned	673
6. Regrets of the Wicked	674
Ch. 24.—Al-Nūr: THE LIGHT	678
1. Law relating to Adultery	679
2. 'Ā'ishah's Slanderers	681
3. Slanderers of Women	682
4. Preventive Measures	684
5. Manifestation of Divine Light	688
6. Manifestation of Divine Power	690
7. Establishment of the Kingdom of Islām	691
8. Respect for Privacy	693
9. State matters take Precedence	695
Ch. 25.—Al-Furqān: THE DISCRIMINATION	696
1. A Warner for all Nations	697
2. Truth of Warning	698
Part XIX	700
3. Day of Discrimination	700
4. Lesson in Fate of Former People	702
5. A lesson from Nature	704

Section *Page*

6. The Transformation wrought - - - - 706

Ch. 26.—Al-Shu'arā': THE POETS - - - - 709

1. The Prophet is consoled - 710
2. Moses called and sent to Pharaoh - - - - 711
3. Moses and Enchanters - - 713
4. Moses delivered, Pharaoh drowned - - - - 714
5. History of Abraham - - 715
6. History of Noah - - 717
7. History of Hūd - - - 718
8. History of Ṣāliḥ - - 720
9. History of Lot - - - 721
10. History of Shu'aib - - 722
11. Prophet's Opponents warned 723

Ch. 27.—Al-Naml: THE NAML - - - - 727

1. Reference to Moses' History 728
2. History of Solomon - - 730
3. History of Solomon - - 733
4. Ṣāliḥ and Lot - - - 735
5. The Faithful will be exalted 737

Part XX - - - - - 737

6. The Spiritual Resurrection - 739
7. Passing away of Opposition 740

Ch. 28.—Al-Qaṣaṣ: THE NARRATIVE - - 743

1. History of Moses - - 744
2. History of Moses - - 746
3. History of Moses - - 747
4. History of Moses - - 749
5. A Prophet like Moses - - 751
6. Truth of Revelation - - 753
7. Opponents shall be brought low - - - - - 755
8. Korah's wealth ruins him - 757
9. The Prophet will return to Makkah - - - - 758

Ch. 29.—Al-'Ankabūt: THE SPIDER - - - 760

1. Trials purify - - - - 761
2. Noah and Abraham - - 763
3. Abraham and Lot - - 764
4. Opposition to Truth ever a Failure - - - - - 766

Part XXI - - - - - 768

5. Qur'ān is a Purifier - - 768
6. Warning and Consolation - 771
7. Triumph of the Faithful - 772

Ch. 30.—Al-Rūm: THE ROMANS - - - 774

1. A Great Prophecy - - 775
2. The two Parties - - - 777
3. Manifestation of Divine Power in Nature - - 778
4. Appeal to Human Nature - 779
5. A Transformation - - 782
6. Overthrow of Opposition - 784

Ch. 31.—Luqmān - - - 786

1. Believers will be Successful - 787
2. Luqmān's Advice to his Son 788
3. Greatness of Divine Power - 789
4. The Doom comes - - 791

Ch. 32.—Al-Sajdah: THE ADORATION - - 793

1. Islām will be established - 793
2. Believers and Disbelievers compared - - - 795
3. Dead Earth will receive life 797

Ch. 33.—Al-Aḥzāb: THE ALLIES - - - 799

1. Spiritual and Physical Relationship - - - 800
2. Allies' Attack on Madīnah - 802
3. Allies' Flight: Quraiẓah punished - - - 804
4. Prophet's Domestic Simplicity 807

Part XXII - - - - 808

5. Prophet's Marriage with Zainab - - - - 809
6. Prophet's Marriages - - 813
7. Rules of Conduct in Domestic Relations - - - 817
8. Spreading Evil Reports - 818
9. Exhortation to the Faithful - 820

Ch. 34.—Al-Saba': THE SABA' - - - 821

1. Judgment is certain - - 822
2. Favours followed by Retribution - - - - 823
3. A Victory for Muslims - 826
4. Leaders of Evil - - - 828
5. Wealth stands not for Greatness - - - - 829
6. Truth will prosper - - 830

Ch. 35.—Al-Fāṭir: THE ORIGINATOR - - 832

1. Divine Favours - - - 832
2. Truth will prevail - - 834
3. A New Generation will be raised - - - - 835
4. The Elect - - - - 837
5. Punishment due to evil deeds 839

Ch. 36.—Yā Sīn - - - 841

1. Truth of the Qur'ān - - 842
2. Confirmation of the Truth - 843

Part XXIII - - - - 844

3. Signs of the Truth - - 845
4. Reward and Punishment - 848
5. The Resurrection - - 849

Section	Page
Ch. 37.—Al-Ṣāffāt: THOSE RANGING IN RANKS	852
1. Unity will prevail - -	852
2. The Judgment - - -	855
3. Noah and Abraham - -	858
4. Moses, Aaron, Elias and Lot	861
5. Jonah and the Prophet's Triumph - - -	863
Ch. 38.—Ṣād - - - -	866
1. The Enemy's Discomfiture -	867
2. David's Enemies - - -	868
3. Solomon and his Enemies -	871
4. Job — Triumph of the Righteous - - -	873
5. Opposition to Prophets -	876
Ch. 39.—Al-Zumar: THE COMPANIES - -	878
1. Obedience to Allāh - -	879
2. Believers and Disbelievers -	881
3. A Perfect Guidance - -	883
Part XXIV - - - - -	884
4. Rejectors will be abased -	884
5. Punishment cannot be averted - - -	886
6. Divine Mercy - - -	888
7. The Final Judgment - -	889
8. Each Party meets its Desert	890
Ch. 40.—Al-Mu'min: THE BELIEVER - - -	892
1. Protection of the Faithful -	893
2. Failure of Opponents - -	894
3. A Warning in Moses' History	896
4. A Believer of Pharaoh's People - - - -	897
5. End of Pharaoh - - -	899
6. Messengers Receive Divine Help - - - -	901
7. Power of Allāh - - -	903
8. End of Opposition - -	904
9. End of Opposition - -	905
Ch. 41.—Ḥā Mīm - - -	906
1. Invitation to Truth - -	906
2. The Warning - - -	907
3. Man's Evidence against Himself - - - -	909
4. Believers strengthened -	910
5. Effect of Revelation - -	911
6. Gradual Spread of Truth -	913
Part XXV - - - - -	914
Ch. 42.—Al-Shūrā: COUNSEL	916
1. Divine mercy in giving warning - - -	917
2. Judgment is given - -	918
3. Allāh's Dealing is Just -	920
4. Believers should be Patient -	922
5. Revelation guides aright -	924
Ch. 43.—Zukhruf: GOLD -	928
1. Revelation is a Divine Favour	929
2. Polytheism condemned -	930
3. Allāh's Choice of a Prophet -	932
4. Opposition to Truth is punished - - -	933
5. Pharaoh's Opposition to Moses - - - -	934
6. Jesus as a Prophet - -	936
7. The Two Parties - -	937
Ch. 44.—Al-Dukhān: THE DROUGHT - -	940
1. Lighter Punishment followed by Severer - - -	940
2. Good and Evil Rewarded -	943
3. Good and Evil Rewarded -	944
Ch. 45.—Al-Jāthiyah: THE KNEELING - -	946
1. Denial of Revelation - -	946
2. Truth of the Revelation -	947
3. Denial of Judgment - -	949
4. The Doom - - -	950
Part XXVI - - - -	952
Ch. 46.—Al-Aḥqāf: THE SANDHILLS - -	952
1. Truth of Revelation - -	952
2. Witness of Truth - -	954
3. The Fate of 'Ād - - -	956
4. A Warning - - -	957
Ch. 47.—Muḥammad - -	959
1. Opponents will perish in War - - - -	960
2. Oppressors brought low -	962
3. The Weak-hearted Ones -	964
4. An Exhortation - - -	965
Ch. 48.—Al-Fath: THE VICTORY - - -	967
1. Ḥudaibiyah Truce — a Victory - - -	968
2. The Defaulters - - -	970
3. More Victories for Islām -	972
4. Ultimate Triumph of Islām -	974
Ch. 49.—Al-Ḥujurāt: - -	976
1. Respect for the Prophet -	977
2. Respect for Muslim Brotherhood - - - -	978
Ch. 50.—Qāf - - -	981
1. The Resurrection - -	981
2. The Resurrection - -	983
3. The Resurrection - -	984

Section	Page
Ch. 51.—Al-Dhāriyāt: THE SCATTERERS	987
1. Falsehood is doomed	987
2. Fate of Previous Nations	989
Part XXVII	990
3. Judgment is sure	991
Ch. 52.—Al-Ṭūr: THE MOUNTAIN	993
1. Success of the Faithful	993
2. Opponents are doomed	997
Ch. 53.—Al-Najm: THE STAR	1000
1. Eminence attained by the Prophet	1000
2. Nothing avails against Truth	1003
3. Allāh's Power manifested	1005
Ch. 54.—Al-Qamar: THE MOON	1007
1. Judgment to overtake Opponents	1007
2. Thamūd and Lot's People	1010
3. Pharaoh and the Prophet's Opponents	1011
Ch. 55.—Al-Raḥmān: THE BENEFICENT	1013
1. Divine Beneficence	1013
2. Judgment of the Guilty	1015
3. Reward of the Righteous	1017
Ch. 56.—Al-Wāqi'ah: THE EVENT	1020
1. Three Classes of Men	1020
2. The Guilty	1022
3. Judgment is Inevitable	1024
Ch. 57.—Al-Ḥadīd: IRON	1027
1. Establishment of God's Kingdom	1028
2. Light and Life given by Prophet	1029
3. Truth shall be established	1032
4. Double Reward for Believers	1034
Ch. 58.—Al-Mujādilah: THE PLEADING WOMAN	1036
Part XXVIII	1036
1. Safeguarding Women's Rights	1037
2. Secret Counsels condemned	1038
3. Guard against Internal Enemy	1040
Ch. 59.—Al-Ḥashr: THE BANISHMENT	1043
1. The Exiled Jews	1043
2. Hypocrites deceive Jews	1047
3. An Exhortation	1048
Ch. 60.—Al-Mumtaḥanah: THE WOMAN WHO IS EXAMINED	1050
1. Friendly Relations with Enemies	1051
2. Friendly Relations with non-Muslims	1052
Ch. 61.—Al-Ṣaff: THE RANKS	1055
1. Triumph of Islām	1055
2. Establish Truth by Sacrifices	1058
Ch. 62.—Al-Jumu'ah: THE CONGREGATION	1059
1. Muslims chosen for Divine Favours	1059
2. Friday Prayer	1061
Ch. 63.—Al-Munāfiqūn: THE HYPOCRITES	1062
1. The Hypocrites	1062
2. An Exhortation	1063
Ch. 64.—Al-Taghābun: THE MANIFESTATION OF LOSSES	1065
1. Disbelievers Warned	1066
2. An Exhortation	1067
Ch. 65.—Al-Ṭalāq: DIVORCE	1069
1. Supplementary Divorce Rules	1069
2. Makkah warned	1071
Ch. 66.—Al-Taḥrīm: THE PROHIBITION	1073
1. Prophet's Domestic Relations	1074
2. Progress of Faithful	1076
Part XXIX	1079
Ch. 67.—Al-Mulk: THE KINGDOM	1079
1. The Kingdom of God	1080
2. The Disbelievers' Doom	1082
Ch. 68.—Al-Qalam: THE PEN	1085
1. Not a Madman's Message	1086
2. A Reminder for Nations	1089
Ch. 69.—Al-Ḥāqqah: THE SURE TRUTH	1092
1. The Doom	1092
2. False Allegations refuted	1096
Ch. 70.—Al-Ma'ārij: THE WAYS OF ASCENT	1098
1. Certainty of the Punishment	1098
2. A New Nation to be raised	1100
Ch. 71.—Nūḥ: NOAH	1102
1. Noah preaches	1102
2. Destruction of Transgressors	1104

Section *Page*

Ch. 72.—Al-Jinn : THE JINN - 1106
1. Foreign Believers - - 1106
2. Protection of Revelation - 1109

Ch. 73.—Al-Muzzammil : THE ONE COVERING HIMSELF - - - 1111
1. Prophet enjoined to pray - 1111
2. Prayer enjoined on Muslims 1113

Ch. 74.—Al-Muddaththir : THE ONE WRAPPING HIMSELF UP - - 1115
1. The Prophet enjoined to warn 1115
2. The Warning - - - 1117

Ch. 75.—Al-Qiyāmah : THE RESURRECTION - 1120
1. Truth of the Resurrection - 1120
2. The Dead Rise - - - 1123

Ch. 76.—Al-Insān : THE MAN 1125
1. Attainment of Perfection - 1125
2. Another Generation raised - 1128

Ch. 77.—Al-Mursalāt : THOSE SENT FORTH - - 1130
1. Consequences of Rejection - 1130
2. Consequences of Rejection - 1133

Part XXX - - - - 1134

Ch. 78.—Al-Naba' : THE ANNOUNCEMENT - 1134
1. The Day of Decision - - 1134
2. The Day of Decision - - 1136

Ch. 79.—Al-Nāzi'āt : THOSE WHO YEARN - - 1138
1. The Great Commotion - 1138
2. The Great Calamity - - 1140

Ch. 80.—'Abasa : HE FROWNED - - - 1143

Ch. 81.—Al-Takwīr : THE FOLDING UP - - 1147

Ch. 82.—Al-Infiṭār : THE CLEAVING - - 1152

Ch. 83.—Al-Taṭfīf : DEFAULT IN DUTY - - - 1154

Ch. 84.—Al-Inshiqāq : THE BURSTING ASUNDER 1158

Ch. 85.—Al-Burūj : THE STARS - - - 1161

Ch. 86.—Al-Ṭāriq : THE COMER BY NIGHT - 1164

Ch. 87.—Al-A'lā : THE MOST HIGH - - - 1167

Ch. 88.—Al-Ghāshiyah : THE OVERWHELMING EVENT - - - 1170

Ch. 89.—Al-Fajr : THE DAY-BREAK - - - 1172

Ch. 90.—Al-Balad : THE CITY 1176

Ch. 91.—Al-Shams : THE SUN 1179

Ch. 92.—Al-Lail : THE NIGHT 1182

Ch. 93.—Al-Ḍuḥā : THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE DAY - - - - 1184

Ch. 94.—Al-Inshirāḥ : THE EXPANSION - - 1187

Ch. 95.—Al-Tīn : THE FIG - 1189

Ch. 96.—Al-'Alaq : THE CLOT 1191

Ch. 97.—Al-Qadr : THE MAJESTY - - - 1194

Ch. 98.—Al-Bayyinah : THE CLEAR EVIDENCE - 1196

Ch. 99.—Al-Zilzāl : THE SHAKING - - - 1198

Ch. 100.—Al-'Ādiyāt : THE ASSAULTERS - - 1200

Ch. 101.—Al-Qāri'ah : THE CALAMITY - - 1202

Ch. 102.—Al-Takāthur : THE ABUNDANCE OF WEALTH - - - 1204

Ch. 103.—Al-'Asr : THE TIME 1206

Ch. 104.—Al-Humazah : THE SLANDERER - - 1207

Ch. 105.—Al-Fīl : THE ELEPHANT - - 1209

Ch. 106.—Al-Quraish : THE QURAISH - - - 1211

Ch. 107.—Al-Mā'ūn : ACTS OF KINDNESS - - 1212

Ch. 108.—Al-Kauthar : THE ABUNDANCE OF GOOD - - - 1213

Ch. 109.—Al-Kāfirūn : THE DISBELIEVERS - - 1215

Ch. 110.—Al-Naṣr : THE HELP - - - - 1216

Ch. 111.—Al-Lahab : THE FLAME - - - 1217

Ch. 112.—Al-Ikhlāṣ : THE UNITY - - - 1219

Ch. 113.—Al-Falaq : THE DAWN - - - 1220

Ch. 114.—Al-Nās : THE MEN 1222

PART I

CHAPTER 1

Al-Fātiḥah: THE OPENING

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 7 verses)

The *Fātiḥah* or the *Opening* is known under various other names. It is spoken of as the *Seven Oft-repeated Verses* in the Qur'ān itself (15:87), because its seven verses are constantly repeated by every Muslim in his prayers. It is spoken of as the *Fātiḥat al-Kitāb* or the *Opening of the Book* in a saying of the Holy Prophet, in which it is said that "no prayer is complete without the recitation of *Fātiḥat al-Kitāb*" (B.10:95). Hence it is also called *Sūrat al-Ṣalāt,* i.e., the *chapter of Prayer,* being essential to every prayer whether performed in congregation or in private. It is also called *Sūrat al-Du'ā,* i.e., the *chapter of Supplication,* because the entire chapter is a supplication or a prayer to the Great Master. It is also known as *Umm al-Kitāb,* i.e., *the Basis of the Book,* because it contains the whole of the Qur'ān as it were in a nutshell. Some of the other names given to this chapter are *the Praise, the Thanksgiving, the Foundation, the Treasure, the Whole, the Sufficient, the Healer* and *the Healing.*

Al-Fātiḥah contains seven verses in a single section, and was revealed at Makkah, being without doubt one of the earliest revelations. It is a fact that the *Fātiḥah* formed an essential part of the Muslim prayers from the earliest days when prayer was made obligatory, and there is a vast mass of evidence showing that this happened very early after the Prophet's Call. For not only is the fact referred to in the earliest revelations, such as the 73rd chapter, but there are also other historical incidents showing that prayer was observed by the earliest Muslim converts.

The chapter is headed by the words *Bi-smi-llāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm,* which also head every one of the other 113 chapters of the Holy Qur'ān with the exception of one only, the ninth, while the same sentence occurs once in the middle of a chapter, viz., in 27:30, thus occurring 114 times in the Holy Qur'ān. The phrase has besides acquired such a wide usage among the Muslims that it is the first thing which a Muslim child learns, and in his everyday affairs the *Bismillāh* is the first word which a Muslim utters.

The *Bismillāh* is the quintessence of the chapter *Fātiḥah,* in the same manner as the latter is the quintessence of the Qur'ān itself. By commencing every important affair with the *Bismillāh,* the Muslim in fact shows in the midst of his everyday life affairs that the right attitude of the human mind towards the Great Mind of the universe is that it should always seek a support in the Mighty One Who is the Source of all strength; and Faith in God, thus, finds expression in the practical life of a Muslim in a manner unapproached anywhere else in the history of religion.

The *Fātiḥah* has a special importance as a prayer. Its oft-repeated seven verses constitute the prayer for guidance of every Muslim at least thirty-two times a day, and therefore it has a much greater importance for him than the Lord's prayer for a Christian. There is another difference, too. The latter is instructed to

pray for the coming of the kingdom of God, whereas the Muslim is instructed to seek for his right place in that kingdom, which had already come, the hint no doubt being that the coming of the Prophet was really the advent of the kingdom of God about whose approach Jesus preached to his followers (Mark 1:15). The prayer contained in this chapter is the sublimest of all the prayers that exist in any religion, and occupies the first place among all the prayers contained in the Qur'ān itself. A chorus of praise has gone forth for it from the greatest detractors of the Holy Qur'ān. The entire chapter is composed of seven verses, the first three of which speak of the four chief Divine attributes, viz. providence, beneficence, mercy and requital, thus giving expression to the grandeur and praise of the Divine Being, and the last three lay open before the Great Maker the earnest desire of man's soul to walk in righteousness without stumbling on either side, while the middle one is expressive of man's entire dependence on Allāh. The attributes referred to are those which disclose Allāh's all-encompassing beneficence and care, and His unbounded love for all of his creatures, and the ideal to which the soul is made to aspire is the highest to which man can rise, the path of righteousness, the path of grace, and the path in which there is no stumbling. Thus, on the one hand, the narrow views that the Divine Being was the Lord of a particular nation are swept off before the mention of His equal providence and equal love for all mankind, nay for all the creatures that exist in all the worlds, and, on the other, the soul is made to aspire to the great spiritual eminence to which arose those to whom Allāh was gracious, the prophets, the truthful, the faithful and the righteous (4: 69). One would in vain turn over the pages of sacred books to find anything approaching the grand and sublime ideas contained in this chapter of the Holy Qur'ān.

As I have said, the *Fātiḥah* is the quintessence of the whole of the Qur'ān. For the Qur'ān is a book which declares the glory of Allāh and teaches the right way to man, and both these themes find full expression in the *Fātiḥah*. The fundamental principles of faith, the prime attributes of the Divine Being, which are the basis of all other attributes, the relation which ought to hold between man and his Creator, are all contained in their essence in the seven short sentences of which this wonderful chapter is made up. And to crown all, this chapter opens with the broadest possible conception of the Lordship of the Divine Being and the brotherhood of man, nay of the oneness of all creation, for the unity of the creation necessarily follows the unity of the Creator.

In[1] the name of Allāh,[2] the Beneficent, the Merciful.[3]

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Praise be to Allāh, the Lord[5] of the worlds,[6]

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ○

2 The Beneficent, the Merciful,

الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

3 Master[7] of the day of Requital.[8]

مٰلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّيْنِ ○

4 Thee do we serve and Thee do we beseech for help.[8a]

اِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَاِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِيْنُ ○

5 Guide us on[8b] the right path,

اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيْمَ ○

6 The path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours,[9]

صِرَاطَ الَّذِيْنَ اَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ

7 Not those upon whom wrath is brought down, nor those who go astray.[10]

الْمَغْضُوْبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّآلِّيْنَ ○

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1 I retain the ordinary translation of the particle *bā*, but I must warn the reader that the sense of this particle is not the same in Arabic as the sense of the word *in* in the equivalent phrase *in the name of God. In*, in the latter case, signifies *on account of*, whereas the *bā* in Arabic signifies *by*, or *through*, or, to be more exact, *with the assistance of*. The phrase is in fact equivalent to: *I seek the assistance of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful* (AH). Hence it is that a Muslim is required to begin every important affair with *Bismillāh*.

2 Allāh, according to the most correct of the opinions respecting it, is a proper name applied to *the Being Who exists necessarily by Himself, comprising all the attributes of perfection* (T-LL), the *al being inseparable from it, not derived* (MṢb-LL). *Al-ilāh* is a different word, and *Allāh* is not a contraction of *al-ilāh*. The word Allāh is not applied to any being except the only true God, and comprises all the excellent names, and the Arabs never gave the name Allāh to any of their numerous idols. Hence, as being the proper name of the Divine Being and not having any equivalent in any other language, I have adopted the original word in this translation.

3 *Raḥmān* and *Raḥīm* are both derived from *raḥmat*, signifying *tenderness requiring the exercise of beneficence* (R), and thus comprising the ideas of *love* and *mercy*. *Al-Raḥmān* and *al-Raḥīm* are both active participle nouns of different measures denoting intensiveness of significance, the former being of the measure of *fa'lān* and indicating the greatest preponderance of the quality of mercy, and the latter being of the measure of *fa'īl* and being expressive of a constant repetition and manifestation of the attribute (AH). The Prophet is reported to have said: "*Al-Raḥmān* is the Beneficent God Whose love and mercy are manifested in the creation of this world, and *al-Raḥīm* is the Merciful God Whose love and mercy are manifested in the state that comes after". (AH), i.e. in the consequences of the deeds of men. Thus the former is expressive of the utmost degree of love and generosity, the latter of unbounded and constant favour and mercy. Lexicologists agree in holding that the former includes both the believer and the unbeliever for its objects, while the latter relates specially to the believer (LL). Hence I render *al-Raḥmān* as meaning the *Beneficent*, because the idea of doing good is predominant in it, though I must admit that the English language lacks an equivalent of *al-Raḥmān*.

5 The Arabic word *Rabb* conveys not only the idea of *fostering, bringing-up,* or *nourishing,* but also that of *regulating, completing* and *accomplishing* (T-LL), i.e. of the evolution of things from the crudest state to that of the highest perfection. According to R, *Rabb* signifies *the fostering of a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of completion.* Hence *Rabb* is the Author of all existence, Who has not only given to the whole creation its means of nourishment but has also beforehand ordained for each a sphere of capacity and within that sphere provided the means by which it continues to attain gradually to its goal of perfection. By the use of the word *Rabb* the Holy Qurān thus hints at the law of evolution which is working in the universe. There is no single word in English carrying the significance of the word *Rabb* — *Nourisher unto perfection* would be nearest; but the word Lord has generally been adopted for the sake of brevity. *Rabb* or *Nourisher to perfection,* however, includes both the physical and spiritual sides so far as man is concerned, His Word being the spiritual nourishment through which man is brought to perfection.

6 The word translated as *worlds* is *'ālamīn,* which is plural of *'ālam* (from the root *'ilm, to know*), indicating literally *that by means of which one knows a thing,* and hence it signifies *world* or *creation,* because by it the Creator is known. In a restricted sense it is applied to *any class* or *division of created beings* or *of mankind* (LL). Hence *'ālamīn* has been translated as "nations" in 2:47 and elsewhere. The all-comprehensiveness of the Lordship of Allāh in the very first words of the Qur'ān is quite in consonance with the cosmopolitan nature of the religion of Islām, which requires an admission of the truth of the prophets of all nations.

7 English translations have usually adopted *King* as the translation of the word *Mālik,* which is not correct. *Mālik* and *malik* are two different words from the same root, the former signifying *master* and the latter *king.* According to the rule of forming derivations in Arabic, an additional letter (as the *alif* in Mālik) gives the meaning a greater intensity (AH), and hence a master is more than a king. The adoption of the word mālik or *master* is to show that Allāh is not guilty of injustice if He forgives his servants, because He is not a mere king or a mere judge, but more properly a Master.

8 The word *yaum* is applied in the Holy Qur'ān to any period of time, from a moment (55:29) to fifty thousand years (70:4), and may therefore indicate an indefinitely small or indefinitely large space of time. According to LL, *yaum is a time,* whether *day* or *night, time absolutely,* whether *night* or *not, little* or *not*; also *a day,* meaning the period from the rising of the sun to its setting. According to R, the word *yaum* indicates a *period of time, whatever period it may be,* and this is the proper signification. As there are ample indications in the Qur'ān that the Divine law of requital is working every moment, and there is nothing to support the idea that it will not come into force before a particular day, the law of requital referred to in this verse is therefore a law which is constantly at work, the day of Judgment being the day of complete manifestation of it. *Master of the day of Requital* in fact stands for *Master of the law of Requital,* as that law is working every moment.

The word *dīn* means both *requital* and *religion,* being derived from *dāna, he recompensed, judged, obeyed* (LL). In describing God as Master of the day of Requital, the Holy Qur'ān lays stress, on the one hand, on the fact that the Divine law of requital of deeds is working every moment, and thus makes man feel the responsibility of what he does, and gives prominence, on the other, to the quality of forgiveness in Divine nature so that the law of requital is not like a rigid law of nature but like the dealing of a Master Who is essentially merciful, as already described. In speaking of the law of *requital* after the two great attributes of *beneficence* and *mercy,* the aim is to show that requital is as essential a Divine attribute to bring humanity to perfection as the attributes of beneficence and mercy. Beneficence is exercised towards the whole of humanity, mercy towards those who accept the Truth, and through requital are brought to perfection those who do not accept the Truth. Their punishment sometimes takes the form of distress and affliction in this life but it will receive a final shape on the day of Judgment. Both the afflictions of this life and the hell of the Hereafter are really remedial measures to exterminate spiritual diseases, and awaken spiritual life in man.

It may be further noted that God may also be said to be the Master of the day of Religion, in the sense that spiritual awakening will gradually be brought about in the world, so that ultimately the majority of people will recognize the truth of religion. The law of evolution is, in fact, working spiritually as it is working physically in this vast creation.

8a The first three verses of this *sūrah* speak of the grandeur of God and the last three of the aspiration of man's soul to attain spiritual loftiness, while this, the middle verse, speaks of the relation of the spirit of man to the Divine Spirit. Here the way is pointed out through which man can attain to real greatness. It is through *'ibādat* of God which means *obedience* (*ṭā'at*) combined with complete humility (*khuḍū'*) (R), and through *isti'ānat,* or seeking help (*'aun*) from God. The idea of *'ibādat* (*service* or *worship*) in Islām is not a mere declaration of the glory of God, but the imbibing of Divine morals and receiving their impress through humble service to God; hence the prayer for Divine help.

8b *Hidāyat* (guidance) means not only *showing the way* but also *leading one on the right way till one reaches the goal.* This is the significance here. Through Divine help man seeks to be guided in the right path until he reaches his goal of perfection. Man indeed stands in need of guidance and light from God in his everyday life affairs and is therefore taught to look for light in the right direction, for light from God. But he needs this light in a greater degree for attaining to the great spiritual goal. What that goal is, is stated in the next verse.

9 Those upon whom favours are bestowed are according to I'Ab the four classes mentioned in 4:69, viz. the prophets, the truthful, the faithful and the righteous (AH). It is in the footsteps of these spiritual leaders of the world that the Muslim aspires to walk, the chief aim of his life thus being not only his own spiritual perfection but to try also, and lay down his very life, for the spiritual perfection of others. He thus also prays for the Divine favours which were vouchsafed to the righteous in the uprooting of evil and establishing good in the world. It further shows that according to the Holy Qur'ān the favours that were bestowed upon the prophets — the gift of Divine revelation being one of them — can still be bestowed upon the righteous who follow the right way. It should, however, be borne in mind that prophethood and revelation are two different things, because the gift of revelation was, according to the express teachings of the Holy Qur'ān, granted to others than prophets as well; as, for instance to the mother of Moses (20:38) and to the disciples of Jesus Christ (5:111). This gift of revelation or being spoken to by God, according to most authentic ḥadīth, will be granted to the righteous among the Holy Prophet's followers — *there will be among them men to whom God will speak though they would not be prophets* (B.62:6).

10 The Muslims are warned here that even after receiving Divine favours they may incur Divine displeasure and go astray from the path which leads to the goal of perfection, and this is what the prayer of v. 7 aims at. The Holy Qur'ān speaks of the Jews as incurring Divine displeasure (2:61, 90; 3:111; 5:60) and it speaks of the Christians as having gone astray (5:77), and the Prophet is reported to have said: "Those upon whom wrath is brought down are the Jews and those who went astray are the Christians" (Tr. 44:2). Of course, the words are only explanatory and do not limit the significance of the original words used. The Jews afford an example of a people failing in righteous deeds, in carrying out the spirit of the doctrine while retaining the doctrine, and the Christians an example of a people corrupting the doctrine itself, and both these are the pitfalls of a people to whom the right direction has been pointed out. Again, the Jews and the Christians afford an example of the two extremes, the Jews rejecting Jesus, a prophet of God, as a liar, and doing their utmost to slay him, and the Christians raising a mortal prophet to the dignity of Godhead. The Muslims are thus taught a prayer that they may neither fail in good deeds while retaining the letter of the law, nor corrupt the doctrine, and that they may be kept on the middle path, avoiding either extreme.

CHAPTER 2

Al-Baqarah : THE COW

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 40 *sections*; 286 *verses*).

The name of this chapter is taken from the story narrated in vv. 67-71, regarding the slaughter of a *cow*. As this chapter deals chiefly with the Jews, and as cow-worship, as shown in foot-notes 84 and 108, was the particular form of idolatry which took a hold among the Jews, the importance of that incident seems to have been rightly estimated in giving this chapter the name that it bears.

This chapter deals mainly with the Jews and their contentions against Islām, and hence it is that much of the legislation, details of which necessarily differ from the Jewish law, and most of the Jewish objections to the prophethood of Muḥammad — peace and blessings of Allāh be on him! — are dealt with in this chapter. The chapter opens with a brief statement of the fundamental principles of Islām, and, after mentioning the consequences of their acceptance or rejection in the first section, and dealing with lip-profession in the second, draws an inference of the truth of those principles, and more particularly of Divine Unity, by referring to the work of God in nature, in the third. The fourth section proceeds to show that man is endowed with vast capabilities but needs Divine revelation for his perfection, and this is illustrated in the story of Adam. The fifth section speaks of the Israelites. who are told how the Qur'ān fulfils the prophecies met with in their books, and the next two sections are devoted to Divine favours to them and their stubbornness, being followed by three others which speak of their degeneration, their tendency to cow-worship, their hard-heartedness and their violation of covenants. The eleventh section speaks of their objections to the Holy Prophet, and the twelfth refers to their great enmity and to their plans against him. The thirteenth states that former scriptures are abrogated and a better and more advanced code is given in Islām, the religion of entire submission. The next section points out that partial good is met with in all religions, but it is only in Islām that religion attains to perfection. The fifteenth reminds the Israelites of the covenant with Abraham, which required the raising of a prophet from among the Ishmaelites, being followed by another dealing with the religion of the great patriarch. The subject of the Ka'bah, the house built by Abraham, as the new *qiblah*, is thus introduced, and the next two sections, while declaring the Ka'bah to be the new centre of spiritual activity, also give reasons for the change. The nineteenth warns the Muslims that they must undergo hard trials to establish the Truth; and that it will ultimately triumph, is made clear in the twentieth section. Certain minor differences with the Jewish law are then introduced as against the common principle of the doctrine of Unity, and thus the laws relating to foods, retaliation, bequests, fasting, fighting, pilgrimage, wine, gambling, orphans, marital obligations, divorce and widowhood are discussed in the eleven sections that follow. The next two, the 32nd and the 33rd, make a reversion to the subject of fighting, which was necessary if the Muslims would escape national death, and illustrations are given from Israelite history. We are then told in the thirty-fourth section of the mighty power of Allāh to give life to the dead, and the Muslims are told that they should not use compulsion in the matter of religion, as their opponents had done. Two instances are then quoted in the following section, one from the history of Abraham and the other from Israelite history, showing how dead nations are raised to life. But national growth and prosperity, we are immediately told in the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh sections, depend on acts of sacrifice, and every penny spent in the cause of truth yields seven hundredfold, and even much more, fruit. The Muslims, being thus promised abundance of wealth as the result of their sacrifices,

inordinate love of wealth, for the amassing of wealth was not the goal of a Muslim's life. They are at the same time told, in the thirty-ninth section, to guard their property rights by the employment of writing in their transactions and securing evidence. In conclusion, they are taught a prayer for the ultimate triumph of the Truth. Thus we find no break in the continuity of the subject, and the change, whenever necessary, is introduced quite naturally.

There is a clear connection between this chapter and the last one. There in the concluding words is a prayer for being guided on the right path (1 : 5), while here that guidance is afforded in the opening words: "This book, there is no doubt in it, is a guide" (v. 2). But though this chapter follows the *Fātiḥah*, it is really the first chapter, because the *Fātiḥah* is placed at the head, being the essence of the whole of the Qur'ān. This affords very clear evidence of the wisdom displayed in the arrangement of the chapters of the Holy Book. For this chapter fittingly opens with a prelude as to the object which is aimed at in the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān, and contains in its very opening verses the fundamental principles of the Islamic religion, which are also in fact the fundamental principles which can form the basis of the natural religion of man. These principles are five in number, three of them containing theoretical ordinances or articles of belief and two containing practical ordinances or principles of action. The theoretical ordinances are a belief in the Unseen, i.e. Allāh, in Divine revelation to the Holy Prophet as well as to the prophets before him, and in the life to come, while on the practical side is mentioned prayer, which is the source from which springs true Divine love, and charity in its broadest sense. The result of the acceptance of these fundamental principles is mentioned in v. 5, being guidance in the right direction and success. Similarly, it is with a reiteration of the broad principles of the Islamic faith and with a prayer for the triumph of the Truth that the chapter ends, and the whole of the chapter is really an illustration of the truth of the principles enunciated in its beginning.

This chapter was revealed in Madīnah, and belongs to the earliest Madīnah revelations. The main portion of it belongs to the 1st and 2nd years of the Hijrah, but it also contains verses which were revealed later, some of them towards the close of the Prophet's life.

SECTION 1 **Fundamental Principles of Islām**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.	بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ ۝
1 I, Allāh, am the best Knower.[11]	الٓمّٓ ۝۱

11 The original words are *alif, lām, mīm.* Translations of the Holy Qur'ān generally leave abbreviations, like the one occurring here, untranslated. The combinations of letters or single letters occurring at the commencement of several chapters, 29 in all, are called *muqaṭṭa'āt,* and according to the best received opinion these letters are abbreviations standing for words. The Arabs used similar letters in their verses. Abbreviations are known to all languages, the only peculiarity of their use in Arabic literature being that the letters carry different meanings in different places, and the meaning is decided in each case by the context. Such is the opinion of IAb (AH). Both he and IMsd agree in interpreting *alif, lām, mīm,* occurring here as well as at the commencement of the 3rd, 29th, 30th, 31st, and 32nd chapters of the Holy Qur'ān as meaning I, *Allāh,* am *the best Knower, alif* standing for *ana, lām* for *Allāh,* and *mīm* for *a'lam* (AH, IJ), being respectively the first, the middle and the last letters of the words for which they stand. Others regard them as contractions for some Divine attribute. That they may also serve as the names of chapters is no ground for supposing that they carry no significance. The strange suggestion of Golius that *alif, lām, mīm* stands for *amr-li-Muḥammad,* which is said to mean *at the command of Muhammad,* is not only devoid of authority but is also grammatically

2 This[12] Book,[13] there is no doubt in it, is a guide to those who keep their duty,[14]

ذٰلِكَ الْكِتٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ ۛۚ فِيْهِ ۛۚ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ۝

3 Who believe in the Unseen[15] and keep up prayer and spend out of what We have given them,[16]

الَّذِيْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيْمُوْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنٰهُمْ يُنْفِقُوْنَ ۝

incorrect. Rodwell's statement, made in his comment, on the significance of the letter *nūn*, occurring in the beginning of chapter 68, that "the meaning of this and of the similar symbols throughout the Qur'ān, was unknown to the Muhammadans themselves even in the first century", is equally devoid of truth. The significance of these letters can in most cases be traced to the Companions of the Holy Prophet, and hence the suggestion that these were "private marks" or initial letters attached by their proprietor to the copies furnished to Zaid, when effecting his recension of the text under *'Uthmān* is not even worthy of consideration. It is further opposed to the surest historical testimony, which proves beyond all doubt that these letters were recited as parts of the chapters in the time of the Prophet himself.

12 Palmer translates the word *dhālika* as *that,* and thinks that its rendering as *this* is an error, but as LL says: "Like as a person held in mean estimation is indicated by *hādhā* which denotes a thing that is near, so, on account of its high degree of estimation a thing that is approved is indicated by *dhālika,* whereby one indicates a thing that is remote."

13 The Qur'ān is here called *al-Kitāb,* or *the Book.* The root word *kataba* means *he wrote* and also *he brought together* (LL) and *kitāb,* or *book,* is a writing which is complete in itself. Thus a letter may also be called a *kitāb,* and in this sense the word occurs in 27:28, 29. The application of the word *kitāb* to the Holy Qur'ān occurs in very early revelations, and the use of the word shows clearly that the Qur'ān was from the first meant to be a *complete book* and one that existed not only in the memory of men but also in visible characters on writing material, for otherwise it could not be called *al-Kitāb.*

14 I make a departure here from the rendering of the word *muttaqī,* which English translators generally render into *God-fearing* or *pious.* The root is *waqā,* and conveys the sense of *saving, guarding,* or *preserving* (LL). According to R, *wiqāyah* signifies *the guarding of a thing from that which harms* or *injures it.* The verb of which *muttaqī* is the nominative form is *ittaqā,* which means, *he preserved* or *guarded himself exceedingly.* "In the conventional language of the law", according to LL, "*he preserved* or *guarded himself exceedingly from sin* or *what would harm him in the world to come.*" Hence the word *muttaqī* may properly be translated only as one who guards himself against evil, or *one who is careful of,* or *has regard for,* or *keeps his duty.* The Qur'ān is here described as affording guidance to those who keep their duty, because the sense of keeping his duty is innate in man, and everyone who has regard for duty is true to nature and true to himself. No guidance would benefit a man who has no regard for his duty. Adopting the alternative meaning, *those who guard against evil,* the significance is that guarding against evil or being saved from sin is the first stage in man's spiritual advancement, and the Qur'ān lays down the principles by following which the higher stages of that advancement are attained.

15 *Al-ghaib* is that *which is unseen* or *unperceivable by the ordinary senses.* According to R, the Unseen here stands for Allāh, a belief in Whose existence is the cardinal principle of religion. A belief in God is thus the first duty of man, the first requisite of spiritual advancement.

16 *Ṣalāt* means *supplication* or *prayer.* In Islām prayer assumed a regularity and a form, and became an established institution of religion. The verb used to indicate the observance of *ṣalāt* is throughout the Holy Qur'ān *aqāma,* meaning *he kept a thing* or *an affair in a right state* (LL), and hence it is not the mere observance of the form that the Qur'ān requires, but the keeping of it in a right state, i.e. being true to the spirit of the prayer. The object of prayer is elsewhere

4 And who believe in that which has been revealed to thee and that which was revealed before thee,[18] and of the Hereafter[19] they are sure.

وَالَّذِيْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكَ وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ ۚ وَبِالْاٰخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوْقِنُوْنَ ۝٤

5 These are on a right course from their Lord and these it is that are successful.[19a]

اُولٰٓئِكَ عَلٰى هُدًى مِّنْ رَّبِّهِمْ ۙ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ ۝٥

6 Those who disbelieve—it being alike to them whether thou warn them or warn them not[20]—they will not believe.[21]

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَاَنْذَرْتَهُمْ اَمْ لَمْ تُنْذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ۝٦

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clearly stated to be the purification of the heart (29:45). Spending out of what one has been given stands for *charity* in its broadest sense, or the doing of good to all creatures. This verse lays down the two prime duties of man, the two principles of action which are necessary for spiritual advancement, and these are prayer to God and service of humanity. After speaking of the cardinal principle of faith, a belief in God, the Holy Qur'ān now speaks of the two great principles of action to show how to translate faith into action.

18 Of all the religions of the world Islām is the only one that laid down the broad basis of faith in all the prophets of the world, and the recognition of truth in all religions is its distinctive characteristic. The words *that which was revealed before thee* include revelations to all the nations of the world, for we are elsewhere told that "there is not a people but a warner has gone among them" (35:24). The Qur'ān does not, however, mention all the prophets by their names, for "there are some of them that We have mentioned to thee, and there are others whom We have not mentioned to thee" (40:78). It thus requires not only a belief in Divine revelation to the Prophet Muḥammad but a belief in Divine revelation to the whole of humanity, to all nations of the world. A Muslim is therefore one who believes in all the prophets of God, sent to any nation, whether their names are mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān or not. This is the fourth of the fundamental principles of Islām, the second among matters relating to faith. It shows that God has always been made known to man through Divine revelation, and that revelation is a universal fact.

19 A belief in a life after death is the last of the five fundamental principles of Islām that are stated here, the third of the principles of faith. It is only this belief that can make the generality of men conscious of the responsibility of human actions. A life after death, according to Islām, implies a state of existence which begins with death, but a complete manifestation of which takes place later, when the fruits of the actions done in this life take their final shape. It should be borne in mind that a belief in Allāh and a belief in the Hereafter, being respectively the first and the last of the fundamental principles of Islām as mentioned here, often stand for a belief in all the fundamental principles of Islām, as in vv. 8, 62, etc. It is quite unwarranted to take *al-Ākhirat* as meaning *the message or revelation which is to come.* The Qur'ān knows of no message coming to humanity after it. It is the last message, religion having been made perfect by it (5:3). The *Ākhirat* of this verse is plainly spoken of as the Last Day in v. 8.

19a Those who accept the three principles of faith, and the two principles of action, mentioned above, are declared to be successful. The word *mufliḥ* is the nominative form of *aflaḥa* which means *he attained to success,* and includes both the good of this life and the good of the Hereafter (T). The next two verses speak of those who disbelieve.

20 The passage is parenthetical (AH), and should be translated as such. The ordinary rendering of the passage, which makes the parenthetical passage an enunciative one, makes the verse meaningless, for it would then run thus: "Those who disbelieve it is alike to them whether thou warn them or warn them not:

7 Allāh has sealed their hearts and their hearing ; and there is a covering on their eyes, and for them is a grievous chastisement.[21]

خَتَمَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ وَعَلٰى سَمْعِهِمْ ؕ وَعَلٰۤى اَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةٌ ۫ وَّلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيْمٌ ۧ

SECTION 2 : **Lip-profession**

8 And there are some people who say : We believe in Allāh and the Last Day ;[22] and they are not believers.

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَّقُوْلُ اٰمَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ وَبِالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۘ

9 They seek to deceive Allāh and those who believe, and they deceive only themselves and they perceive not.[23]

يُخٰدِعُوْنَ اللّٰهَ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ۚ وَمَا يَخْدَعُوْنَ اِلَّاۤ اَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُوْنَ ؕ

10 In their hearts is a disease, so Allāh increased their disease, and for them is a painful chastisement because they lie.[24]

فِىْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ ۙ فَزَادَهُمُ اللّٰهُ مَرَضًا ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ۢ ۙ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْذِبُوْنَ ۞

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they will not believe." Now this amounts to saying that no one who once disbelieves would ever believe, a statement which is absurd on the face of it. Treating the portion quoted above as parenthetical, the meaning is quite clear, viz., disbelievers of a particular type, i.e., those who pay no heed at all to the Prophet's warning, cannot benefit by his preaching.

21 It should be noted that only those disbelievers are spoken of here who so hardened their hearts as not to pay any heed to the Prophet's preaching and warning, as clearly indicated in the previous verse ; compare 7 : 179 : "They have hearts with which they understand not, and they have eyes with which they see not, and they have ears with which they hear not : they are as cattle." Allāh is here spoken of as having sealed their hearts and ears because He made them taste the consequences of their heedlessness.

22 Belief in Allāh and the Last Day is here equivalent to the profession of Islām ; see 19. After speaking of the two classes, the accepters and the rejecters of the Prophet's message, the Holy Qur'ān now speaks of a third class, the insincere people who accept the message only with their lips. The persons spoken of in this verse are the hypocrites, who were a source of constant trouble to the Prophet at Madīnah. Before he came to that city, 'Abd Allāh ibn Ubayy was a person of note there, and he expected to become the leader. But the Prophet's advent and his recognition by all the communities of that city, as head of the state, robbed him of those dearly cherished hopes, and he along with his followers adopted an attitude of hypocrisy. The case of the hypocrites is dealt with at length here, in 3 : 148-180 ; 4 : 60-152 ; 9 : 38-127, and in the 63rd chapter, and occasionally elsewhere. But apart from the particular class of people spoken of here who were really enemies of Islām in the guise of believers, there are in every religion large numbers of people whose hearts are affected with a similar spiritual disease. Their acceptance of the Truth is only with the lips, and faith does not go deep down into their hearts. They are loud in their claims but when there is a question of carrying out the precepts of the faith or of making any sacrifice in its cause, they lag behind. These verses may as well apply to them.

23 *Khāda'a* signifies *he strove, endeavoured* or *desired to deceive* him. One says this of a man when he has not attained his desire (LL). *Khāda'a* also indicates, when used concerning the Divine Being, *He requited to him his deceit* (T, LL) ; see 27 and 638. *Khāda'a* also means *he forsook, he refrained* (LL).

24 Compare 71 : 6, where Noah is made to say : "But my call has made

11 And when it is said to them, Make not mischief in the land, they say: We are but peacemakers.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12 Now surely they are the mischief-makers, but they perceive not.[25]

أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَٰكِنْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 And when it is said to them, Believe as the people believe, they say: Shall we believe as the fools believe? Now surely they are the fools, but they know not.[25a]

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمِنُوا كَمَا آمَنَ النَّاسُ قَالُوا أَنُؤْمِنُ كَمَا آمَنَ السُّفَهَاءُ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ السُّفَهَاءُ وَلَٰكِنْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

14 And when they meet those who believe, they say, We believe; and when they are alone with their devils,[26] they say: Surely we are with you, we were only mocking.

وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا ۚ وَإِذَا خَلَوْا إِلَىٰ شَيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Allāh will pay them back their mockery,[27] and He leaves them alone in their inordinacy, blindly wandering on.

اللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

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them only flee the more", though the call was meant to bring them nearer to the truth. The disease here stands for the weakness of their hearts (AH), for they had not the courage to deny Islām openly, and this weakness only became the greater as the cause of Islām became more and more triumphant.

25 Their idea of making peace was only this, that they mixed with both parties, but they were really taking advantage of this opportunity to sow the seeds of dissention and mischief among the various parties. In fact, they were a constant source of mischief for whereas outwardly they were with the Muslims, they always plotted against them and gave help to their enemies.

25a They called the Muslims fools because they were undergoing all kinds of sufferings and making sacrifices for the sake of the Truth. The hypocrites were under the impression that the Muslims would soon be wiped out of existence. They are told that Truth will prosper and the half-hearted ones are really the fools.

26 By their *devils* are meant their *evil companions*, as plainly stated in v. 76: "And when they meet those who believe, they say We believe; and when they are apart one with another they say." IMsd says that by *their devils* are meant *their leaders in unbelief* (IJ). Kf and Bd say that by their *devils* are meant *those men who made themselves like the devils in their insolence and rebellion*. In fact, the word s̲h̲aiṭān (devil) signifies, "*every insolent or rebellious one from among the jinn and the men and the beasts*" (R).

27 According to LA, the more preferable explanation of the words *Allāhu yastahzi'u bi-him* is that Allāh *will requite them with punishment according to their mockery* and thus, it is added, the punishment of an evil is spoken of in the terms of an evil, as is laid down elsewhere: "The punishment of an evil is evil like it" (42:40). Another explanation is that given by Kf: "The meaning is the sending down of disgrace and contempt, for the object which a mocker has in view is to hold him whom he mocks in light estimation and to bring down contempt and disgrace upon him."

16 These are they who buy error for guidance, so their bargain brings no gain, nor are they guided.[28]

أُولَٰٓئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلٰلَةَ بِالْهُدٰى فَمَا رَبِحَتْ تِّجَارَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 Their parable is as the parable of one who kindles a fire,[29] but when it illumines all around him, Allāh takes away their light,[30] and leaves them in darkness—they cannot see.

مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا ۚ فَلَمَّآ أَضَآءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللّٰهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمٰتٍ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Deaf, dumb, (and) blind,[32] so they return not:

صُمٌّ ۢ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

19 Or like abundant rain from the cloud[33] in which is darkness, and thunder and lightning; they put their fingers into their ears because of the thunder-peal, for fear of death.[34] And Allāh encompasses the disbelievers.

أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمٰتٌ وَّرَعْدٌ وَّبَرْقٌ ۚ يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ مِّنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ مُحِيطٌۢ بِالْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 The lightning almost takes away their sight. Whenever it shines on them they walk in it, and when it becomes dark to them they stand still. And if Allāh had pleased, He would have taken away their hearing and their sight. Surely Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.

يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ ۖ كُلَّمَآ أَضَآءَ لَهُمْ مَّشَوْا فِيهِ ۙ وَإِذَآ أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

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28 They rejected the Truth and followed the error, thinking that this course would bring them worldly gain. They are told that they will have neither worldly gain nor guidance, and will be losers both temporally and spiritually.

29 The kindler of the fire is the Holy Prophet, who kindled the torch of light. The opening words of a ḥadīth are: "My example is the example of a man who kindles a fire . . ." (B.81 : 26). The personal pronouns used lend weight to this interpretation. The kindler of the fire and the illuminer is one, while those whose light is taken away are many. This interpretation of the parable is, moreover, in accordance with the next parable, where the rain is unanimously agreed upon as representing the Divine Revelation.

30 The light of their eyes, which alone could make them take advantage of the light which was lit up by the Prophet, was taken away. The act of taking away the light is attributed to Allāh, as the remote cause of the disappearance of their sight.

32 The description seems to apply to those spoken of in v. 6, and accordingly the first parable may apply to them instead of to the hypocrites; or it may apply to those hypocrites who persisted in the wrong course and refused to take any advantage of the light and guidance brought by the Prophet.

33 *Samā'* is literally *the higher* or *the upper*, or *the highest* or *the uppermost part of anything*, and it means *the sky* or *the heaven*, *the clouds* or *a cloud* (T). It is a collective noun and is used both as singular and plural (LL).

34 This is a parable showing the condition of the hypocrites and the weak-

SECTION 3 : **Divine Unity**

21 O men, serve your Lord Who created you and those before you, so that you may guard against evil,

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعۡبُدُوۡا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِىۡ خَلَقَكُمۡ وَالَّذِيۡنَ مِنۡ قَبۡلِكُمۡ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَتَّقُوۡنَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 Who made the earth a resting-place for you and the heaven a structure,[35] and sends down rain from the clouds then brings forth with it fruits for your sustenance ; so do not set up rivals to Allāh while you know.

الَّذِىۡ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الۡاَرۡضَ فِرَاشًا وَّالسَّمَآءَ بِنَآءً وَّاَنۡزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَاَخۡرَجَ بِهٖ مِنَ الثَّمَرٰتِ رِزۡقًا لَّكُمۡ ۚ فَلَا تَجۡعَلُوۡا لِلّٰهِ اَنۡدَادًا وَّاَنۡتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُوۡنَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 And if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it[36] and call on your helpers besides Allāh if you are truthful.[37]

وَاِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ فِىۡ رَيۡبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلۡنَا عَلٰى عَبۡدِنَا فَاۡتُوۡا بِسُوۡرَةٍ مِّنۡ مِّثۡلِهٖ ۖ وَادۡعُوۡا شُهَدَآءَكُمۡ مِّنۡ دُوۡنِ اللّٰهِ اِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ صٰدِقِيۡنَ ﴿٢٣﴾

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hearted ones. When difficulties and distresses befell the Muslims — when it became dark — the hypocrites and the weak-hearted stood still. They refused to keep company with the Muslims in the battles which the latter had to fight. When there was a flash of lightning, and a success followed — a success so great that it almost blinded them — they would walk on a little and seem to be keeping company with the Muslims. The same idea is expressed in 22:11 in the following words: "And among men is he who serves Allāh standing on the verge, so that if good befalls him he is satisfied therewith, but if a trial afflicts him he turns back headlong." The difficulties and distresses which the Muslims experienced in the early days of Islām greatly obstructed its spread and held back many of the weak-hearted, who, under better circumstances, would have gladly joined its ranks.

35 The word *binā'* signifies a *structure* (LL) in its widest sense, viz., *any production* or *piece of work consisting of parts joined together in some definite manner*. The heaven is here called a *structure* in reference to the order which prevails in heavenly bodies. But *binā'* is also used to signify *the roof* or *the ceiling of a house*, and as such it is used figuratively to indicate the vast blue overhead. Attention is thus drawn to the oneness of humanity, as if it were a single family living in one resting-place under one roof.

36 A similar challenge is contained in 10:38, and in 11:13 doubters are challenged to produce ten chapters like it, while in 17:88, a very early revelation, the whole of mankind are declared to be unable to produce a book like the Qur'ān. Is it a question of mere style and diction ? The Qur'ān itself does not say so, nor does any saying of the Holy Prophet. That the Qur'ān is a unique production of Arabic literature and has ever been regarded as the standard of the purity of that literature, goes without saying, but the chief characteristic of the Holy Book, in which no other book can claim equality with it, is the wonderful transformation which it accomplished, and it is to this characteristic that it lays claim in the very commencement when it says that this Book is a guide (2:2). That the transformation wrought by it is unparalleled in the history of the world is admitted on all hands, for if the Holy Prophet was the "most successful of all prophets and religious personalities" (En. Br. 11th ed., Art. *Koran*), this success was due to no other cause than the Qur'ān. Its injunctions swept off the most deep-rooted evils, like idolatry and drunkenness, so as to leave no trace of them in the Arabian peninsula, welded the warring elements of Arabian society into one nation, and made an ignorant people the foremost torchbearers of knowledge and science, and a politically down-trodden people the masters of the greatest

37, see next page.

24 But if you do (it) not — and you can never do (it) — then be on your guard against the fire whose fuel is men and stones;[38] it is prepared for the disbelievers.

فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوْا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوْا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِيْ وَقُوْدُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ ۖ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And give good news to those who believe and do good deeds, that for them are Gardens in which rivers flow.[39] Whenever they are given a portion[40] of the fruit thereof, they will say: This is what was given to us before; and they are given the like of it.[41] And for them therein are pure companions[42] and therein they will abide.

وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ اَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ ؕ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوْا مِنْهَا مِنْ ثَمَرَةٍ رِّزْقًا ۙ قَالُوْا هٰذَا الَّذِيْ رُزِقْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ ۙ وَاُتُوْا بِهٖ مُتَشَابِهًا ؕ وَلَهُمْ فِيْهَآ اَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ ۙ وَّهُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿٢٥﴾

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empire of the world. Besides, every word of the Qur'ān gives expression to Divine majesty and glory in a manner which is not approached by any other sacred book. The challenge remains unanswered to this day.

37 The word *shuhadā'*, translated as *helpers* or *leaders*, is the plural of *shahīd*, meaning *one who gives information of what he has witnessed*, or *one who knows and declares what he knows*, or *one possessing much knowledge* (LL). *Shahīd* also means an *imām* or a *leader*.

38 The word *stones* stands for *al-ḥijārah*, the plural of *ḥajar*, meaning *stone*, so called because it resists by reason of its hardness; the verb *ḥajara* signifies *he prevented, hindered, forbade*, etc. (LL). By stones are here generally understood the idols which the Arabs worshipped, even unhewn stones being sometimes the objects of worship among them. But the word *ḥijārah* may bear another significance. According to LA, you say: "*Such an one was assailed with the ḥajar of the earth,*" *when his assailant is a formidable man*. And when Mu'āwiyah named 'Amr ibn 'Āṣ as one of the two umpires to decide the quarrel between himself and 'Alī, Aḥnaf said to 'Alī: "Thou hast had a *ḥajar* (exceedingly sagacious and crafty and politic man) made to be an assailant against thee" (LL). The reference in *ḥijārah* may, therefore, be to the leaders spoken of in the previous verse, while *nās* would stand for the common people.

39 Gardens with rivers flowing in them is the ever-recurring description of a future life of the righteous that occurs in the Holy Qur'ān. Elsewhere, the pure word of faith is compared to a tree which gives its fruit in all seasons (14:24). Belief is thus like a seed cast into the ground, growing into a tree and bearing fruit when properly nurtured. The rivers represent the good deeds which are necessary to the growth of the seed. It should be borne in mind that the description of paradise as given in the Holy Qur'ān is expressly stated to be a parable: "A parable of the Garden which is promised to those who keep their duty" (13:35; 47:15). The righteous are spoken of as having gardens in the next life to show that they have made the seed of faith to grow into extensive gardens, and this is in reference to the vast development of their inner self or of the faculties which God has given them.

40 *Rizq* (lit., *sustenance*) also signifies *ḥaẓẓ* or *a portion* (LL). The fruits of the life after death are the consequences of the deeds done in this life.

41 The meaning seems to be that whenever the faithful are made to taste of a portion of the fruits of their good deeds in the life to come, they will find those fruits so much resembling the fruits which they tasted spiritually in this life

42, see next page.

26 Surely Allāh disdains not to set forth any parable[43] — a gnat or anything above that. Then as for those who believe, they know that it is the truth from their Lord; and as for those who disbelieve, they say: What is it that Allāh means by this parable? Many He leaves in error by it and many He leads aright by it. And He leaves in error by it only the transgressors,[44]

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَسْتَحْيٖٓ أَنْ يَّضْرِبَ مَثَلًا مَّا بَعُوْضَةً
فَمَا فَوْقَهَا ۚ فَأَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا فَيَعْلَمُوْنَ أَنَّهُ
الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَّبِّهِمْ ۚ وَأَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا فَيَقُوْلُوْنَ
مَاذَآ أَرَادَ اللّٰهُ بِهٰذَا مَثَلًا ۘ يُضِلُّ بِهٖ كَثِيْرًا وَّ
يَهْدِيْ بِهٖ كَثِيْرًا ۚ وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهٖٓ إِلَّا الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 Who break the covenant of Allāh after its confirmation[44a] and cut asunder what Allāh has ordered to be joined, and make mischief in the land. These it is that are the losers.

الَّذِيْنَ يَنْقُضُوْنَ عَهْدَ اللّٰهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مِيْثَاقِهٖ
وَيَقْطَعُوْنَ مَآ أَمَرَ اللّٰهُ بِهٖٓ أَنْ يُّوْصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُوْنَ
فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ أُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُوْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾

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that they will think that the same fruits are given to them again. Or the words may signify: *This is what was promised to us before. The like of it* may signify that the fruits of their deeds will be similar to those deeds.

42 The *pure mates* or *companions* may be the believing wives of the faithful, as elsewhere we have: "They and their wives are in shades reclining on raised couches" **(36:56)**. But more probably these are among the blessings of the heavenly life to which men and women are equally entitled. The true nature of these blessings is pointed out elsewhere under the word *ḥūr* in 2356, but it may be remarked here that all the blessings of heavenly life are according to a saying of the Holy Prophet "*things which no eye has seen and no ear has heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive of them*" (B. 59:8). The words in which these blessings are depicted in the Holy Qur'ān, therefore, should not be taken literally.

43 The parables to which reference is contained in these words are the parables speaking of the weakness of the false deities; see 29:41: "The parable of those who take guardians besides Allāh is as the parable of the spider that makes for itself a house, and surely the frailest of the houses is the spider's house"; and 22:73: "O people, a parable is set forth, so listen to it. Surely those whom you call upon besides Allāh cannot create a fly though they should all gather for it; and should the fly carry aught from them, they could not take it back from it: weak are the invoker and the invoked"

Instead of the spider and the fly, however, the gnat is mentioned here because the *ba'ūḍah*, or *the gnat*, is among the Arabs a proverbially weak creature, so that to express the utmost degree of weakness they say, *weaker than the gnat*.

44 According to R, *iḍlāl* (ordinarily translated as *leading astray*) has a two-fold significance. It means ***leading one astray*** as well as *finding one as erring*; *aḍlaltu ba'īrī* means *I found that my camel had gone astray*. Another significance of the word *aḍalla* is *he adjudged* or *pronounced him to have gone astray*, as *aḍalla-nī ṣadīqī*, occurring in a verse, is explained as meaning *my friend pronounced me to be in error* (LL). It is said of the Prophet in a ḥadīth that he came to a people *fa-aḍalla-hum*, which does not mean that he led them astray but that *he found them to have gone astray* (N). The same authority quotes other

44a, see next page.

28 How can you deny Allāh and you were without life and He gave you life? Again, He will cause you to die and again bring you to life, then you shall be brought back to Him.[44b]

كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَكُنْتُمْ اَمْوَاتًا فَاَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيْتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيْكُمْ ثُمَّ اِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُوْنَ ﴿۲۸﴾

29 He it is Who created for you all that is in the earth. And[45] He directed Himself to the heaven, so He made them complete seven heavens;[46] and He is Knower of all things.

هُوَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي الْاَرْضِ جَمِيْعًا ثُمَّ اسْتَوٰٓى اِلَى السَّمَآءِ فَسَوّٰىهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمٰوٰتٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۲۹﴾

instances of a similar use of the measure *if'āl*, as *aḥmadtu-hū* means, not *I praised him* but, *I found him praiseworthy*, and *abkhaltu-hū* means *I found him parsimonious* or *avaricious*. It is a plain fact that Allāh guides people or shows them the right way by sending His messengers, and therefore He could not be spoken of as leading them astray. And the objects of *iḍlāl* are always the *transgressors* as here, or the *wrong-doers* as in 14:27, or the *prodigal* as in 40:34. And again it is the devil that leads astray as in 28:15, or the transgressors as in 6:120, etc. Hence, when ascribed to God, the word *aḍalla* means *He pronounced him to be erring* or *He left him in error*.

44a The covenant of Allāh referred to here is the evidence of His Unity to which human nature bears witness, as referred to in the next verse, and as stated in 7:172. The confirmation of this covenant is brought about by sending prophets. Cutting off what Allāh has ordered to be joined is the disregard of others' rights.

44b The first part of the verse contains an argument of the existence of God Who gave life to man, and the second states that death on this earth is not the end of life but the beginning of another, an eternal and a far higher life.

45 *Thumma* generally denotes *then* or *afterwards*, and it is a particle denoting *order* and *delay*, but there are many examples of its use in which it implies neither order nor delay. According to Akh and other authorities, *thumma* has often the meaning of *waw*, i.e., *and* (LL). For the statement that the earth was made after the heavens, see 79:30.

46 It is impossible to deal with the subject of the Quranic cosmogony within the limits of a foot-note. But a few suggestions may be made here. In the first place, it should be noted that the word *sab'a*, which signifies the number *seven*, is also used in a vague manner, as meaning *seven*, or *more*, *several* or *many* (LL). According to LA, the Arabic equivalents of the numbers *seven*, *seventy*, and *seven hundred* are all used to indicate a large number by the Arabs: "The mention of *seven* and *seventy* and *seven hundred* is frequent in the Qur'ān and the sayings of the Holy Prophet, and the Arabs used them to signify a large number and multiplicity". Similarly Az explains the word *sab'īna*, meaning *seventy*, as occurring in 9:80, as being "used to signify a large number and multiplicity, not indicating exactness in number" (LA). Hence the seven heavens may signify a large number of heavens. Secondly, the significance of the word *samā'*, which means only what we see *above* us, should not be lost sight of. R makes the meaning very clear when he says: "Every *samā'*, i.e. *heaven*, is a heaven in relation to what is beneath it and an earth in relation to what is above it". Thirdly, in 65:12 it is affirmed that as there are seven heavens so there is a like number of earths, which corroborates the conclusion drawn above. Fourthly, the seven heavens are on one occasion called the *seven ways* (23:17), and in this sense the orbit of a planet may be called its *heaven*. In fact, this interpretation makes the significance of 65:12 very clear, for each of the seven earths will thus have a heaven for it. The seven earths together with our earth would thus make up the eight major primary planets of the solar system. Or, the seven heavens may be taken to apply to the whole starry creation, and the reference may in this case be to the seven magnitudes of the stars which may be seen by the naked eye.

One point more may be noted here. The *samā'* or *the heaven* is plainly called *dukhān*, i.e. *smoke* or *vapour*, in 41:11.

SECTION 4 : **Greatness of Man and Need of Revelation**

30 And when thy Lord said to the angels,[47] I am going to place a ruler[48] in the earth, they said: Wilt Thou place in it such as make mischief in it and shed blood ?[50] And we celebrate Thy praise and extol Thy holiness.[51] He said: Surely I know what you know not.

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ إِنِّيْ جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ
خَلِيْفَةً ۭ قَالُوْٓا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيْهَا مَنْ يُّفْسِدُ فِيْهَا
وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَآءَ ۚ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَ
نُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۭ قَالَ إِنِّيْٓ أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝

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47 The Arabic word for angels is *malā'ikah,* which is the plural of *malak.* It is said to be derived, either from *malaka* which means *he controlled,* and refers to the angels' function of controlling the forces of nature on the physical side of life, or from *alk, to send,* the original being in this case *ma'lak,* contracted into *malak,* and refers to the angels' spiritual function of acting as intermediaries between God and man. Both root ideas thus contain a reference to the principal functions ascribed to the angels. The existence of such intermediaries has been recognized by righteous men in all ages and all countries.

It will also be seen, from what has been said above as to the functions of the angelic beings, that Allāh's saying to them is really the expression of an intention which is to be brought into execution. It is not a conversation, or a consultation with the angels; it is an expression of the Divine will to those intermediary beings who are entrusted by the Divine Being with the execution of it. It may also be added that by the angels here are meant the angels entrusted with this particular affair, not all the angels of the universe (IJ).

48 This shows the high place that man was destined to hold in the whole of creation. The original word *khalīfah* (from *khalafa,* meaning *he came after or succeeded another that had perished* or *died*), means primarily *a successor,* and hence *the supreme* or *the greatest ruler who supplies the place of him* who has been before him (T, LL). IMsd and I'Ab explain *khalīfah* as meaning *one who judges among,* or *rules, the creatures of Allāh by His command* (IJ). What is stated here is an allegorical description of the preference of man above the whole of the creation on this earth, and then of the election of those righteous servants of Allāh from among men themselves who lead others into the right path. One of the significances suggested by the commentators is that the word *khalīfah* here refers to *the children of Adam,* i.e., *the whole of mankind.* The correctness of this view is corroborated by the Qur'ān itself, which says, referring to the whole of mankind: "He it is who has made you rulers in the earth" (6:166), the word used for *rulers* being *khalā'if,* plural of *khalīfah.* Hence the reference here seems to be to the whole of mankind. References to Adam are contained in 2:30-39 and in 3:58; 7:11-25; 15:28-44; 17:61-65; 18:50; 20:115-124 and 38:71-85.

50 God declares His will to the angels, the controlling forces of nature, to create man who is meant to rule the forces of nature, and to whom, therefore, power to rule is to be delegated. Being entrusted with such great powers, man could use them rightly or wrongly, and it is to this fear of abuse of power that the angels give expression, they themselves being only executors of Divine will in which they have no choice. The concluding words of this verse show that God knew that man would abuse the power given to him, but He also knew that he would turn it to good use as well. The whole history of man is briefly written in this one verse. Man is the greatest killer on this earth but he also turns the gifts of God to the best use. The angels speak of the darker side of the picture of humanity, but to God was known the brighter side as well as the darker side of this picture. Hence the words, *I know what you know not.*

51 While giving expression to the darker side of the picture of humanity, these intermediaries declare that this could not be the Divine purpose, for *God*

31 And He taught Adam[52] all the names,[53] then presented them to the angels; He said: Tell Me the names of those if you are right.[54]

وَعَلَّمَ اٰدَمَ الْاَسْمَآءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ فَقَالَ اَنْبِـُٔوْنِيْ بِاَسْمَآءِ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿۳۱﴾

32 They said: Glory be to Thee! We have no knowledge but that which Thou has taught us. Surely Thou are the Knowing, the Wise.

قَالُوْا سُبْحٰنَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَآ اِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا ؕ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْعَلِيْمُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿۳۲﴾

33 He said: O Adam, inform them of their names. So when he informed them of their names, He said: Did I not say to you that I know what is unseen in the heavens and the earth? And I know what you manifest and what you hide.[55]

قَالَ يٰٓاٰدَمُ اَنْبِئْهُمْ بِاَسْمَآئِهِمْ ۚ فَلَمَّآ اَنْبَاَهُمْ بِاَسْمَآئِهِمْ ۙ قَالَ اَلَمْ اَقُلْ لَّكُمْ اِنِّيْٓ اَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۙ وَاَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُوْنَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُوْنَ ﴿۳۳﴾

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is free from all imperfections, such being the significance of *tasbīḥ* (LL), generally rendered as *declaring the glory of God.*

52 Adam is generally taken to be the proper name for the first man, but neither here nor anywhere else in the Holy Qur'ān is it affirmed that Adam was the first man or that there was no creation before him. On the other hand, great Muslim theologians have held that there were many Adams — thousands of Adams — before the great ancestor of mankind known by this name (RM). As the previous verse shows, the whole of humanity is spoken of here because the shedding of blood could not be the work of one man; the reference is to the shedding of the blood of man by man. Adam, therefore, though it may also be the name of a particular man stands for man generally.

53 Explaining *asmā',* which literally signifies *names* (being plural of *ism,* meaning *a name*), Rz says: "He taught him the attributes of things and their descriptions and their characteristics, for the attributes of a thing are indicative of its nature". Teaching Adam the names therefore signifies the vast capability of man and the superiority of his knowledge to that of the angels. Or, the reference may be to the faculty of speech, which is the real source of the excellence of man above the whole of creation. To this the Holy Qur'ān refers elsewhere too: "He created man, taught him the mode of expression" (55:3, 4).

54 Man's superiority to the angels is made clear here. The angels were not gifted with the knowledge which was given to man, and the gift of knowledge was the greatest gift of God. The form of dialogue is kept up to indicate eternal truths. Man might be a maker of mischief and a shedder of blood, but he possessed vast capability for knowledge, and hence the angels' estimate of man, which looked only to the darker side of the picture, was not a right estimate. Evil there might be in him, but the good was preponderant.

Note that *ṣidq* (lit., *truth*) sometimes signifies *ṣawāb,* or *that which is right,* as *kidhb* (lit., *falsehood*) sometimes signifies *khaṭa',* i.e., that *which is wrong* (Rz).

55 "What you hide" refers to those great qualities in man which preponderate the evil in him, and which remain hidden until they are made manifest through the Divine gift of knowledge. The immense capability of man for progress remains hidden, while the evil of shedding bood is manifested in a very primary stage in his growth.

34 And when We said to the angels, Be submissive to Adam,[56] they submitted, but Iblīs[57] (did not).[58] He refused and was proud, and he was one of the disbelievers.[59]

وَاِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اسْجُدُوْا لِاٰدَمَ فَسَجَدُوْٓا اِلَّآ اِبْلِيْسَ ۭ اَبٰى وَاسْتَكْبَرَ ۤ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ۝

35 And We said: O Adam, dwell thou and thy wife in the garden,[60] and eat from it a plenteous (food)[61] wherever you wish, and approach not this tree,[62] lest you be of the unjust.

وَقُلْنَا يٰٓاٰدَمُ اسْكُنْ اَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا ۠ وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هٰذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُوْنَا مِنَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ۝

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56 *Sajada* is really synonymous with *khaḍ'a*, i.e., *he was lowly* or *submissive* (LL). In the Holy Qur'ān, the word is frequently used to signify simple submission. And you also say, *sajada la-hū*, meaning *he saluted him* or *he paid respect* or *honour to him* (LL).

What is the significance of the angels being submissive to Adam? In the first place, it must be remembered that Adam throughout this section stands for man generally; so submission is not limited to one particular man; it is to man generally. Secondly, it has already been shown that man has a superiority over the angels on account of his great gift of the knowledge of things, the angels being the controlling powers of the forces of nature. By his knowledge man could harness the forces of nature and exercise control over them; in other words, the angels submitted to him.

57 *Iblīs* was not one of the angels: "He was one of the jinn, so he transgressed" (18:50). In v. 36 he is called Satan. It should be borne in mind that *Iblīs* and Satan (Ar. *shaiṭān*) refer to one and the same being. The word Iblīs is used when the Evil one's evil is limited to himself, and Satan, when his evil affects others besides himself; or Iblīs is the proud one, and Satan the deceiver. Iblīs is derived from *balasa*, meaning *he despaired*, and *Shaiṭān* from *shaṭana*, meaning *he became distant* or *remote*. The same entity is thus mentioned under two different names; he is called Iblīs because he despairs of the mercy of God and *Shaiṭān* because he allures others to do things which remove them further off from Divine mercy. Iblīs therefore stands for the lower desires which keep man off from bowing before God and seeking His mercy, and Satan incites the low desires of man to lead others away from the path of rectitude.

What is the significance underlying the refusal of Iblīs to submit to man? As shown in the last footnote, the angels' submission meant that man could control the forces of nature by his knowledge of things; he could conquer nature. But he himself was a part of nature, and he could not conquer his own evil desires. His advancement lay in two directions; the conquest of nature and the conquest of his own self. He could attain the first end by the power of knowledge with which he was gifted, but the higher end, the conquest of self, needed yet another act of Divine mercy, the sending of Divine Revelation; and this is explained in this story of Adam in v. 38.

58 The thing excepted by means of *illā* (lit., *except*) is in some cases disunited in kind from that from which the exception is made, and the statement which follows *illā* is, therefore, a new statement altogether cut off from the first. Therefore instead of adopting the ordinary rendering, *with the exception of Iblīs*, I adopt *but Iblīs did not*.

59 Note that he refused to submit because he was a disbeliever, which further corroborates the statement that he was not one of the angels.

60, 61, 62, see next page.

36 But the devil made them slip from it,[63] and caused them to depart from the state in which they were. And We said: Go forth,[64] some of you are the enemies of others. And there is for you in the earth an abode and a provision for a time.[65]

فَأَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّيْطٰنُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا
فِيهِ ۖ وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوْا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ ۚ وَلَكُمْ
فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَّمَتَاعٌ إِلٰى حِيْنٍ ﴿٣٦﴾

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60 The garden spoken of in this verse was on this earth, as it was on the earth that man was placed. It was certainly not the paradise to which men go after death, and from which they will never be expelled (15:48). The placing in the garden signifies leading a life of ease and comfort, as is shown by the words that follow: "Eat from it a plenteous food wherever you wish". And more clearly still, the life in the garden is thus described in 20:117-119: "So let him not drive you both forth from the garden, so that you should be unhappy. Surely it is ordained for you that you are not hungry therein nor bare of clothing, and that you are not thirsty therein, nor do you feel the heat of the sun". And now, as it were, to complete the picture of happiness, the woman is brought in, and both Adam and his wife are made to dwell in the garden, though there is no mention of the wife in what has gone before. All this shows that life in the garden meant a life of comfort, ease and happiness.

61 *Raghad* here either qualifies an understood noun, and the meaning is *a plenteous food*, or it is indicative of the condition of Adam and Eve, and the words may thus be rendered: *Eat from it wherever you wish, having abundance of all things.*

62 According to the Bible, the tree which Adam was forbidden to approach was the tree of knowledge of good and evil; the Qur'ān does not say so. On the other hand, where the Devil deceives man, he calls it "the tree of immortality" (20:120). It was therefore just the opposite of what the Devil stated it to be. It was the tree of death, the spiritual death of man — the tree of evil. Adam undoubtedly stands for man in the whole of this description, and it is evil which man is again and again forbidden to approach, and it is evil against which all prophets of God have warned men. In the Qur'ān, it is always called *this* tree, which further shows that it was something which was known to man, and there is not the least doubt that not only has man been warned against evil throughout his history, but hatred for evil is also innate in him. That man hates evil by nature is shown by the fact that every man condemns evil when it is done by another. As regards the figurative use of the word *tree*, compare 14:24-26, where a good word is likened to "a good tree whose root is firm and whose branches are high, yielding its fruit in every season", and an evil word is likened to "an evil tree pulled up from the earth's surface — it has no stability". The order to eat from the earth a plenteous food but not to approach evil is really a description of what pure human nature is. Man is entitled to all the benefits of nature to maintain the body, to harness the forces of nature for his physical comforts and happiness, so long as he does not forget his soul. It is an order not to pamper the body at the expense of the soul, but it is as yet an order innate in human nature, not an order given by Divine Revelation — the need for revelation comes on later.

63 *Azalla* (translated as *made* them *slip*) is derived from *zall, to slip* (foot or tongue) *unintentionally* (R), and *zallat* is *a fault committed unintentionally* (R). *Azalla-humā* therefore means the Devil *made them commit a fault unintentionally.* The result was that they were made to depart from the happy condition in which they were. The lesson taught here is that real happiness lies in peace of mind, so that when the peace of mind is disturbed by committing an evil, even if it be unintentional, physical happiness does not avail a man.

How did the Devil do it? Here the Qur'ān again contradicts the Bible. It was not the serpent that misled Eve, nor did Eve mislead Adam. The Devil cast an evil suggestion into the minds of both Adam and Eve, as he casts evil

64, 65, see next page.

37 Then Adam received (revealed) words from his Lord, and He turned to him (mercifully).[66] Surely He is Oft-returning (to mercy), the Merciful.

فَتَلَقّٰۤی اٰدَمُ مِنۡ رَّبِّہٖ کَلِمٰتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَیۡہِ ؕ اِنَّہٗ ہُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِیۡمُ ﴿۳۷﴾

38 We said: Go forth from this state all. Surely there will come to you a guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve.[66a]

قُلۡنَا اہۡبِطُوۡا مِنۡہَا جَمِیۡعًا ۚ فَاِمَّا یَاۡتِیَنَّکُمۡ مِّنِّیۡ ہُدًی فَمَنۡ تَبِعَ ہُدَایَ فَلَا خَوۡفٌ عَلَیۡہِمۡ وَ لَا ہُمۡ یَحۡزَنُوۡنَ ﴿۳۸﴾

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suggestions into the mind of every son and daughter of Adam and Eve: "But the Devil made an evil suggestion to them that he might make manifest to them what had been hidden from them of their evil inclinations" (7:20).

64 *Habṭ* sometimes means *going down a declivity*, or *descending from a high place to a low one,* but its more frequent use in literature is simply in the sense of *removing from one place to another*, as in *ihbiṭū miṣr-an* (2:61), which means *go to*, or *enter into, a city.* It also signifies simply change in condition. According to LL, *habaṭa* means *he came forth from it* and also *he became lowered or degraded.* And *habṭ* further signifies *falling into evil;* or *becoming low* or *abject;* or *suffering loss* or *diminution.* This loss or suffering is brought about by means of indulgence in evil.

The new condition in which man finds himself by submitting to his low desires is the condition of the mutual enmity of one to the other, the tyranny of man to man being undoubtedly the greatest evil which man can commit. The use of the word "some of you being the enemies of others" shows clearly that this address is not to Adam and Eve alone, but to all mankind or man in general.

65 The words "an abode and a provision for a time" refer to man's span of life on earth, which is limited as compared with the eternal life of the next world.

66 The Arabic word *taubah* (*repentance*) gives us in fact the philosophy of repentance. *Tāba* originally means *he returned,* and hence the primary meaning of *tāba il-Allāhi* is *he returned to Allāh.* In religious terminology the word *taubah* comes to mean the *returning to a state of obedience.* Thus *taubah* implies a perfect change in the course of one's life, and this is repentence according to the Holy Qur'ān. It is not an utterance of certain words, but an actual *change* for the better. The same word *tāba* is used to express the Divine act of the acceptance of repentance, with reference again to the original meaning of the word, because in this case the Divine Being deals with man mercifully.

Kalimāt (*words*) here means *the revealed words of God.* Man is found too weak to overcome the evil suggestions of the Devil or the evil inclinations in him, however strong he may be to conquer the forces of nature. So God comes to his help and reveals Himself to him. He sends down revelation which strengthening his faith in God gives him the strength to overcome the Devil and reject his suggestions.

66a This section is now closed with the statement of a general law that Divine Revelation will be granted to the whole of humanity and prophets will appear everywhere from time to time, and that it would be by following the Guidance sent by God through His prophets that men will attain to perfection. This state of perfection is described as a state in which "no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve". The man who truly follows the Divine Revelation shall have no fear of the Devil misleading him, for he has subjugated his devil, nor shall he grieve that he wasted the opportunity given him in this life, for he turned it to the best use.

39 And (as to) those who disbelieve in and reject Our messages,[67] they are the companions of the Fire; in it they will abide.[68]

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

SECTION 5: **Israelite Prophecies fulfilled in Qur'ān**

40 O Children of Israel, call to mind My favour which I bestowed on you and be faithful to (your) covenant with Me, I shall fulfil (My) covenant with you;[69] and Me, Me alone, should you fear.

يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِي أُوفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ فَارْهَبُونِ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 And believe in that which I have revealed, verifying that which is with you,[70] and be not the first to deny it; neither take a mean price[71] for My messages; and keep your duty to Me, Me alone.

وَآمِنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتُ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَكُمْ وَلَا تَكُونُوا أَوَّلَ كَافِرٍ بِهِ ۖ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا وَإِيَّايَ فَاتَّقُونِ ﴿٤١﴾

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67 The word *āyat* (plural *āyāt*), which occurs for the first time here, is of very frequent occurrence in the Holy Qur'ān and conveys a number of significances. The primary meaning of *āyat* is *an apparent sign* or *mark* (R), by which a thing is known. Hence it comes to signify *a sign* as meaning *an indication* or *evidence* or *proof* (T, LL). In this sense it signifies what is called a *mu'jizah* or *a miracle*, instead of which the Holy Qur'ān always uses the word *āyat*, thus showing that the miracles of which it speaks are not *wonders* but actual *evidence* or *proof* of the truth of a prophet. But the most frequent use of the word *āyat* in the Holy Qur'ān is to signify *a message* or *a communication* and it is in this sense that the word is applied to a verse of the Holy Qur'ān, i.e., *a collection of the words of the Holy Qur'ān continued to its breaking*, or *a portion of the Qur'ān after which a suspension of the speech is approvable* (T, LL). But it generally retains the wider significance of *a sign* or *a mark*, or *a Divine message* or *a Divine communication*.

68 As against those who attain to perfection by following the Divine message, the people spoken of in this verse are those who not only disbelieve but also exert their utmost to oppose revealed truth and uproot it. Such people are described as companions of the Fire. They keep company with evil in this life, so the fire becomes their companion in the next to purge them of the evil consequences of their evil deeds. Their hearts burn with evil passions in this life, and it is this very fire that assumes a palpable shape in the next.

Khalada signifies originally *he remained* or *abode*, or *remained* or *abode long*, being synonymous with *aqāma* (A). Hence you say *khwālid* (plural of *khālid*), meaning *the three stones upon which the cooking-pot is placed*, so called because of their remaining for a long time after the standing relics of a house have become effaced (LL). Therefore ***khālidūn*** signifies simply ***abiding***, and does not necessarily convey the idea of perpetuity.

69 After speaking of the need of Divine Revelation, the Qur'ān now speaks of a nation to whom this favour was granted, among whom many prophets were raised and who were also made rulers in the earth: "Remember the favour of Allāh to you when He raised prophets among you and made you kings and gave

70, 71, see next page.

42 And mix not up truth with falsehood, nor hide the truth while you know.[73]

وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 And keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate[73a] and bow down with those who bow down.

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكٰوةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرّٰكِعِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 Do you enjoin men to be good and neglect your own souls while you read the Book? Have you then no sense?[74]

أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتٰبَ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 And seek assistance through patience and prayer,[75] and this is hard except for the humble ones,

وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلٰوةِ ۚ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخٰشِعِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 Who know[76] that they will meet their Lord and that to Him they will return.

الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلٰقُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رٰجِعُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

you what He gave not to any other among the nations" (5:20). The Jewish people who are addressed here are generally mentioned as Children of Israel, Israel being the other name of Jacob, son of Isaac, son of Abraham.

As for the covenants spoken of here, see Deut. 26:17-19: "Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in His ways, and to keep His statutes, and His commandments, and His judgement, and to hearken unto His voice. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be His peculiar people, as He hath promised thee, and that thou shouldst keep all His commandments; and to make thee high above all nations which He hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour". "The hearkening unto the voice of the Lord" means the acceptance of the revelation to the promised prophet of Deut. 18:18, as Deut. 18:19 shows clearly: "And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him".

70 The verification referred to here is clearly the fulfilment of the promise contained in Deut. 18:15-18: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken . . . . I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him". It is nowhere but in the Holy Qur'ān that the "word of God", as promised here, is "put into the Prophet's mouth", and no prophet ever claimed to have come in fulfilment of this prophecy except the Holy Prophet Muḥammad. The whole of the Israelite history after Moses is silent as to the appearance of the promised prophet of Deut. Even Jesus Christ never said that he came in fulfilment of that prophecy and his apostles truly felt that difficulty when they thought that that prophecy would be fulfilled in the second coming of Christ. But one of the earliest messages of the Holy Prophet was that he was the like of the prophet sent to Pharaoh (73:15), and the claim is often repeated in the Holy Qur'ān.

71 The religious leaders are specially addressed in this section. They rejected the truth which the Prophet brought, fearing to lose their high position as leaders. They thus sacrificed truth to the inducements of this life, and took "a mean price" for it.

73 It is again the religious leaders who are spoken of here: "Mixing up the truth with falsehood" signifies their *mixing up the prophecy with their own false interpretations of it,* and thus making obscure the prophecy itself, while

73a, 74, 75, 76, **see next page.**

SECTION 6 : **Divine Favours on Israel**

47 O Children of Israel, call to mind My favour which I bestowed on you and that I made you excel the nations.[77]

يٰبَنِيٓ اِسۡرَآءِيۡلَ اذۡكُرُوۡا نِعۡمَتِيَ الَّتِيۡٓ اَنۡعَمۡتُ عَلَيۡكُمۡ وَاَنِّيۡ فَضَّلۡتُكُمۡ عَلَى الۡعٰلَمِيۡنَ ﴿۴۷﴾

48 And guard yourselves against a day when no soul will avail another in the least,[78] neither will intercession be accepted on its behalf,[79] nor will compensation be taken from it, nor will they be helped.

وَاتَّقُوۡا يَوۡمًا لَّا تَجۡزِىۡ نَفۡسٌ عَنۡ نَّفۡسٍ شَيۡـًٔا وَّلَا يُقۡبَلُ مِنۡهَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَّلَا يُؤۡخَذُ مِنۡهَا عَدۡلٌ وَّلَا هُمۡ يُنۡصَرُوۡنَ ﴿۴۸﴾

"hiding the truth" signifies their *concealing the prophecy itself*, for they often commanded their followers not to disclose to the Muslims those prophecies which were known to them. Compare v. 76. Or, by the ***truth*** is meant that which was revealed to their prophets, and by ***falsehood*** their own ideas which they mixed up with Divine Revelation.

73a These are the two fundamental principles of religion, worship of God through prayer to Him, and service of humanity or helping the poor.

74 The leaders enjoined their followers to be good because they could not remain leaders otherwise, but their own lives were corrupt. They read the Book and yet they did not follow it; how could the ignorant masses benefit by their preaching?

75 A sign of the promised prophet of Deut. 18:18 was that he would utter prophecies which would prove true. "And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not nor come to pass, this is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deut. 18:21, 22). The Qur'ān had in the Prophet's utter helplessness at Makkah, and when the Quraish were day and night planning to take away his very life, uttered forcible predictions of the final triumph of the Prophet and of the vanquishment and discomfiture of his opponents, and those prophecies were now being fulfilled. They were, therefore, asked to wait until the Truth shone out in its full resplendence and to seek Divine help through prayer.

76 *Ẓann* signifies *thought, opinion* or *conjecture,* and also *knowledge* or *certainty* which "is obtained by considering with endeavour to understand, not by ocular perception, or not such as relates to an object of sense" (LL).

77 By "the nations" are meant *the people contemporaneous with the Israelites in their days of triumph,* or *large masses of people* (AH). Numerous prophets were raised among them, and they were made to rule in the earth, and these are the favours of which Moses also reminds them (5:20).

78 The Jewish religious leaders are specially addressed in the previous section. The masses who followed them blindly are now told that their leaders will not avail them aught on the great day of Reckoning when every soul is held responsible for what it did.

79 *Shafā'at* (meaning *intercession*) is derived from the root *shaf'*, which signifies *the making* a thing *to be one of a pair* (T, LL) or *the adjoining* a thing *to its like* (R), and hence it comes to signify *intercession.* The doctrine of *shafā'at* or intercession is a well-known doctrine, according to which the prophets and the righteous will intercede for the sinners on the day of Judgement. But intercession has another significance also, which is referred to in 4:85, viz., the institution of a way which another imitates, so that the latter, in fact, joins himself to his model, and this is really the primary significance of *shafā'at*. Thus *shafā'at*

49 And when We delivered you from Pharaoh's people, who subjected you to severe torment,[80] killing your sons and sparing your women,[81] and in this there was a great trial from your Lord.

وَاِذْ نَجَّيْنٰكُمْ مِّنْ اٰلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُوْمُوْنَكُمْ سُوْٓءَ
الْعَذَابِ يُذَبِّحُوْنَ اَبْنَآءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُوْنَ نِسَآءَكُمْ
وَفِيْ ذٰلِكُمْ بَلَآءٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ عَظِيْمٌ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 And when We parted the sea for you, so We saved you and drowned the people of Pharaoh while you saw.[82]

وَاِذْ فَرَقْنَا بِكُمُ الْبَحْرَ فَاَنْجَيْنٰكُمْ وَاَغْرَقْنَآ اٰلَ
فِرْعَوْنَ وَاَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُوْنَ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 And when We appointed a time of forty nights[83] with Moses, then you took the calf (for a god)[84] after him, and you were unjust.

وَاِذْ وٰعَدْنَا مُوْسٰٓى اَرْبَعِيْنَ لَيْلَةً ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ
الْعِجْلَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِهٖ وَاَنْتُمْ ظٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿٥١﴾

52 Then We pardoned you after that so that you might give thanks.

ثُمَّ عَفَوْنَا عَنْكُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ ذٰلِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿٥٢﴾

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has a twofold significance, viz., firstly it enables a man to walk in the ways of righteousness by imitating his model, and, secondly, it affords him a shelter from the evil consequences of certain weaknesses which he is unable to overcome by himself.

The statement made here, that intercession shall not be accepted on a certain day, is in reference to those who have not made themselves deserving of intercession by joining themselves with a righteous servant of God, so as to take him for their model. It is only people who have done their best to follow a righteous servant of God and failed in some respects owing to mortal weaknesses that can benefit by intercession, not those who pay no regard at all to Divine commandments.

80 No details of the oppressions to which the Israelites were subjected are given in the Holy Qur'ān. According to the Bible: "They did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens" (Exod. 1:11); "And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service wherein they made them serve was with rigour" (Exod. 1:14).

81 See Exod. 1:15-18 and also 1:22: "And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive". The object was to demoralize and extirpate the Israelites.

82 The Qur'ān does not say how the Israelites were made to pass through the sea or in what manner the parting of the sea was brought about. The word *baḥr* means *a sea* or *a river*. As the Bible says, it was the northern extremity of the Red sea; "the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night" (Exod. 14:21), thus enabling the Israelites to get through. Another explanation is that the Israelites passed when the sea receded on account of the ebb, and the Egyptians were drowned because the tide was on at the time, and in their zeal to overtake the Israelites they did not care for it. Elsewhere the Qur'ān says: "And We revealed to Moses, saying: Travel by night with My servants, then strike for them a dry path in the sea" (20:77). See also 1593.

83 "And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and got him up into the Mount: and Moses was in the Mount forty days and forty nights" (Exod. 24:18).

84 Details are contained in 20:86-97. The story of the making of the calf is contained in the Bible in the 32nd chapter of Exodus. The only important difference is that while the making of the calf is attributed to Aaron in the Bible, the Holy Qur'ān declares that prophet to be innocent in the matter, and ascribes

53 And when We gave Moses the Book and the Discrimination[85] that you might walk aright.

وَاِذۡ اٰتَيۡنَا مُوۡسَى الۡكِتٰبَ وَالۡفُرۡقَانَ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَهۡتَدُوۡنَ ﴿۵۳﴾

54 And when Moses said to his people: O my people, you have surely wronged yourselves by taking the calf (for a god), so turn to your Creator (penitently), and kill your passions.[86] That is best for you with your Creator. So He turned to you (mercifully). Surely He is the Oft-returning (to mercy), the Merciful.

وَاِذۡ قَالَ مُوۡسٰى لِقَوۡمِهٖ يٰقَوۡمِ اِنَّكُمۡ ظَلَمۡتُمۡ اَنۡفُسَكُمۡ بِاتِّخَاذِكُمُ الۡعِجۡلَ فَتُوۡبُوۡۤا اِلٰى بَارِئِكُمۡ فَاقۡتُلُوۡۤا اَنۡفُسَكُمۡ ؕ ذٰلِكُمۡ خَيۡرٌ لَّكُمۡ عِنۡدَ بَارِئِكُمۡ ؕ فَتَابَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ ؕ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيۡمُ ﴿۵۴﴾

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the leadership in the making of the calf and its worship to *Sāmirī*. The idea of calf, or bull-worship, seems to have been taken by the Israelites from the Egyptians. In the opinion of Renan, Maspero, and Konig, "bull-worship may have been an imitation of the worship of Apis at Memphis or of Mendis at Heliopolis" (En. Bib. col. 631). The writer of the article on the golden calf is, however, of opinion that "adoption from Egypt is unlikely", and his chief reason is that "the Egyptians worshipped only living animals". But the Israelites, too, seem to have been addicted to the worship of living animals in the time of Moses, as the incident narrated in vv. 67-71 shows, and the calf was only an image of a living animal, and at any rate four hundred years' contact with the Egyptians could not have been without its influence, bull-worship dating from a very remote antiquity in Egypt. It was for this reason that the Mosaic law laid great stress upon the slaughter of cows, and the commandment mentioned in v. 67 seems to have been given for the same reason. Notwithstanding all that Moses did to uproot this form of idolatry from among the Israelites, the worshipping of the bull appears to have continued up to the time of Hosea, who rails at it in very strong terms (Hos. 8:5; 10:5).

85 The original word is *furqān*, an infinitive noun from the root *farq*, which signifies *the making of distinction between two things*, and *furqān*, according to LL is *anything that makes a separation* or *distinction between truth and falsity*, and hence it signifies a *proof* or *demonstration* and also *aid* or *victory*. The *furqān* or *discrimination* which is here spoken of as being given to Moses was Pharaoh's drowning in the sea and the deliverance of the Israelites. The battle of *Badr* afforded the *furqān* or *discrimination* in the case of the Holy Prophet, and hence the battle of Badr is called *yaum al-furqān* or *the day of discrimination* in 8:41.

86 According to the Bible, the children of Levi were commanded to slay the others, and three thousand men were killed on that day. On the basis of this Bible story, the words *fa-qtulū anfusa-kum* occurring here have been translated as meaning *kill your people*. The context does not allow this interpretation. In the first place, the words are preceded by an order to repent and it could not be followed by an order to kill. Secondly, the words that follow are, *so He turned to you mercifully*, and an order to kill three thousand people could not be called a merciful dealing. Thirdly, it has already been made clear in v. 52 that God pardoned them for the offence of taking the calf for a god: *Then We pardoned you after that so that you might give thanks*. They could not be asked to give thanks for being killed. The order to kill is inconsistent with the statement that they were pardoned. Fourthly, when the same incident is narrated elsewhere, there is a clear statement that they were granted a pardon and there is no mention of killing: "Then they took the calf for a god, after clear signs had come to them, but We pardoned this" (4:153). Fifthly, according to the Qur'ān even Sāmirī, the leader of calf-worship, was not killed and was dismissed simply with the order: "Begone! Surely for thee in this life it would be to say, Touch me not" (20:97).

55 And when you said: O Moses, we will not believe in thee till we see Allāh manifestly, so the punishment overtook you while you looked on.[87]

وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يٰمُوسٰى لَنْ نُّؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتّٰى نَرَى اللّٰهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْكُمُ الصّٰعِقَةُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُوْنَ ﴿٥٥﴾

56 Then We raised you up after your stupor that you might give thanks.[88]

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنٰكُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَوْتِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 And We made the clouds to give shade over you[89] and We sent to you manna and quails.[90] Eat of the good things that We have given you. And they did not do Us any harm, but they wronged their own souls.

وَظَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْغَمَامَ وَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَنَّ وَالسَّلْوٰى ط كُلُوْا مِنْ طَيِّبٰتِ مَا رَزَقْنٰكُمْ ط وَمَا ظَلَمُوْنَا وَلٰكِنْ كَانُوْٓا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُوْنَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 And when We said: Enter this city,[91] then eat from it a plenteous (food) whence you wish, and enter

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا ادْخُلُوْا هٰذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ فَكُلُوْا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ رَغَدًا وَّادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا

Hence the Holy Qur'ān rejects the Bible story of the Israelites being killed as a punishment for calf-worship. They were pardoned and were told simply to repent, and God accepted their repentence as clearly stated here. Therefore *anfusa-kum* does not mean here *your people*, but *your desires* or *your passions*, for the word *nafs*, of which *anfus* is the plural, means not only *self* or *soul* but also *intention, desire* or *passion*. In fact, it was an order not to kill but to mortify, and this is the only interpretation which can be given to these words consistent with the clear mention of God's pardoning them and turning to them mercifully. I may add that no prophet or religion has ever taught that a man can be killed for the worship of an object other than God.

87 The reference to this story contained in the Bible is in Exod. 19:16, 17: "And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the Mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the Mount". The Talmud gives the details.

Ṣā'iqah originally signifies *thunder* or *the sound of thunder*, and hence *any vehement cry* (T, LL); it also means any *destructive punishment* (LL). The same incident is referred to in 7:155, in the following words: "And Moses chose out of his people seventy men for Our appointment, and when the earthquake overtook them". Thus the *ṣā'iqah* of this verse is the same as the *earthquake* in 7:155, and thus it here signifies the rumbling noise which precedes an earthquake.

88 The word *maut* does not always mean cessation of life. It also signifies *loss of sensation, deprivation of intellectual faculties, experiencing great grief and sorrow, sleep*, etc. (R, LL). The *maut* mentioned in this verse refers to temporary loss of sensation, because on the same occasion Moses is spoken of as having fallen down "in swoon" (7:143), and the statement is followed by the words "when he *recovered*". A similar fate overtook his companions.

89 The Bible speaks of a cloud, clear and bright during the night, thick and gloomy in day time (Exod. 13:21), a very unnatural phenomenon to continue for forty years. The Qur'ān simply speaks of clouds having given them shade at some point in their journey in the wilderness, when probably the excessive heat of the Arabian Desert had become unbearable.

90, 91, see next page

the gate submissively,[92] and make petition for forgiveness.[93] We will forgive you your wrongs and increase the reward of those who do good (to others).

وَّقُوْلُوْا حِطَّةٌ نَّغْفِرْ لَكُمْ خَطٰيٰكُمْ ۚ وَسَنَزِيْدُ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿۵۸﴾

59 But those who were unjust changed the word which had been spoken to them, for another saying,[94] so We sent upon the wrongdoers a pestilence from heaven, because they transgressed.[95]

فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا قَوْلًا غَيْرَ الَّذِيْ قِيْلَ لَهُمْ فَاَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا رِجْزًا مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَفْسُقُوْنَ ﴿۵۹﴾

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90 The *mann* and *salwa* are the manna and quails of Exodus, 16th chapter, Literally, ***mann* is *anything which comes to man without much effort*** (LL). In a saying of the Holy Prophet ***the truffle*** is spoken of as being ***mann***. LL has the following explanation under the word *turanjabīn*: "A kind of manna; the manna of the thorny plants called by the Arabs the *hāj*, and hence by European botanists *Alhagi;* according to Dr. Royle it is a sweetish juice which exudes from the *Alhagi maurorum,* crystallizes into small granular masses, and is usually distinguished by the name of Persian manna; a kind of dew that falls mostly in Khurāsān and Mā-warā al-nahr and in our country, mostly upon the *hāj;* the best thereof is that which is fresh or moist and white (Ibn Sīnā), ***the mann* or *manna*** mentioned in the Qur'ān". Some say it was honey. *Salwā* means ***whatever renders one content in a case of privation.*** It is a certain bird resembling the quail (LL). The ***mann*** and the *salwā* formed the food of the Israelites in the wilderness. According to Zj, it includes all that Allāh bestowed on them as a gift in the wilderness and granted to them freely without much exertion on their part (AH).

91 The city is probably Shittim: "And they pitched by Jordan, from Beth-Jesimoth even unto Abel-Shittim in the plains of Moab", or Jericho, which was near by in the same plain (Num. 33: 49, 50). Here it was that the worst features of the wickedness of the Israelites were displayed: "And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab" (Num. 25: 1). Or, the reference may be to the Holy Land, as stated elsewhere: "O my people, enter the Holy Land which Allāh has ordained for you" (5: 21).

92 They were told to remain submissive while abiding in a city where they would be able to enjoy the comforts of life. See 56 for the significance of *sajdah.*

93 *Ḥiṭṭat-un* (from *ḥaṭṭa,* meaning ***he put it down***) is a ***prayer for the putting down of the heavy burden of sins*** from one. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said to his followers: "Say, *We ask forgiveness of Allāh and turn to Him penitently*"; and to have added: "This is, to be sure, the ***ḥiṭṭat-un*** which the Israelites were commanded to say" (IH, ch. Ḥudaibiyah). By ***qaul*** the Arabs express all kinds of deeds (I, A). ***Qūlū ḥiṭṭat-un*** therefore stands for a petition for forgiveness or for ***being repentant.***

94 That is to say, they went against the Divine commandment. The Bible says: "The people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baal-Peor, and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel" (Num. 25: 1-3).

95 When a punishment overtakes a people as a consequence of their wicked deeds it is spoken of as coming from heaven, the significance probably being that it cannot be averted. The pestilence spoken of here is referred to in the Bible in Num. 25: 8, 9, according to which 24,000 men died of the plague. The same incident is again referred to in 7: 161, 162.

SECTION 7: **Divine Favours on Israel**

60 And when Moses prayed for water for his people, We said: March on to the rock with thy staff.[96] So there flowed from it twelve springs. Each tribe knew their drinking-place.[97] Eat and drink of the provisions of Allāh, and act not corruptly, making mischief in the land.

وَإِذِ اسْتَسْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ فَقُلْنَا اضْرِب بِّعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ ۖ فَانفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا ۖ قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَّشْرَبَهُمْ ۖ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا مِن رِّزْقِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْثَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ۝

61 And when you said: O Moses, we cannot endure one food,[98] so pray thy Lord on our behalf to bring forth for us out of what the earth

وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَىٰ لَن نَّصْبِرَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامٍ وَاحِدٍ فَادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا مِمَّا تُنبِتُ الْأَرْضُ

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96 The words *idrib bi'asā ka-l-hajara* may be translated in two ways, *strike the rock with thy staff*, or *march on* or *go forth* or *hasten, to the rock with thy staff*. *Ḍarb* means *striking, smiting, marching on, going from place to place, setting forth a parable*, and carries a number of other significances. In fact, *ḍarb* is used to indicate all kinds of actions except a few (T). When *arḍ* (*land* or *earth*) is its object, it carries the significance of *going about* or *seeking a way*. Thus *ḍaraba-l-arḍa* or *ḍaraba fi-l-arḍi* both signify *he journeyed in the land* or *went forth* or *hastened in the land* (LL). The object of *iḍrib* here is *al-ḥajar* which means *a rock* or *a mountain* to which there is no access, as explained by Tha'labī (LL). *'Aṣā* ordinarily means *staff* or *rod*, but its primary significance is *a state of combination* (T, LL), and the word is metaphorically used to speak of a community. Thus of the Khwārij, a Muslim sect, it is said, *shaqqū 'asa-l-Muslimīna* (lit., *they broke the staff of the Muslims*) which means that *they made a schism in the state of combination and union*, or *in the community of the Muslims* (LA). Hence the words may mean *strike the rock with thy staff*, or *march on to the mountain with thy staff* or *thy community*.

The story that Moses carried a stone with him and that twelve springs flowed from it whenever, placing it in the wilderness, he struck it with his staff, has no foundation in the words of the Holy Qur'ān or any saying of the Prophet. What the words of the Qur'ān signify is either that Moses was commanded by God to smite a particular rock with his staff from which water flowed forth miraculously, or to march on to a mountain from which springs flowed. The Bible does not contain any contemporaneous record of the events, and what it contains does not render much help. In Exod. 17:1-6 we are told that Moses went with the elders to the rock of Horeb, and on his smiting the rock with his rod water flowed out, but there is no mention of twelve springs there. But as Marah (Exod. 15:23) is now known by the name of *'uyūn Mūsā*, i.e., the springs of Moses (Bib. Dict., Cambridge Press, Art. "Wilderness"), it is very doubtful whether the incident referred to in Exod. 17:1-6 is correctly recorded, the more so as there is hopeless confusion about the other incidents related to have occurred at Rephidim, the scene of the smiting of the rock.

97 The number of springs is in accordance with the number of the Israelite tribes. It is very probable that the reference in this verse is to the twelve wells at Elim (Exod. 15:27), to which place the Israelites had gone from Marah. Moreover, the twelve tribes could settle on twelve springs apart from each other only if the springs were situated at a distance from each other and did not flow from one source. Compare also the next verse, according to which the demand for a variety of foods is granted by pointing out the natural course of settling in a town and tilling the ground.

98 " We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers

grows, of its herbs and its cucumbers and its garlic[99] and its lentils and its onions. He said: Would you exchange that which is better for that which is worse? Enter a city,[100] so you will have what you ask for. And abasement and humiliation were stamped upon them, and they incurred Allāh's wrath.[101] That was so because they disbelieved in the messages of Allāh and would kill the prophets unjustly.[102] That was so because they disobeyed and exceeded the limits.

مِنۢ بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّآئِهَا وَفُومِهَا وَعَدَسِهَا وَبَصَلِهَا
قَالَ أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ الَّذِىْ هُوَ أَدْنٰى بِالَّذِىْ هُوَ
خَيْرٌ ؕ اِهْبِطُوْا مِصْرًا فَإِنَّ لَكُمْ مَّا سَأَلْتُمْ ؕ وَ
ضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ وَالْمَسْكَنَةُ ۚ وَبَآءُوْ
بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ؕ ذٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا يَكْفُرُوْنَ
بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَيَقْتُلُوْنَ النَّبِيّٖنَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ؕ
ذٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَّكَانُوْا يَعْتَدُوْنَ ﴿٦١﴾

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and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic. But now our soul is dried away, there is nothing at all besides this manna before our eyes . . . . Then Moses heard the people weep throughout their families, every man in the door of his tent" (Num. 11:5-10).

99 The Israelites were required to live a hard life which would make them fit for conquering the Holy Land; this was better for them. But they wanted to live a life of ease and to have all kinds of food which they could get only by settling in towns and tilling the land.

100 Sale's translation, "Get ye down into Egypt," is decidedly wrong. The word *misr* is used here as a common noun, and means a *city*. Hazeroth (Num. 11:35) seems to have been the place referred to here, "a station in the desert journey, the second after leaving Senai, probably to be identified with the modern 'Ain al-Huderah, about forty miles N.E. of Jabal Mūsā" (Bib. Dict., Cam.).

101 The verse speaks of the ultimate condition to which the Israelites were reduced when they persisted in setting at naught the Divine commandments and indulged in immoral and depraved practices. A comparison with 3:111 will show the truth of this remark, for that verse, which is almost identical with the one under discussion, clearly refers to the later history of Israel. The truth of this prophecy regarding the fate of the Jewish nation is amply borne out by Jewish history. The Jews are the wealthiest of nations but their lot is miserable in almost every country of the world, notwithstanding their great influence in politics it remains so to this day. Moses had promised the same fate for them: "The Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from one end of the earth even unto the other . . . . And among those nations thou shalt find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; but the Lord shall give thee a trembling heart, and failing of eyes and sorrow of mind" (Deut. 28:64, 65).

102 Jesus also holds the Jews guilty for "all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias" (Matt. 23:35), and condemns them for their hypocritical assertion that "if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets" (Matt. 23:30). There is an allusion here to the Jewish plans against the life of the Prophet also. The word *qatl* signifies sometimes an attempt to kill or the *doing of things which may lead to murder whether murder actually takes place or not* (RM). Whether any prophets were actually killed or not is a different question, but they undoubtedly tried to kill prophets, and made several attempts to kill the Holy Prophet Muhammad too.

SECTION 8 : **Israelites' Degeneration**

62 Surely those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabians,[103] whoever believes in Allāh and the Last Day and does good, they have their reward with their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve.[104]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَىٰ
وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 And when We made a covenant with you and raised the mountain above you:[105] Hold fast that which We have given you, and bear in mind what is in it, so that you may guard against evil.

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ
الطُّورَ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاذْكُرُوا
مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 Then after that you turned back; and had it not been for the grace of Allāh and His mercy on you, you had certainly been among the losers.

ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ
عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَكُنْتُمْ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

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103 The Sabians are mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān on three occasions only, here and in 5:69 along with the Jews and the Christians, and in 22:17 with these and the Magians. According to En. Br., the Sabians were a semi-Christian sect of Babylonia, closely resembling the so-called "Christians of St. John the Baptist". The probable derivation of the name is traced to an Aramaic root, and the root meaning is said to be *those who wash themselves*, and this is said to be corroborated by Arab writers applying to them the name *al-Mughtasilah*. The idea that the Sabians were star-worshippers is rejected; the error, it is said, being due to the pseudo-Sabians of Harrian, who chose to be known by that name in the reign of Al-Māmūn, in 830 A.D., in order to be classed as the "People of the Book". The commentators hold different opinions regarding them, most of them agreeing that they are representatives of a religion between Judaism and Christianity, based on the doctrine of unity, but also maintaining worship of angels. The majority do not include them in the Ahl al-Kitāb (AH).

104 This verse strikes at the root of the idea of a favoured nation whose members alone may be entitled to salvation. The subject is introduced here to show that even the Jews, notwithstanding their transgressions which had made them deserving of Divine wrath, were entitled to a goodly reward if they believed and did good deeds. It should be borne in mind that, as shown in 9, belief in Allāh and the Last Day is equivalent to belief in Islām as the true religion. The statement made amounts to this, that salvation cannot be attained by mere lip-profession by any people, not even by the Muslims, unless they adhere to a true belief and do good deeds. As to those who stick to their own religions, we are told in 22:17 that "Allāh will judge between them on the day of Resurrection" The existence of good men in other religions is not denied by the Holy Qur'ān, but perfect peace, or the state of absolute contentment which is indicated by freedom from fear and grief, is obtainable only in Islām, because Islām alone is the religion of absolute submission to the Divine Being.

105 "They stood at the nether part of the mount" (Exod. 19:17). There is nothing in the words of the Qur'ān to support the baseless story that the

65 And indeed you know those among you who violated the Sabbath,[106] so We said to them: Be (as) apes, despised and hated.[107]

وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ الَّذِيْنَ اعْتَدَوْا مِنْكُمْ فِي السَّبْتِ فَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُوْنُوْا قِرَدَةً خٰسِئِيْنَ ۝٦٥

66 So We made them an example to those who witnessed it and those who came after it and an admonition to those who guard against evil.

فَجَعَلْنٰهَا نَكَالًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهَا وَمَا خَلْفَهَا وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ۝٦٦

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mountain was suspended in mid-heaven over the heads of the Israelites to frighten them into submission (see 957). The use of the word *raf'* is in accordance with the Arabic idiom, for it signifies the *rearing* or *uprearing* of a building, or *making it high* or *lofty* (R, LL). In this sense the word is used in v. 127.

106 The root meaning of *sabt* (from which *Sabt,* meaning Sabbath, is derived) is *cutting off* (R). The *Sabt* or the Sabbath is so called *because the Jews ceased thereon from work* (T). The Jews and the Christians observed a particular day for religious worship, and they were forbidden to do any work on that day. In this sense there is no Sabbath among the Muslims, because in Islām no particular day is set apart for Divine worship. On the other hand, the Muslim is required to pray in the very midst of his everyday work, and even the Jumu'ah (Friday) prayers are no exception, for the Qur'ān expressly allows the doing of work both before and after the Jumu'ah prayers (2505).

The commandments regarding the observance of the Sabbath by the Jews are manifold, but we find the Jews so persistently violating them that the later prophets openly reproved them for it (see 107).

107 Mjd explains this in the following words: *They were not transformed or metamorphosed; it is only a parable which Allāh has set forth for them, the like of what He has set forth in likening them to asses* (62:5), i.e., *their hearts were transformed, not that they were metamorphosed into apes* (IJ). The verse that follows lends support to this explanation as a monkey could not afford a lesson to the generations that came after the metamorphosis had taken place. R observes in explaining this verse: *It is said that He rather made them morally like apes.* Compare also 5:60: "(Worse is he) whom Allāh has cursed, and brought His wrath upon him, and of whom He made apes and swine, and he who served the devil: these are worse in place and more erring from the straight path". This description of the same people clearly shows that it is men who imitate apes and swine that are meant. See also 4:47: "Or (We shall) curse them as We cursed the violators of the Sabbath". Now, in the case of the Holy Prophet's opponents from among the Jews, who are referred to in the words, *We shall curse them,* there was no metamorphosis, but here it is stated that the same curse must overtake them as overtook the violators of the Sabbath. A reference to Deut. 28 will show that the curses which Moses prophesied for them meant their being scattered among the nations of the earth, and this was the fate which overtook the Prophet's enemies from among the Jews. *Qiradah* is the plural of *qird,* meaning *an ape,* and among the Arabs the ape is a proverbially incontinent animal, they say *more incontinent than an ape* (LL).

Turning to the Bible, we find that the Israelites became *apes,* in all the senses in which that word is used in the Arabic language, by violating the Divine commandments: "Thou hast despised Mine holy things, and hast profaned My Sabbath. In thee are men that carry tales to shed blood: and in thee they eat upon the mountains; in the midst of thee they commit lewdness. In thee have they discovered their father's nakedness: in thee have they humbled her that was set apart for pollution. And one hath committed abomination with his neighbour's wife; and another hath lewdly defiled his daughter-in-law; and another in thee hath humbled his sister, his father's daughter . . . . And I will scatter thee among the heathen and disperse thee in the countries" (Ezek. 22:8-15).

67 And when Moses said to his people: Surely Allāh commands you to sacrifice a cow.[108] They said: Dost thou ridicule us? He said: I seek refuge with Allāh from being one of the ignorant.

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ
تَذْبَحُوا۟ بَقَرَةً ۖ قَالُوٓا۟ أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُوًا ۖ قَالَ
أَعُوذُ بِٱللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْجَٰهِلِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 They said: Call on thy Lord for our sake to make it plain to us what she is. (Moses) said: He says, Surely she is a cow neither advanced in age nor too young, of middle age between these (two); so do what you are commanded.

قَالُوا۟ ٱدْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّن لَّنَا مَا هِىَ ۚ قَالَ
إِنَّهُۥ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لَّا فَارِضٌ وَلَا بِكْرٌ
عَوَانٌۢ بَيْنَ ذَٰلِكَ ۖ فَٱفْعَلُوا۟ مَا تُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 They said: Call on thy Lord for our sake to make it clear to us what her colour is. (Moses) said: He says, She is a yellow cow; her colour is intensely yellow delighting the beholders.

قَالُوا۟ ٱدْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّن لَّنَا مَا لَوْنُهَا ۚ قَالَ
إِنَّهُۥ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ صَفْرَآءُ فَاقِعٌ لَّوْنُهَا
تَسُرُّ ٱلنَّٰظِرِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 They said: Call on thy Lord for our sake to make it clear to us what she is, for surely to us the cows are all alike, and if Allāh please we shall surely be guided aright.

قَالُوا۟ ٱدْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّن لَّنَا مَا هِىَ إِنَّ ٱلْبَقَرَ
تَشَٰبَهَ عَلَيْنَا وَإِنَّآ إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ لَمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

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108 The slaughter of the cow referred to in this verse has nothing in common with the slaying of a heifer as an expiation of an uncertain murder in Deut. 21:1-9, or the slaughter of a red heifer, the ashes of which purify one who has touched the dead body of any man (Num. 19:1-19), except the fact that as the Israelites held the cow in great honour, and even worshipped it, as is clear from their worship of the golden calf, they were ordered to slaughter such cows as were usually let abroad and worshipped as sacred objects — cows not wrought with, nor drawn in yoke, but let loose to wander abroad. The cow mentioned in these verses is a typical cow answering this description. This type of cow is still an object of special reverence in India, and the slaughter of this particular type was especially enjoined upon the Jews, according to the Bible as well as the Holy Qur'ān, the object being to root out cow-worship from among them. But whereas the Biblical injunction to slaughter a heifer is a general injunction to be observed whenever an uncertain murder takes place or an unclean person is to be purified, the injunction as contained in the Qur'ān, points to the slaughter of one particular cow which was probably likely to become an object of worship. Indeed, there is a striking resemblance between the colour of the golden calf and the cow ordered to be slaughtered. The concluding words of the section show that, because of their reverence for that particular cow, the Jews were very averse to slaughter it. The red heifer "had a whole treatise to itself in the Mishna, where its qualifications were elaborated to such a point that at last R. Nisin said that no one since the days of Moses had been able to find one fit to be slain" (En. Bib., col. 846). This remark clearly suggests that in the time of Moses one fit to be slain and answering that description had been found. For the Israelites' worship of cows, see 84.

71 (Moses) said: He says: She is a cow not made submissive to plough the land, nor does she water the tilth, sound, without a blemish in her. They said: Now thou hast brought the truth. So they slaughtered her, though they had not the mind to do (it).[109]

قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لَّا ذَلُولٌ تُثِيرُ الْأَرْضَ وَلَا تَسْقِي الْحَرْثَ مُسَلَّمَةٌ لَّا شِيَةَ فِيهَا ۚ قَالُوا الْآنَ جِئْتَ بِالْحَقِّ ۚ فَذَبَحُوهَا وَمَا كَادُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

SECTION 9 : **They grow in Hard-heartedness**

72 And when you (almost) killed a man,[110] then you disagreed about it. And Allāh was to bring forth that which you were going to hide.[111]

وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا فَادَّارَأْتُمْ فِيهَا ۖ وَاللَّهُ مُخْرِجٌ مَّا كُنتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

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109 The concluding words of this verse, as well as those of the 69th, show that the cow which the Israelites were commanded to slaughter was one specially venerated by them. It was delightful in appearance, and the Israelites were averse to slaughter it. This shows that this particular cow was likely to become an object of worship among them, and hence Moses' precaution. The directions contained in Deut. 21:1-9 and elsewhere in regard to the slaughter of this type of cow show further precautions against a similar tendency of the Israelite mind.

110 The story generally narrated by the commentators to explain this passage is not based on any saying of the Holy Prophet; nor is it met with in the Bible. The very indefiniteness of the incident is an indication that it refers to some well-known event in history, and as almost all incidents of the stubbornness of the Jewish nation prior to the time of Jesus have been mentioned, it becomes almost certain that this incident refers to Jesus himself, as it was with respect to his death that disagreement took place and many doubted his death. This inference becomes stronger when we compare the incidents narrated here with the same incidents as narrated in the fourth chapter in vv. 153-157, where, after enumerating almost all the incidents narrated here in the three previous sections, the Qur'ān goes on to accuse the Jews in the following words: "And their saying: Surely we have killed the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the messenger of Allāh; and they killed him not nor did they crucify him, but he was made to appear to them as such, and those who differ therein are surely in a doubt about it; they have no knowledge respecting it, but only follow a conjecture" (4:157). The part quoted answers exactly to vv. 72 and 73, only that the name is omitted here. This comparison makes it clear that it is the apparent killing of Jesus that is referred to here. The words that *you killed* (Ar. *qataltum*) are used, because in the first place the Jews asserted that they had killed him, and secondly because metaphorically a person may be said to have been killed when he is made to appear as if he were dead. Thus in the well-known saying, *idhā mā māta mait-un* (lit., *when a dead man dies*), the word *dead* really signifies *not the dead man, but one who is about to die*. 'Umar's saying, *uqtulū S'ad-an*, is explained by LA as meaning, *make him like one who is slain*. LA also allows the use of the word *qatl* for a *severe punishment* in cases in which the drunkard and the habitual thief are spoken of as deserving of *qatl* in certain sayings of early-day judges.

111 The Jews wanted to kill Jesus, but God ordained that he should not die. This was the bringing forth of that which they were going to hide.

73 So We said: Smite him with it partially.[112] Thus Allāh brings the dead to life,[113] and He shows you His signs that you may understand.

فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبُوهُ بِبَعْضِهَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُحْيِي اللَّهُ الْمَوْتَىٰ وَيُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 Then your hearts hardened after that, so that they were like rocks, rather worse in hardness. And surely there are some rocks from which streams burst forth; and there are some of them which split asunder so water flows from them; and there are some of them which fall down for the fear of Allāh.[114] And Allāh is not heedless of what you do.

ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً ۚ وَإِنَّ مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهَارُ ۚ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشَّقَّقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ الْمَاءُ ۚ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 Do you then hope that they would believe in you, and a party from among them indeed used to hear the word of Allāh, then altered it after they had understood it, and they know (this).[115]

أَفَتَطْمَعُونَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

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112 The construction of the phrase *iḍribū-hu bi-ba'ḍi-hā,* is rather difficult, but a comparison with 4:157 makes the meaning clear. *Ḍarb,* as shown in 96, conveys a number of significations. It means *striking* as well as *likening,* and an instance of the latter significance we find in the Qur'ān itself, where it is said *yaḍribu-llāhu-l-ḥaqqa wa-l-bāṭila, Allāh compares truth and falsehood* (13:17). In *ba'ḍi-hā* (lit., *a part of it*), the personal pronoun *hā,* i.e., *it,* refers to the act of murder. The act of murder was not completed in the case of Jesus, as the Gospels show, for after he was taken down from the cross his legs were not broken, as in the case of the thieves. The meaning of the sentence is therefore according to the signification of *ḍarb* that we adopt: *strike him with partial death,* or *liken his condition to that of the partially dead man;* and thus he was made to appear as a dead man, as stated in 4:157. There is no other case of a murder or an attempted murder in Jewish history of which the whole nation could be said to have been guilty, and which might answer to the description of these two verses.

113 This was really a case of giving life to the dead, for Jesus Christ was dead to all appearance. Those actually dead do not return to life in this world; see 1659, 1731 and 2165.

114 The hardened hearts are likened to rocks, and then they are metaphorically spoken of as bursting forth so that streams of water flow from them; others are spoken of as splitting asunder so that water flows from them; others still as falling down for fear of Allāh. The significance is clear; even hardened hearts would receive life — nay more, they would give life to others, be a source of spiritual life for others as water and streams are sources of life in the physical world.

115 That the Israelites did not preserve their sacred books in their purity is a constant charge laid by the Holy Qur'ān against the Jews. In fact, the alteration and corruption of the various books of the Bible is now proved beyond all doubt; see 117a.

76 And when they meet those who believe they say, We believe, and when they are apart one with another they say: Do you talk to them of what Allāh has disclosed to you that they may contend with you by this before your Lord? Do you not understand?[116]

وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا ۚ وَإِذَا خَلَا بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ قَالُوا أَتُحَدِّثُونَهُمْ بِمَا فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَاجُّوكُمْ بِهِ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 Do they not know that Allāh knows what they keep secret and what they make known?

أَوَلَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

78 And some of them are illiterate;[117] they know not the Book but only (from) hearsay, and they do but conjecture.

وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُّونَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا أَمَانِيَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

79 Woe! then to those who write the Book with their hands then say, This is from Allāh; so that they may take for it a small price.[117a] So woe! to them for what their hands write and woe! to them for what they earn.

فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَكْتُبُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَٰذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لِيَشْتَرُوا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۖ فَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا كَتَبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

80 And they say: Fire will not touch us but for a few days.[118] Say: Have you received a promise from Allāh? Then Allāh will not fail to perform His promise. Or do you speak against Allāh what you know not?

وَقَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَةً ۚ قُلْ أَتَّخَذْتُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا فَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ ۖ أَمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

81 Yea, whoever earns evil and his sins beset him on every side, those are the companions of the Fire; therein they abide.[119]

بَلَىٰ مَنْ كَسَبَ سَيِّئَةً وَأَحَاطَتْ بِهِ خَطِيئَتُهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

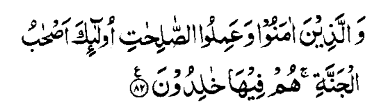
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116 They remonstrate with their less careful co-religionists who would talk of the prophecies of the advent of the promised Prophet, telling them that the Muslims would benefit by these disclosures in the sight of their Lord. The absurdity of this argument is made clear in the next verse. Truth was truth in the sight of Allāh whether they made it known or not.

117 The word translated here as *illiterate* is *ummiyyūn*, plural of *ummī*, which signifies *one who neither writes nor reads a writing* (R). The word is therefore, specially applied to the Arabs, who were generally unacquainted with reading and writing, exceptions being rare. It is, however, here applied to the illiterate Jews; see also 950. The Jewish masses had no access to their own sacred books which were known only to their learned men, and therefore religious ideas were based only on stories which they knew from hearsay. The word *amānī*

117, 117a, 118, 119, see next page.

82 And those who believe and do good deeds, these are the owners of the Garden ; therein they abide.[120]



is plural of *umniyyah* which means *a desire* and also carries the significance of *lying,* because desire leads to lies (R). Some understand by it the repetition of words without knowing their significance. What is said here about the Jews is to a very large extent true of the Muslims of our day. In the early days of Islām, every individual Muslim, man as well as woman, sought light direct from the Qur'ān. Not so the Muslims in this age who depend entirely on their learned men. They do read the Qur'ān but look upon mere recitation as a meritorious deed without trying to learn what it says, and then act upon it.

117a The alteration and corruption of the Bible, the Old as well as the New Testament, spoken of in v. 75 and repeated here, is now an established fact. That the alteration spoken of in v. 75 was an alteration of the words of the text is made manifest here: "They write the Book with their hands then say: This is from Allāh" These alterations they effected for their own selfish ends, "That they may take for it a small price". I give below a few quotations from Rev. Dummelow, which prove the alteration of the Bible text beyond all doubt: "On close examination, however, it must be admitted that the Pentateuch reveals many features inconsistent with the traditional view that in its present form it is the work of Moses. For instance, it may be safely granted that Moses did not write the account of his own death in Dt. 34. The statement in Dt. 1:1 that Moses spoke these words beyond Jordan is evidently made from the standpoint of one living in Canaan, which Moses never did . . . Other passages which can with difficulty be ascribed to him are Ex. 6:26, 27; 11:3; 16:35, 36; Lv. 18:24-28; Nu. 12:3; Dt. 2:12" (Bible Commentary, p. xxiv). And again: "A careful examination has led many scholars to the conviction that the writings of Moses formed only the rough material or purport of the material, and that in its present form it is not the work of one man, but a compilation made from previously existing documents" (p. xxvi). Still again: "Similarly in the legislative portions of these books we find apparent contradictions and these not in minor or insignificant details, but in fundamental enactments" (p. xxvi). The text of the New Testament is still more unreliable. The same author says: "To begin with, the writers of the Gospels report in Greek . . . the sayings of Jesus Christ, who for the most part probably spoke Aramaic . . . Not even in later centuries do we find that scrupulous regard for the sacred text which marked the transmission of the Old Testament. A copyist would sometimes put in not what was in the text, but what he thought ought to be in it. He would trust a fickle memory, or he would even make the text accord with the views of the school to which he belonged" (p. xvi).

118 "It is a received opinion among the Jews at present that no person, be he ever so wicked, or of whatever sect, shall remain in hell above eleven months, or at most a year, except Dathan and Abiram and atheists, who will be tormented there to all eternity" (Sale).

119 The inmates of the Fire are here stated to be those who earn evil, and find themselves beset on every side by their evil deeds. These are the men who give themselves up to evil, and who therefore ultimately find themselves in the power of evil, which even in this life, but more palpably in the life after death, assumes the form of a burning fire. It should be noted that the man who struggles against evil, however long that struggle may take, to overcome an evil inclination, is not the man who earns evil, because the earnest struggle in which the fighter against evil hates and detests evil, and seeks to overcome it, always ends in a victory for the good and noble qualities in man.

120 This verse speaks of those whose lives are devoted to the doing of good as against those who earn evil, spoken of in the last verse. It should be noted that, though refraining from evil is a praiseworthy thing, the doing of good occupies a much higher place. Sinlessness is simply a preparatory ground for the development of self, while that development consists in the doing of good.

SECTION 10: **Their Covenant and its Violation**

83 And when We made a covenant with the Children of Israel.[120a] You shall serve none but Allāh.[121] And do good to (your) parents,[122] and to the near of kin and to orphans and the needy,[123] and speak good (words)[124] to (all) men, and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate.[125] Then you turned back except a few of you, and you are averse.

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيْثَاقَ بَنِيْٓ إِسْرَآءِيْلَ لَا تَعْبُدُوْنَ
إِلَّا اللّٰهَ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَّذِي الْقُرْبٰى وَ
الْيَتٰمٰى وَالْمَسٰكِيْنِ وَقُوْلُوْا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا وَّ
أَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتُوا الزَّكٰوةَ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا
قَلِيْلًا مِّنْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ مُّعْرِضُوْنَ ﴿٨٣﴾

84 And when We made a covenant with you: You shall not shed your blood, nor turn your people out of your cities; then you promised and you bear witness.[126]

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيْثَاقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفِكُوْنَ دِمَآءَكُمْ
وَلَا تُخْرِجُوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَقْرَرْتُمْ
وَأَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُوْنَ ﴿٨٤﴾

The doers of good are called *aṣḥāb al-jannat* or *owners of the Garden.* The word *aṣḥāb* is pl. of *ṣāḥib* which means a *companion* or *an owner.* I have translated *aṣḥāb al-nār* as *companions of the Fire* but *aṣḥāb al-Jannat* as *owners of the Garden,* because while the inmates of the Fire will be taken out of it after being purged of the evil, of the inmates of paradise it is said that it is "a gift which shall never be cut off" (11:108), and that those in it "will never be ejected from it" (15:48). As to the reason for calling the righteous the owners of the Garden or describing the fruit of their labour as Gardens in which rivers flow, see 39.

120a Allāh's making a covenant with a people signifies His giving commandments to them. Compare Deut. 4:13: "And He declared unto you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform".

121 Compare Exod. 20:3: "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me", and Exod. 23:25: "And ye shall serve the Lord your God", and various other places.

122 Compare Exod. 20:12, and Deut. 5:16: "Honour thy father and thy mother".

123 Compare Deut. 15:11: "Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land".

124 The word *qaul* (*speaking*) is used to express all kinds of deeds (N), and hence the speaking of good words to all stands for kind dealing with all.

125 Prayer and *zakāt* as enjoined on the Israelites differed from the Islāmic prayer and *zakāt* in details. The directions regarding poor-rate among the Israelites are contained in Deut. 14:28, 29: "At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates. And the Levite (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee), and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest".

126 The previous verse speaks of a covenant with *the Children of Israel* while this one speaks of a covenant with *you.* The reference here is to the important treaty of mutual obligation in writing which the Holy Prophet entered into with the Jews when he settled at Madīnah. By this treaty the Muslims and the Jews were bound not only not to turn their hands against each other but also to defend one another against a common enemy. In fact, this treaty aimed at a perfect

85 Yet you it is who would slay your people and turn a party from among you out of their homes, backing each other up against them unlawfully and exceeding the limits.[126a] And if they should come to you as captives you would ransom them, whereas their turning out itself was unlawful for you.[127] Do you then believe in a part of the Book and disbelieve in the other? What then is the reward of such among you as do this but disgrace in the life of this world, and on the day of Resurrection they shall be sent back to the most grievous chastisement. And Allāh is not heedless of what you do.

ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ تَقْتُلُوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتُخْرِجُوْنَ
فَرِيْقًا مِّنْكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِهِمْ تَظٰهَرُوْنَ عَلَيْهِمْ
بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَإِنْ يَّأْتُوْكُمْ أُسٰرٰى
تُفٰدُوْهُمْ وَهُوَ مُحَرَّمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِخْرَاجُهُمْ
أَفَتُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتٰبِ وَتَكْفُرُوْنَ بِبَعْضٍ
فَمَا جَزَآءُ مَنْ يَّفْعَلُ ذٰلِكَ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا خِزْيٌ
فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ يُرَدُّوْنَ إِلٰٓى
أَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ وَمَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٨٥﴾

86 These are they who buy the life of this world for the Hereafter, so their chastisement shall not be lightened, nor shall they be helped.

أُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ اشْتَرَوُا الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ
فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنْصَرُوْنَ ﴿٨٦﴾

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union among the discordant elements of the population of Madīnah. I quote a few clauses of this treaty: "Whosoever is rebellious or seeketh to spread enmity and sedition, the hand of every man shall be against him, even if he be a son . . . Whosoever of the Jews followeth us shall have aid and succour; they shall not be injured, nor shall any enemy be aided against them . . . The Jewish clans in alliance with the several tribes of Madīnah are one people with the believers. . . . The Jews will profess their religion, the Muslims theirs. As with the Jews so with their adherents. No one shall go forth to war excepting with the permission of Muḥammad, but this shall not hinder any from seeking lawful revenge. The Jews shall be responsible for their expenditure, the Muslims for theirs; but if attacked, each shall come to the assistance of the other. Madīnah shall be sacred and inviolable for all that join this treaty. Controversies and disputes shall be referred to the decision of God and His Prophet. None shall join the men of Makkah or their allies, for verily the engaging parties are bound together against every one that shall threaten Madīnah. War and peace shall be made in common" (IH-Muir).

126a There is a prophetic reference here to the Jewish attitude towards the Muslims later on when they secretly made an alliance with the Quraish who attacked Madīnah. Thus in a later sūrah: "And He drove down those of the People of the Book who backed them (i.e. the Quraish), from their fortresses" (33:26). The reference here is to the Bani Quraiẓah, who were in alliance with the Prophet, but when the Quraish attacked Madīnah, which, under the treaty, they were bound to repel, they secretly sided with the invading army; see 1983. Under the treaty, the Muslims and the Jews were *one people* and hence they are spoken of, in the opening words of the verse, as slaying their own people. The two Jewish tribes, the Qainuqā' and the Banī Naḍīr, were also guilty of intriguing with the enemy and violating the treaty.

127 The reference in these words is to the terms of the original treaty under

SECTION 11 : They reject the Prophet

87 And We indeed gave Moses the Book and We sent messengers after him one after another ; and We gave Jesus, son of Mary, clear arguments and strengthened him with the Holy Spirit.[128] Is it then that whenever there came to you a messenger with what your souls desired not, you were arrogant ? And some you gave the lie to and others you would slay.[129]

وَلَقَدْ اٰتَيْنَا مُوْسَى الْكِتٰبَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْۢ بَعْدِهٖ
بِالرُّسُلِ وَاٰتَيْنَا عِيْسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنٰتِ وَ
اَيَّدْنٰهُ بِرُوْحِ الْقُدُسِ اَفَكُلَّمَا جَآءَكُمْ رَسُوْلٌ
بِمَا لَا تَهْوٰۤى اَنْفُسُكُمُ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِيْقًا
كَذَّبْتُمْ وَفَرِيْقًا تَقْتُلُوْنَ ﴿٨٧﴾

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which the Jews were bound to ransom the Muslims if they were made captives by an enemy. They did not openly repudiate the treaty but intrigued with the enemy to turn the Muslims out of Madīnah. The reference in believing in a part of the book and disbelieving in the other is to this conduct of the Jews. Most commentators, however, understand that the reference here is to the alliance which the two Jewish tribes, Quraiẓah and Naḍīr, living side by side at Madīnah, had made with Aus and Khazraj, the two rival tribes of Madīnah respectively. When the latter fought against each other, their allies took part in the fighting, and thus one Jewish tribe slaughtered and imprisoned the other and laid waste their habitations, but afterwards collected subscriptions for the release of the Jewish prisoners, on the ground that the law commanded them to redeem the prisoners, and they fought against their co-religionists for the honour of their allies. The punishment or disgrace which they are threatened with at the end of the verse was witnessed by all the three Jewish tribes of Madīnah, the Qainuqā', the Naḍīr, and the Quraiẓah, on account of their violation of the treaty, and making secret alliances with the enemies of Islām in the hope that they would succeed in turning the Muslims out of Madīnah.

128 The Hebrew for Jesus is Yasū', but in Arabic it is always 'Īsā, and generally the epithet Ibn Maryam (son of Mary) is added to it, to show that he was a mortal like other prophets of God. The long chain of prophets that came after Moses ended in Jesus, Moses being the first and Jesus the last prophet of the Israelite dispensation.

Jesus is here spoken of as having been given clear arguments and strengthened with the Holy Spirit, yet he too was rejected by the Jews. The idea of the Holy Ghost as met with in Christian religious literature is quite different from and opposed to the Jewish conception of the Holy Spirit which Islām accepts. The Christians believe in the Holy Ghost as one of the three persons of Divinity and not as a creation of God, for which there is not the least ground in Jewish religious thought. Even among the Christians the idea was of a later growth, as we find both Zacharias and John spoken of as being filled with the Holy Ghost.

According to the Holy Qur'ān, the Holy Spirit is the angel which brought revelation: "The Holy Spirit has brought it (i.e. the Qur'ān) from thy Lord" (16:102). The Holy Spirit is mentioned by two other names, Gabriel (v. 97) and the Faithful Spirit (26:193). So Jesus' being strengthened with the Holy Spirit only means that he was granted Divine revelation like other prophets before him.

129 The change of tense from the past to the optative is an allusion to the attempts which were then being made on the life of the Holy Prophet. Rz thus explains this change: "For you seek by devices the murder of Muḥammad, were it not that I had protected him from you".

88 And they say: Our hearts are repositories.[130] Nay, Allāh has cursed them[131] on account of their unbelief; so little it is that they believe.

وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ ۚ بَلْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللّٰهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

89 And when there came to them a Book from Allāh verifying that which they have, and aforetime they used to pray for victory against those who disbelieved — but when there came to them that which they recognized, they disbelieved in it; so Allāh's curse is on the disbelievers.[132]

وَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ كِتٰبٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ ۙ وَكَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۚ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ مَّا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهٖ ۚ فَلَعْنَةُ اللّٰهِ عَلَى الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾

90 Evil is that for which they sell their souls — that they should deny that which Allāh has revealed, out of envy that Allāh should send down of His grace on whomsoever of His servants He pleases; so they incur wrath upon wrath. And there is an abasing chastisement for the disbelievers.

بِئْسَمَا اشْتَرَوْا بِهٖٓ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أَنْ يَّكْفُرُوا بِمَآ أَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ بَغْيًا أَنْ يُّنَزِّلَ اللّٰهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ عَلٰى مَنْ يَّشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهٖ ۚ فَبَآءُوْ بِغَضَبٍ عَلٰى غَضَبٍ ۗ وَلِلْكٰفِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿٩٠﴾

91 And when it is said to them, Believe in that which Allāh has revealed, they say: We believe in that which was revealed to us.[133] And they deny what is besides that, while it is the Truth verifying that which they have. Say: Why then did you kill Allāh's prophets before (this) if you were believers?[134]

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ اٰمِنُوا بِمَآ أَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ قَالُوا نُؤْمِنُ بِمَآ أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَيَكْفُرُونَ بِمَا وَرَآءَهٗ ۚ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ ۗ قُلْ فَلِمَ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْۢبِيَآءَ اللّٰهِ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

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130 Ghulf carries two significances. It is plural of *ghilāf*, which means a *covering*, a *case* or a *repository*. The meaning in this case would be that their hearts were repositories of knowledge and they stood in no need of any further knowledge. Ghulf is also plural of *aghlaf* which means *enclosed in a covering* (LL), and the significance in this case is that their hearts were covered from hearing and accepting what the Prophet said.

131 *Curse*, as implying an imprecation of evil, is not the exact equivalent of *la'nat*, which implies *the banishing and estranging of one from good* (LA), though it must necessarily be adopted as such for want of another simple equivalent. The allegation of the Israelites was that, being descendants of prophets, their hearts were the repositories of knowledge, and being already, as it were, full of knowledge, they did not stand in need of more. They are told that it was really their disbelief which became the cause of their estrangement from the good which the Holy Prophet had brought.

132 The Jews expected that when the Prophet spoken of in Deut. 18:18 came, he would make them victorious over their disbelieving opponents: "And

133, 134, see next page.

92 And Moses indeed came to you with clear arguments, then you took the calf (for a god) in his absence and you were wrongdoers.

وَلَقَدْ جَآءَكُم مُّوسَىٰ بِالْبَيِّنَٰتِ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ
الْعِجْلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ وَأَنتُمْ ظَٰلِمُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

93 And when We made a covenant with you and raised the mountain above you: Take hold of that which We have given you with firmness and obey.[135] They said: We hear and disobey.[136] And they were made to imbibe (the love of) the calf into their hearts on account of their disbelief.[137] Say: Evil is that which your faith bids you if you are believers.

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَٰقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّورَ
خُذُوا مَآ ءَاتَيْنَٰكُم بِقُوَّةٍ وَاسْمَعُوا قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا
وَعَصَيْنَا وَأُشْرِبُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْعِجْلَ
بِكُفْرِهِمْ قُلْ بِئْسَمَا يَأْمُرُكُم بِهِۦٓ إِيمَٰنُكُمْ
إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

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it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all His commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: and all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God" (Deut. 28:1, 2). Read it along with Deut. 18:15-19, and the significance of "hearkening" becomes clear. As to the fact that the Jews were still waiting for the appearance of the Promised Prophet, see John 1:25: "Why baptizest thou, then, if thou be not the Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet"; *that prophet*, as in John 1:23, referring to the promised prophet of Deut. 18:15 and 18. This shows clearly that they waited for three different prophets. Acts 3:21-23 also shows that the Prophet spoken of in Deut. 18:18 was still waited for after the death of Christ.

133 By saying that they believed in that which was revealed to them, they asserted that they could accept only a revelation granted to an Israelite. The reply to this is that the revelation of the Holy Prophet is the truth verifying that which is contained in their own Scriptures, the reference being to the prophecies of the advent of the Holy Prophet contained in Deut. 18:15-18 and other places.

134 They are shown guilty out of their own mouths. Their contention was that they would believe only in a revelation which was granted to an Israelite prophet. Yet they tried to kill even Israelite prophets, which shows that it was their hard-heartedness which prevented them from accepting the truth, whether that truth was revealed through an Israelite or a non-Israelite prophet.

135 The original word is *isma'ū*, meaning primarily *hear* or *listen*, but it may also mean *obey* (AH), a meaning given to it in the Qur'ān itself in 36:25. It may also mean *accept* (LL). The sense of the word as used here is made clear by the similar expression in v. 63: "And when We made a covenant with you and raised the mountain above you: Take hold of what We have given you with firmness and bear in mind what is in it".

136 They did not utter these words with their tongues, but it is an expression of their condition, for the word *qaul* is used to denote *what is expressive of the condition of a thing*. *Qālati-l-'aināni* means *the eyes showed* (not *spoke*) (T). Kf explains the words as meaning, *we hear the words and we disobey the command.*

137 The words used here signify that they had imbibed *the love of the calf.* The use of the word *qulūb* (hearts) shows clearly that it was a thing that had gone deep down into their hearts; nothing was taken by mouth. According to

94 Say: If the abode of the Hereafter with Allāh is specially for you to the exclusion of the people, then invoke death if you are truthful.[138]

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَتْ لَكُمُ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَالِصَةً مِّنْ دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوُا الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِينَ ﴿٩٤﴾

95 And they will never invoke it on account of what their hands have sent on before, and Allāh knows the wrongdoers.

وَلَنْ يَّتَمَنَّوْهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾

96 And thou wilt certainly find them the greediest of men for life, (greedier) even than those who set up gods (with God). One of them loves to be granted a life of a thousand years, and his being granted a long life will in no way remove him further off from the chastisement. And Allāh is Seer of what they do.[139]

وَلَتَجِدَنَّهُمْ أَحْرَصَ النَّاسِ عَلٰى حَيٰوةٍ ۚ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا ۚ يَوَدُّ أَحَدُهُمْ لَوْ يُعَمَّرُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ ۚ وَمَا هُوَ بِمُزَحْزِحِهِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ أَنْ يُّعَمَّرَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

SECTION 12: **Their Enmity to the Prophet**

97 Say: Whoever is an enemy to Gabriel[140] — for surely he revealed

قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ

Exod. 32:20 and Deut. 9:21 the Israelites were actually made to drink of the water on which the ashes of the calf were strewed. The Holy Qur'ān makes it clear in 20:97 that the ashes of the calf were scattered by being thrown into the sea.

138 According to IAb *tamannawu-l-mauta* (lit., *desire death*) signifies *invoke death on the party that lies* or *is false in its assertion* (IJ). A similar challenge, but in fuller words, is contained in 3:60: "Whoever then disputes with thee in this matter after the knowledge that has come to thee, say to him, Come, let us call our sons and your sons, and our women and your women, and our people and your people, then let us be earnest in prayer and pray for the curse of Allāh on the liars". This challenge is given to the Christians, and the same challenge in fewer words is given here to the Jews.

139 By those who set up gods with God, are meant the Christians, because they also hold the polytheistic belief of the Divinity of a man. They too refused to accept the Prophet's challenge of *mubāhalah* (3:60) on account of the love of this life. As to their desire of living for a thousand years and its fulfilment, as indicated here, see 1602. It would thus mean the life of a people in prosperity and not the life of an individual. Or, the reference may be to the Zoroastrians who, when invoking a blessing on anyone, prayed that he should live for a thousand years.

140 Michael was regarded by the Jews as a friend, "the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people" (Dan. 12:1). And they looked upon Gabriel as their enemy, because he was considered to be an avenging angel who brought down Divine punishment upon the guilty. But in the Bible, as in the Holy Qur'ān, Gabriel is mentioned as delivering Divine messages to men, as in Dan. 8:16 and in Luke 1:19 and 26. According to Muqātal, the Jews considered Gabriel as their enemy because they thought that he was charged to convey the gift of prophecy to the Israelites, and he conveyed it to another people, i.e., Ishmaelites (Rz). Some commentators look upon both the words Jibrīl and Mīkāl as foreign words having no derivation in Arabic (AH), but others consider Jibrīl as a combination of *jabr*, meaning *a servant*, and *īl* meaning *Allāh*, and *Mīkāl* as

it to thy heart by Allāh's command,[141] verifying that which is before it and a guidance and glad tidings for the believers.

عَلٰى قَلْبِكَ بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَّبُشْرٰى لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿۹۷﴾

98 Whoever is an enemy to Allāh and His angels and His messengers and Gabriel and Michael, then surely Allāh is an enemy to disbelievers.[142]

مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّلّٰهِ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتِهٖ وَرُسُلِهٖ وَجِبْرِيْلَ وَمِيْكٰلَ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَدُوٌّ لِّلْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿۹۸﴾

99 And We indeed have revealed to thee clear messages, and none disbelieve in them except the transgressors.

وَلَقَدْ اَنْزَلْنَآ اِلَيْكَ اٰيٰتٍۢ بَيِّنٰتٍ ۚ وَمَا يَكْفُرُ بِهَآ اِلَّا الْفٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿۹۹﴾

100 Is it that whenever they make a covenant, a party of them cast it aside? Nay, most of them have no faith.

اَوَكُلَّمَا عٰهَدُوْا عَهْدًا نَّبَذَهٗ فَرِيْقٌ مِّنْهُمْ ۭ بَلْ اَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿۱۰۰﴾

101 And when there came to them a messenger from Allāh verifying that which they have, a party of those who were given the Book threw the Book of Allāh behind their backs as if they knew nothing.[143]

وَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ رَسُوْلٌ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَهُمْ نَبَذَ فَرِيْقٌ مِّنَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ ۙ كِتٰبَ اللّٰهِ وَرَآءَ ظُهُوْرِهِمْ كَاَنَّهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۱۰۱﴾

102 And they follow what the devils[144] fabricated[145] against the kingdom of Solomon.[146] And Solomon disbelieved not,[147] but the devils disbelieved, teaching men enchantment.[148] And it was not revealed to

وَاتَّبَعُوْا مَا تَتْلُوا الشَّيٰطِيْنُ عَلٰى مُلْكِ سُلَيْمٰنَ ۚ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمٰنُ وَلٰكِنَّ الشَّيٰطِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا يُعَلِّمُوْنَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ ۗ وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ عَلَى

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made up of *mīk* and *īl*, the word *mīk* having the same significance as *jabr* (IJ).

141 The word idhn signifies *permission, leave* or *concession of liberty to do a thing*; and sometimes *command*, likewise *will*; also *knowledge* (LL).

142 The enmity of man to Allāh and Allāh to man is thus explained: "In reality there can be no enmity between Allāh and man; as to man's enmity to Allāh, it signifies opposition to His commandments, and as to Allāh's enmity to man, it signifies the recompense for his opposition" (AH). Note that Allāh is here said to be an enemy to those disbelievers only who first make themselves enemies to the prophets of Allāh, and hence also to the angels and the Divine Being Himself. The same law of the punishment of an evil being spoken of in the terms of that evil really finds an expression here, as is referred to in 27.

143 The covenant referred to in the previous verse as being cast aside, and the throwing of the Book behind their backs, both refer to the Israelites paying no heed to the prophecy of Deut. 18:18, which was verified by the advent of the Holy Prophet. So clearly did that phophecy point to the Holy Prophet that it is again and again referred to in this chapter as the most powerful argument against the inimical attitude of the Jews.

144, 145, 146, 147, 148, see next page.

the two angels in Babel, Hārūt and Mārūt. Nor did they teach (it to) anyone, so that they should have said, We are only a trial, so disbelieve not. But they learn from these two (sources) that by which they make a distinction between a man and his wife. And they cannot hurt with it anyone except with Allāh's permission. And they learn that which harms them and profits them not.[149] And certainly they know that he who buys it has no share of good in the Hereafter. And surely evil is the price for which they have sold their souls, did they but know!

الْمَلَكَيْنِ بِبَابِلَ هَارُوْتَ وَمَارُوْتَ ۭ وَمَا
يُعَلِّمٰنِ مِنْ اَحَدٍ حَتّٰى يَقُوْلَآ اِنَّمَا نَحْنُ
فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ ۭ فَيَتَعَلَّمُوْنَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُوْنَ
بِهٖ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهٖ ۭ وَمَا هُمْ بِضَاۗرِّيْنَ
بِهٖ مِنْ اَحَدٍ اِلَّا بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ۭ وَيَتَعَلَّمُوْنَ مَا
يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ ۭ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوْا لَمَنِ
اشْتَرٰىهُ مَا لَهٗ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَاقٍ ڜ وَ
لَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهٖٓ اَنْفُسَهُمْ ۭ لَوْ كَانُوْا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

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144 According to an interpretation accepted by all commentators, by the *devils* here are meant human devils, or devils in the form of men (AH, Rz).

145 *Yaqūlu 'alai-hi* means *such a one lies* or *says what is false against such a one*; *yatlū 'alai-hi* sometimes carries the same significance (TA, LL). Rz says *talā 'alai-hi* means *he lied*. This is the significance here.

146 By the *mulk* of Solomon is here meant *his prophethood* or *kingdom* (AH, Rz). The Jews attributed Solomon's glory to certain devilish crafts, and this is the lie which they are spoken of here as having forged against Solomon (Rz).

147 In this respect the Holy Qur'ān contradicts the Bible, which says that the wives of Solomon "turned away his heart after other gods" (1 Kings 11:4), and that "the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel" (1 Kings 11:9). It is now established that the statement of the Bible is wrong in this respect. The Rev. T. K. Cheyne has shown conclusively that Solomon was "not a polytheist", and, having shown how mistakes crept into the Bible statement, he concludes: "That Solomon had a number of wives, both Israelite and non-Israelite, is probable enough, but he did not make altars for all of them, nor did he himself combine the worship of his wives' gods with that of Yahwe" (En. Bib. col. 4689).

148 According to Jauharī *every thing of which the origin is subtle* is *siḥr*. The primary significance is *the turning of a thing from its proper manner of being to another manner* (T, LL). Thus *saḥara-hū bi-kalāmi-hī* means *he caused him to incline to him by his soft* or *elegant speech* (Mgh). Hence it is applied to skilful eloquence, and hence also the saying of the Prophet: *Inna mina-l-bayāni la-siḥr-an*, i.e., verily there is a kind of eloquence that is enchantment (*siḥr*). And also *saḥara-hū* means *he deceived* or *beguiled him* (Q). And *saḥartu-l-fiḍḍata* signifies *I gilded silver* (LL). *Siḥr* is also synonymous with *fasād* (T), thus signifying *the act of corrupting, marring, spoiling*, etc. It is also *the producing of what is false in the form of truth*, and *embellishment by falsification and deceit*. Hence the word *siḥr* carries a very wide significance, and its use in Arabic is not equivalent to that of *sorcery* in the English language.

149 According to Sale, the Persian Magi "mention two rebellious angels of the same names, now hung up by the feet with their heads downwards, in the territory of Babel". A similar story is met with in the Jewish traditions in Midrash. Stories about sinning angels were also believed in by the Christians; see Second

103 And if they had believed and kept their duty, reward from Allāh would certainly have been better; did they but know!

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَمَثُوبَةٌ مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ ۖ لَّوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

SECTION 13: **Previous Scriptures are abrogated**

104 O you who believe, say not *Rā'i-nā* and say *Unẓur-nā*,[150] and listen. And for the disbelievers there is a painful chastisement.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقُولُوا رَاعِنَا وَقُولُوا انظُرْنَا وَاسْمَعُوا ۗ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٤﴾

Epistle of Peter, ii. 4, and Epistle of Jude v. 6. Upon these stories seem to be based the lengthy fables of some commentators, but the more learned reject them. Not only does the Qur'ān not contain a word of these stories, but it plainly discredits them by denying that sorcery was revealed to certain angels at Babel, or that angels taught sorcery to men, giving them at the same time the warning, as was the common belief: We are only a trial, so disbelieve not. This statement was added to the story to save the character of the angels as penitents. The Arabic lexicons give the two words *Hārūt* and *Mārūt* under the roots *hart* and *mart,* and explain *harata* as meaning *he rent a thing* and *marata* as meaning *he broke a thing.*

The statement made in the Qur'ān amounts to this. The Jews, instead of following the word of God, followed certain evil crafts which they falsely attributed to Solomon and to two angels at Babel. Solomon is declared free of any such sinfulness attributed to him, and the story of the two angels is declared to be a fabrication. But the Jews are blamed for learning from these two sources, i.e., by their fabrications against Solomon and the story of the two angels, things by which *they made a distinction between a man and his wife.* The personal pronoun *humā* (meaning *two*) refers to these two fabrications. The clue to what this was is contained in the words *they cannot hurt with it any one except with Allāh's permission,* showing that by this craft they intended to inflict some injury on the Prophet. Similar words are met with in chapter 58, where after, denouncing the secret counsels of the enemies of Islām, it is said in v. 10: "Secret counsels are only the work of the devil that he may cause to grieve those who believe, and he cannot hurt them in the least except with Allāh's permission". It is evident that the 58th chapter was revealed at Madīnah, where secret counsels of the nature of masonic societies were carried on against the Prophet by the Jews, and these secret counsels are stated to be the work of the devil, the expression being closely parallel to what is stated in the verse under discussion, where the Jews are spoken of as following the devil while ascribing their evil doctrines to prophets and angels. In 58:10 we also see that the object of these secret counsels was to cause hurt to the Prophet and to the Muslims, and the same is stated to be the object of the evil machinations of the Jews in the verse under discussion. These considerations point clearly to the fact that the secret counsels of the Jews mentioned in chapter 58 are referred to here. It is further clear that the words *by which they make a distinction between a man and his wife* refer to secret gatherings of the nature of masonic societies, for it is in freemasonry and in no other religious society of the world that women are totally excluded. Instead of mentioning freemasonry itself, therefore, its distinctive characteristic is mentioned. And however untrustworthy may be the old histories of freemasonry, there is no doubt that the institution is an ancient one, "having subsisted from time immemorial" (En. Br.). The statement made in the "Book of Constitutions" that Cyrus constituted Jerubbabel grand master in Judah (En. Br.) may not be without a substratum of truth.

150 *Rā'i-nā* is equivalent to *give ear to, hearken,* or *listen to us,* but with a slight change of accent it becomes *ra'ina,* which means *he is foolish* or *stupid* or

105 Neither those who disbelieve from among the people of the Book, nor the polytheists, like that any good should be sent down to you from your Lord. And Allāh chooses whom He pleases for His Mercy; and Allāh is the Lord of mighty grace.[151]

مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ وَ
لَا الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّنْ خَيْرٍ
مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ
يَّشَاءُ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿١٠٥﴾

106 Whatever message We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring one better than it or one like it. Knowest thou not that Allāh is Possessor of power over all things?[152]

مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ اٰيَةٍ أَوْ نُنْسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا
أَوْ مِثْلِهَا ۗ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٠٦﴾

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unsound in intellect, the derivation in the first case being from *ra'y, to pasture* or *to be mindful,* and in the second case from *ra'n,* i.e., being foolish (LL). The Jews in derision changed the accent, "distorting the word" as stated in 4:46, and thus made it a term of reproach. The word *unẓur-nā,* which means *wait for us* or *grant us a little delay,* is suggested instead, because it cannot be distorted like its equivalent *rā'i-nā.* The Muslims are here forbidden to use a certain form of expression, but the real object is to show how great was the hatred of the Jews towards the Holy Prophet, so that they did not observe even the ordinary rules of decency. Morally the injunction is one worthy of the highest regard, as it disapproves of the use of words bearing a sinister meaning.

151 *Khair,* lit., *good,* and *raḥmat,* lit., *mercy,* both stand here for *Divine revelation,* for it was this good which the Jews would not like to be sent down to the Muslims, and it was this mercy for which the Muslims had been chosen (AH).

152 Reading the verse under discussion in the light of the context, it is clear that the Jews are addressed here. The two previous sections deal, more or less, with a particular Jewish objection to the revelation of the Prophet, viz., that they could not accept a new revelation which was not granted to an Israelite. This is plainly stated in vv. 90 and 91. The same subject is continued, the Jews being addressed throughout. Their objection was: Why was another revelation sent down to Muḥammad, and why was a law containing new commandments promulgated? That objection was to be answered. The answer is given partly in v. 105, and partly in the verse under discussion. In the former of these they are told that Allāh chooses whom He pleases for His revelation. In the latter, that if one law (i.e. the Jewish law) was abrogated, one better than it was given through the Holy Prophet. It should be noted that the new law is here stated to be better than the one abrogated or like it. It is a fact that though the law of the Qur'ān is decidedly superior to and more comprehensive than the previous laws in most respects, yet there are many points of likeness in the two. Hence the words *one like it* are added.

In the verse that follows, attention is called to the laws of nature as prevailing in the universe. Is it not true that the old order in nature gives place to a new one, the inferior to the better? It was therefore quite natural that the Mosaic law, which was in the main given for a particular people in a particular age, and suited only their requirements, should give place to a new and universal law, the law of Islām. The old law had been partly forgotten, and what remained was now abrogated to give place to one better and in certain matters one like it. It will thus be seen that the reference here is to the abrogation of the Jewish law, the statement being really an answer to the objection of the Jews.

That some of the Quranic verses were abrogated by others, though a generally accepted doctrine, is due to a misconception of the words of this verse. The word *āyat* occurring here has been wrongly understood to mean a verse of the Qur'ān. Similar words occur elsewhere: "And when We change one message (*āyat*) for

107 Knowest thou not that Allāh's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and that besides Allāh you have not any friend or helper?

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَهٗ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَمَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ مِنْ وَّلِيٍّ وَّلَا نَصِيْرٍ ﴿١٠٧﴾

108 Rather you wish to put questions to your Messenger, as Moses was questioned before. And whoever adopts disbelief instead of faith he indeed has lost the right direction of the way.[153]

أَمْ تُرِيْدُوْنَ أَنْ تَسْـَٔلُوْا رَسُوْلَكُمْ كَمَا سُئِلَ
مُوْسٰى مِنْ قَبْلُ ۭ وَمَنْ يَّتَبَدَّلِ الْكُفْرَ
بِالْإِيْمَانِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَآءَ السَّبِيْلِ ﴿١٠٨﴾

109 Many of the people of the Book wish that they could turn you back into disbelievers after you have believed, out of envy from themselves, after truth has become manifest to them.[154] But pardon and forgive, till Allāh bring about His command.

وَدَّ كَثِيْرٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ لَوْ يَرُدُّوْنَكُمْ مِّنْۢ
بَعْدِ إِيْمَانِكُمْ كُفَّارًا ۚ حَسَدًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ مِّنْۢ
بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ ۚ فَاعْفُوْا وَاصْفَحُوْا حَتّٰى

another message (*āyat*), and Allāh knows best what He reveals, they say thou art only a forger" (16:101). This is a Makkan revelation and it is an undisputed fact, admitted by all upholders of abrogation in the Qur'ān, that there was no abrogation at Makkah, because the details of the law were not revealed there. Therefore the word *āyat*, occurring there twice, could only mean a message or a communication from God, and the first *message* meant the previous scriptures and by the second *message* was meant the Qur'ān.

The interpretation adopted by the commentators generally is not based on any saying of the Prophet; it is their own opinion. Nor is there a single report traceable to the Prophet that such and such a verse was abrogated. A companion's opinion that he considered a certain verse to have been abrogated by another could not carry the least weight. It was the Prophet only on whose authority any verse was accepted as being a part of the Holy Qur'ān, and it was he only on whose authority any verse could be considered as having been abrogated. But there is not a single *ḥadīth* of the Prophet speaking of abrogation.

Another consideration which shows the erroneousness of the doctrine that any verse of the Qur'ān was abrogated by another is the hopeless disagreement of the upholders of this view. In the first place there is no agreement as to the number of the verses which are alleged to have been abrogated; while some accept no more than five verses to be abrogated, others carry the number to hundreds. This shows that the view is based simply on conjecture. Secondly, if one commentator holds a certain verse to be abrogated, another calls this an erroneous view. In Bukhārī especially do we find opposite views cited side by side. What happened really was this that when a commentator could not reconcile one verse with another, he held the verse to be abrogated by the other, but another who, giving deeper thought was able to effect a reconciliation between the two, rejected abrogation. This seems to be the basis on which the theory of abrogation of Quranic verses rests, and this basis is demolished by the Holy Qur'ān when it says: "Do they not then meditate on the Qur'ān? And if it were from any other than Allāh, they would have found in it many a discrepancy" (4:82). There are no discrepancies in the Qur'ān, and it is want of meditation on it that is responsible for the theory of abrogation.

153 The Jews are addressed here, because it is they who vexed Moses with different demands and different questions. The words *whoever adopts disbelief instead of faith* do not signify a change of disbelief for belief, but the adoption of the former instead of the latter, and therefore these words also apply to the Jews.

154, see next page.

Surely Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.

يَأْتِيَ اللّٰهُ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٠٩﴾

110 And keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate. And whatever good you send before for yourselves, you will find it with Allāh. Surely Allāh is Seer of what you do.

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتُوا الزَّكٰوةَ ۗ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

111 And they say: None shall enter the Garden except he who is a Jew, or the Christians.[155] These are their vain desires. Say: Bring your proof if you are truthful.

وَقَالُوا لَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصٰرٰى ۗ تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ ۗ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِينَ ﴿١١١﴾

112 Nay, whoever submits himself entirely to Allāh and he is the doer of good (to others), he has his reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for such nor shall they grieve.[156]

بَلٰى مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلّٰهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ ۖ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

SECTION 14 : **Perfect Guidance is only in Islām**

113 And the Jews say, The Christians follow nothing (good), and the Christians say, The Jews

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ لَيْسَتِ النَّصٰرٰى عَلٰى شَيْءٍ ۖ وَقَالَتِ النَّصٰرٰى لَيْسَتِ الْيَهُودُ عَلٰى شَيْءٍ ۙ

154 The Jews were so inimical to Islām that, knowing it to be a religion based on the Unity of God as their own religion was, and knowing that it led men to a life of righteousness and turned them away from the path of evil, they longed, and in fact did their best by joining hands with the idolatrous enemies of Islām, to turn them back into idolatry. Elsewhere the following words occur about the Jews: "Hast thou not seen those to whom a portion of the Book was given? They believe in idols and devils and say of those who disbelieve, These are better guided in the path than those who believe" (4:51). The Muslims are, however, told to pardon and forgive.

155 The address hitherto has been particularly to the Jews, but the "people of the Book" include both Jews and Christians, and along with the idolaters they were both opposed to Islām, and hence the Christians are now expressly spoken of. That the Jews denounced the Christians and the Christians denounced the Jews is expressly stated in v. 113, and hence what is said here may be expanded thus: The Jews say that none shall enter the Garden except a Jew and the Christians say that none shall enter the Garden except the Christians. Both degraded religion to a belief in a set of doctrines, and leading a life of righteousness was not considered as of the essence of religion.

156 The Jews and the Christians are told that their assertions that only the Jews and the Christians will be saved are groundless. It is entire submission to Allāh and the doing of good to His creatures that is the true source of salvation, and that is what Islām means according to the Holy Qur'ān. Here the word *wajh* does not stand for the *face*, but is used "for the whole, because *wajh* is the most noble part" (LL). Similarly *wajhī* in 3:19 signifies *my person* or

follow nothing (good),[157] while they recite the (same) Book. Even thus say those who have no knowledge, like what they say. So Allāh will judge between them on the day of Resurrection in that wherein they differ.[158]

وَّهُمْ يَتْلُوْنَ الْكِتٰبَ ۭ كَذٰلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ ۚ فَاللّٰهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ فِيْمَا كَانُوْا فِيْهِ يَخْتَلِفُوْنَ ﴿۱۱۳﴾

114 And who is more unjust than he who prevents (men) from the mosques of Allāh, from His name being remembered therein, and strives to ruin them? (As for) these, it was not proper for them to enter them except in fear. For them is disgrace in this world, and theirs is a grievous chastisement in the Hereafter.[159]

وَمَنْ اَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ مَّنَعَ مَسٰجِدَ اللّٰهِ اَنْ يُّذْكَرَ فِيْهَا اسْمُهٗ وَسَعٰى فِىْ خَرَابِهَا ۭ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ اَنْ يَّدْخُلُوْهَآ اِلَّا خَاۗىِٕفِيْنَ ڛ لَهُمْ فِى الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَّلَهُمْ فِى الْاٰخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيْمٌ ﴿۱۱۴﴾

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myself (T). *Wajh* also means *course, way, purpose* or *object* as in v. 115.

From *aslama,* meaning *he submitted himself* or *entered into peace,* is derived the name of the religion which the Holy Qur'ān preaches, i.e., *Islām,* for which see 400.

157 In *'alā shai-in* the word *'alā* signifies *conformity,* as in the proverb *al-nāsu 'alā dīni mulūki-him* which means *the people are in conformity to,* i.e., *are followers of, the religion of their kings* (LL). The word *shai',* which primarily means simply *a thing,* signifies in such cases *a thing worth being regarded,* or *a thing of any account* or *value,* or *anything good,* as in the proverb *laisa bi-shai'-in* (LL).

158 The Jews and the Christians are here blamed for denying all good in each other like ignorant men, notwithstanding that they were both followers of one Book, by which is here meant the Old Testament, which both accepted. As against this, the Qur'ān accepts that there is partial truth in all religions. The declaration of this cosmopolitan principle by Islām as regards a substratum of truth underlying all religions is the more wonderful when it is borne in mind that Islām took its birth in a country which had no connection with the outside world, and the principle was proclaimed by a man who had not read the scriptures of any religion.

159 The idolatrous Quraish had turned the Muslims out of the Sacred Mosque at Makkah and the Jews and the Christians were now helping them to annihilate the small Muslim community in Madīnah, which practically meant the laying waste of the Sacred Mosque itself. The word *masājid* (mosques) is used here because the Sacred Mosque was to be the centre of all the mosques of the world. This generalization further shows that the fate of all those who prevented Muslims from worshipping Allāh in the mosques is predicted here, and the fate of the opponents of the Prophet bears ample testimony to the truth of this prediction. The Jewish residents of Madīnah, who exerted themselves to their utmost to bring ruin to Islām, were either banished in disgrace or perished in their struggle to annihilate Islām. The idolaters or the Quraish, who prevented Muslims from repairing to the Sacred Mosque at Makkah, were also finally subjugated and had to bow their heads before the very men whom they had persecuted for no other fault than that they worshipped Allāh.

115 And Allāh's is the East and the West, so whither you turn thither is Allāh's purpose. Surely Allāh is Ample-giving, Knowing.[160]

وَلِلّٰهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ ۚ فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوْا فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ اللّٰهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿١١٥﴾

116 And they say: Allāh has taken to Himself a son — glory be to Him! Rather, whatever is in the heavens and the earth is His. All are obedient to Him.[161]

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللّٰهُ وَلَدًا ۙ سُبْحٰنَهٗ ۭ بَلْ لَّهٗ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۭ كُلٌّ لَّهٗ قٰنِتُوْنَ ﴿١١٦﴾

117 Wonderful Originator[162] of the heavens and the earth! And when He decrees an affair, He says to it only, Be, and it is.[163]

بَدِيْعُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۭ وَإِذَا قَضٰى أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُوْلُ لَهٗ كُنْ فَيَكُوْنُ ﴿١١٧﴾

118 And those who have no knowledge say: Why does not Allāh speak to us or a sign come to us?[164] Even thus said those before them, the like of what they say. Their hearts are all alike. Indeed We have made the messages clear for a people who are sure.

وَقَالَ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ لَوْلَا يُكَلِّمُنَا اللّٰهُ أَوْ تَأْتِيْنَآ اٰيَةٌ ۭ كَذٰلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِّثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ ۭ تَشَابَهَتْ قُلُوْبُهُمْ ۭ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا الْاٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يُّوْقِنُوْنَ ﴿١١٨﴾

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160 The previous verse predicts disgrace for those who persecuted the Muslims; this one predicts the Muslim conquests by which the enemy was to be disgraced. The concluding words, Allāh is *Ample-giving, Knowing*, also support this conclusion. The Muslims, who had been deprived of all they possessed and made utterly destitute, were promised ample gifts. The words *whither you turn, thither is Allāh's purpose,* point clearly to the Divine promise that all obstacles in the path of the Muslims will be removed and victory will follow their footsteps.

The word *wajh* occurring here denotes *countenance* or *face,* as well as *course, purpose,* or *object* which one is pursuing, or a *direction* in which one is going or looking (T, LL). According to R it signifies *attention* or *course.*

161 The Christian doctrine that God has a son is refuted here. Though mainly it is the Jews who are addressed in this chapter, Christianity also is spoken of occasionally, in contrast with the next chapter in which Christianity finds a detailed mention while there are occasional references to Judaism. The phrase *subḥāna-hū* is always used to declare the freedom of the Divine Being from all imperfections, and is always mentioned in connection with the doctrine of sonship to show that to attribute a son to the Divine Being is to attribute an imperfection to Him, which is met with in human beings. The doctrine of sonship is mentioned here as being opposed to the religion which requires entire submission to Divine commandments from every man and thus dispenses with the necessity of a conciliator.

162 The original word is *Badī'*, which is applicable to the thing made as well as to the maker. *A thing* is *badī'* which is *not after the similitude of any thing pre-existing,* and *badī'* is also *the person who makes or produces or brings into existence for the first time and not after the similitude of anything pre-existing* (LL).

163 *Kun fa-yakūnu* is the oft-recurring phrase in which Allāh's act of the

164, see next page.

119 Surely We have sent thee with the Truth as a bearer of good news and as a warner, and thou wilt not be called upon to answer for the companions of the flaming Fire.

إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنٰكَ بِالْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَّنَذِيرًا ۙ وَّلَا تُسْـَٔلُ عَنْ أَصْحٰبِ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿١١٩﴾

120 And the Jews will not be pleased with thee, nor the Christians, unless thou follow their religion. Say: Surely Allāh's guidance, that is the (perfect) guidance.[165] And if thou follow their desires after the knowledge that has come to thee thou shalt have from Allāh no friend, nor helper.

وَلَنْ تَرْضٰى عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصٰرٰى حَتّٰى تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَى اللّٰهِ هُوَ الْهُدٰى ۗ وَلَئِنِ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ بَعْدَ الَّذِي جَآءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ ۙ مَا لَكَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ مِنْ وَّلِيٍّ وَّلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿١٢٠﴾

121 Those to whom We have given the Book follow it as it ought to be followed.[166] These believe in it. And whoever disbelieves in it, these it is that are the losers.

الَّذِينَ اٰتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ يَتْلُونَهُ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ ۗ أُولٰٓئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ ۗ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهِ فَأُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾

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creation and annihilation of things is spoken of in the Holy Qur'ān. It is not meant by this that there is no gradual process in the creation of things; evolution in creation is in fact plainly spoken of in the very first words of the Qur'ān, where God is spoken of as *Rabb* (Evolver) of worlds, the *Fosterer of a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of completion* (R). It is, in fact, an answer to those who think that the creation of things by God is dependent on the previous existence of matter and soul and the adaptability of their attributes. The argument given here in the word *badī'* is that man, who stands in need of matter to make things, also stands in need of a pattern after which to make them, but God stands in need of neither. The verse seems particularly to refer here, however, to the revolution that was to be brought about by the Prophet. It seemed an impossibility to men, but Allāh had decreed it. And, in fact, the revolution brought about in Arabia by the Prophet was so wonderful that the old heaven and earth of the peninsula may be said to have been changed into new ones.

164 The disbelievers refused to accept the truth of Islām unless either Allāh spoke to them, so that they should have a proof that He sends His messages to men, or that a sign should come to them. The sign which they often demanded was the threatened punishment. As disgrace in this world is predicted for them (v. 114), their demand is that as an evidence of the Prophet's truth that punishment should overtake them. The answer to both these demands is contained in v. 119, for *as bearer of good news* the Prophet told them that if they purified themselves by walking in his footsteps, Allāh would speak to them, and *as a warner* He informed them of the coming wrath if they persisted in their evil ways.

165 The Guidance of Allāh or the religion of Islām is here called *al-hudā* or *the perfect guidance*, as against the Jewish and Christian religions which are called *ahwā'a-hum* or *their desires*, because both the religions had lost their original purity. What the Prophet taught is here called *al-'ilm*, or *science*, because it establishes all the principles of religion, both theoretical and practical, with clearness.

166 The Muslims are meant, while the *Book* is the Qur'ān (AH). I'Ab interprets the words *yatlūna-hū haqqa tilāwati-hī* as meaning *follow it as it ought to be followed* (IJ). For *talā*, meaning *he followed it*, or *did according to it*, see LL, which quotes several authorities.

SECTION 15 : **Covenant with Abraham**

122 O Children of Israel, call to mind My favour which I bestowed on you and that I made you excel the nations.[167]

يٰبَنِيْٓ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ اذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِيْٓ اَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاَنِّيْ فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿۱۲۲﴾

123 And be on your guard against a day when no soul will avail another in the least, neither will any compensation be accepted from it, nor will intercession profit it, nor will they be helped.

وَاتَّقُوْا يَوْمًا لَّا تَجْزِيْ نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَّفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَّلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَّلَا تَنْفَعُهَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَّلَا هُمْ يُنْصَرُوْنَ ﴿۱۲۳﴾

124 And when his Lord tried Abraham with certain commands he fulfilled them. He said : Surely I will make thee a leader of men. (Abraham) said : And of my offspring ? My covenant does not include the wrongdoers, said He.[168]

وَاِذِ ابْتَلٰٓى اِبْرٰهٖمَ رَبُّهٗ بِكَلِمٰتٍ فَاَتَمَّهُنَّ ؕ قَالَ اِنِّيْ جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ اِمَامًا ؕ قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِيْ ؕ قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿۱۲۴﴾

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167 The Israelites are thrice told in the Holy Qur'ān that God had made them a great nation but that it was by their own evil deeds and forsaking the ways of righteousness that they were proving themselves unworthy of that greatness. They are first addressed in v. 40 and told that the Prophet Muḥammad came in fulfilment of their own prophecies. They are again addressed in v. 47 and told how favours were shown to them in the time of Moses and after him. Now they are being addressed a third time and reminded of the covenant which was made with Abraham, the great patriarch in whom the Israelites and the Ishmaelites met.

168 The first part of the verse relates that Abraham was made spiritual leader of men because he was found perfect in fulfilling the Divine commandments. As a spiritual leader of three great nations of the world, that patriarch occupies a unique position among religious personalities. Having discussed at length that a prophet from the Ishmaelites had come in accordance with the prophecies of the Israelite prophets, the Holy Qur'ān now proceeds to show that even the covenant with their great ancestor Abraham necessitated the appearance of a prophet in Arabia.

The second part of the verse states that the spiritual leadership of the world was still with Abraham's descendants. They are told that the covenant was made, not with Israel but with Abraham, and that therefore the seed of Ishmael and Isaac were equally to be blessed. Nay, as stated further on in v. 125, the covenant was made with both Abraham and Ishmael. The Jewish and Christian contention that the covenant made with Ishmael was simply of a temporal nature is groundless. On the other hand, the following arguments show that the covenant included both Ishmael and Isaac. (1) The promise to bless Abraham and his seed was given long before either Ishmael or Isaac was born : " And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing. . . . And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed " (Gen. 12 : 2, 3). (2) The promise given to Abraham regarding the multiplicity of his seed is the same as that given to Hagar regarding Ishmael when she conceived him : " And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them : and he said to him, So shall thy seed be " (Gen. 15 : 5). " And the angel of the Lord said unto her (i.e. Hagar),

125 And when We made The House a resort for men and a (place of) security.[168a] And: Take ye the place of Abraham for a place of prayer.[168b] And We enjoined Abraham

وَ اِذۡ جَعَلۡنَا الۡبَیۡتَ مَثَابَۃً لِّلنَّاسِ وَ اَمۡنًا ؕ وَ اتَّخِذُوۡا مِنۡ مَّقَامِ اِبۡرٰہٖمَ مُصَلًّی ؕ وَ

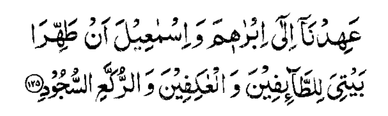
I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude" (Gen. 16:10). (3) The covenant was made again with Abraham after Ishmael was born, while Abraham had no hope of another son, nor was there a Divine promise that a son should be born to him from Sārah, the promise contained in Gen. 15:4, "but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir" having been fulfilled in the birth of Ishmael. This promise is contained in Gen. 17:2-6: "And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. . . . And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee". (4) The covenant was renewed with Ishmael after Isaac was promised: "And as for Ishmael I have heard thee; Behold I have blessed him and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation" (Gen. 17:20). It should also be noted that God's hearing Abraham with regard to Ishmael refers to Abraham's prayer in Gen. 17:18: "O that Ishmael might live before thee!", and shows that Ishmael was righteous in the sight of God. (5) The nature of the promise made to Ishmael does not differ materially from that made to Abraham: they are both to be blessed, both to be made fruitful, the seed of both is to be multiplied exceedingly, princes and kings are promised among the descendants of both of them, and both are promised to be made a great nation. Nothing is said regarding Abraham that is not said regarding Ishmael. (6) The covenant on the part of Abraham's seed was kept by the children of Isaac as well as of Ishmael. According to Gen. 17:10: "This is My covenant which ye shall keep between Me and you and thy seed after thee: Every man child among you shall be circumcised". Now, circumcision has been a characteristic of the Israelites as well as of the Ishmaelites. Hence God's covenant was with both these nations. (7) The fulfilment of the covenant on the part of God has also been true with regard to both nations: "And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God" (Gen. 17:8). If the covenant was only with Isaac's children, the promise of an everlasting possession failed with the advent of Islām, so that even God could not keep His promise. But the fact is that the land of Canaan continues to remain as an everlasting possession in the hands of the seed of Abraham, for as soon as the Israelites or their representatives, the Christians, were deemed unfit to have the Holy Land in their possession because of their unrighteousness, that Holy Land was given to the Arabs, who were Ishmaelites, and to this day it remains in the hands of the Muslims, who are the true representatives of the house of Ishmael.

168a *Al-Bait* or *The House* is the famous house known by this name to this day, the *Ka'bah*. It is also known as *Bait Allāh* or the House of Allāh, and is the same as the *Beth-el* of the Bible. In the Qur'ān itself it is mentioned by the name *al-Bait* several times, as here and in vv. 127, 158; 3:96; 8:35; 22:26. It is also mentioned as *al-Bait al-Ḥarām* or *the Sacred House* (5:3, 97), and *al-Bait al-'Atīq*, or *the Ancient House* (22:29, 33), and *al-Bait al-Ma'mūr* or *the Oft-visited House* (52:4). It is also spoken of as *awwala bait-in wuḍi'a li-l-nāsi, the First House appointed for men for Divine worship* (3:95).

History bears out these three distinguishing characteristics of the Ka'bah. It exists from the remotest antiquity; it was visited annually by people from the most distant corners of Arabia; and its sacredness was respected by the whole of Arabia. Thus writes Muir: "A very high antiquity must be assigned to the main features of the religion of Mecca. . . . Diodorus Siculus, writing about half a century before our era, says of Arabia washed by the Red Sea: 'There is in this country a temple greatly revered by the Arabs'. These words must refer to the

168b, see next page.

and Ishmael, saying: Purify My House for those who visit (it) and those who abide (in it) for devotion and those who bow down (and) those who prostrate themselves.[169]



Holy House of Mecca, for we know of no other which ever commanded such universal homage. . . . Tradition represents the Ka'bah as from time immemorial the scene of pilgrimage from all quarters of Arabia: from Yemen and Ḥadramaut, from the shores of the Persian Gulf, the deserts of Syria, and the distant environs of Hira and Mesopotamia, men yearly flocked to Mecca. So extensive a homage must have had its beginnings in an extremely remote age" (Life of Mahomet).

168b The previous verse speaks of Abraham, and there is apparently a change now introduced in resorting to the subject of the Ka'bah. But really there is no change. This section deals with the covenant made with Abraham and this covenant included both the Israelites and the Ishmaelites. The Ka'bah, the spiritual centre of Islām, it is now related, was connected with the name of Abraham, and pointed reference to this is made in the mention of *Maqām Ibrāhīm* or the Place of Abraham. It is true that a particular place, a small building supported by six pillars about 8 ft. high, situated in the Ka'bah, is known by this name, and was so known in the time of the Prophet and even before him, and this is incontrovertible evidence of Abraham's connection with Arabia and its spiritual centre. But here really Maqām Ibrāhīm stands for the House itself. It is *The House* that was made a resort for men and a place of security as stated in the opening words of the verse, and it is *The House* that was to be purified of idols by Abraham and Ishmael, as stated in the latter part. The injunction therefore to take the place of Abraham for a place of prayer can carry no other significance than that *The House* or the Ka'bah shall be the Central Mosque of the Muslims. It is called the place of Abraham because it was Abraham who purified it of the idols and it was Abraham who rebuilt *The House* as stated further on. While some commentators take the words *Maqām Ibrāhīm* as referring to the particular place known by that name, many of them understand by it the Ka'bah or the whole of the sanctuary. There is a ḥadīth in Bukhārī according to which 'Umar is reported to have said to the Prophet: O Messenger of Allāh, wert thou to take Maqām Ibrāhīm for a place of prayer. These words were spoken when the Prophet, after his flight to Madīnah, turned his face to Jerusalem as the *qiblah*, because Jerusalem was the *qiblah* of the Israelite prophets that had gone before him. It was on receiving this Divine injunction that he made the Ka'bah the *qiblah* of the Muslims.

169 It should be noted that Ishmael is very often mentioned along with Abraham in connection with the Ka'bah. Ishmael's connection with Arabia is established by the Bible itself, for Kedar (son of Ishmael, Gen. 25:13) stands throughout the writings of the Old Testament for Arabia (Ps. 120:5; Is. 42:11; 60:7). The Arab tradition on this point was so strong and of such old standing that the Holy Qur'ān every now and then refers to it as a matter of undoubted history. As Muir says: "This was no Muslim fiction, but the popular opinion of the Meccans long before the era of Muhammad, otherwise it could not have been referred to in the Qur'ān as an acknowledged fact, nor would the names of certain spots around the Ka'bah have been connected, as we know them to have been, with Abraham and Ishmael" (*Life of Mahomet*). The Arab tradition representing Abraham as coming with Hagar and Ishmael to the place where now Makkah is, is quite independent of the Bible statement, and the two taken together justify us in drawing the conclusion as to the truth of the Quranic statement. Moreover, the situation of Makkah on a well-recognized ancient route from Syria to Yaman and the visits from the deserts of Syria to that "Ancient House" corroborate this conclusion. Thus there is not the least reason to reject the popular tradition as a fable, and the facts recorded in the Qur'ān are borne out fully by Arab tradition and the Bible.

126 And when Abraham said: My Lord, make this a secure town and provide its people with fruits, such of them as believe in Allāh and the Last Day. He said: And whoever disbelieves, I shall grant him enjoyment for a short while, then I shall drive him to the chastisement of the Fire. And it is an evil destination.[170]

وَاِذْ قَالَ اِبْرٰهٖمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هٰذَا بَلَدًا
اٰمِنًا وَّارْزُقْ اَهْلَهٗ مِنَ الثَّمَرٰتِ مَنْ اٰمَنَ
مِنْهُمْ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ ؕ قَالَ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ
فَاُمَتِّعُهٗ قَلِيْلًا ثُمَّ اَضْطَرُّهٗۤ اِلٰى عَذَابِ
النَّارِ ؕ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿۱۲۶﴾

127 And when Abraham and Ishmael raised the foundations of the House: Our Lord, accept from us; surely Thou art the Hearing, the Knowing.[170a].

وَاِذْ يَرْفَعُ اِبْرٰهٖمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ
وَاِسْمٰعِيْلُ ؕ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا ؕ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ
السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿۱۲۷﴾

128 Our Lord, and make us both submissive to Thee, and (raise) from our offspring, a nation submissive to Thee,[171] and show us our ways of devotion and turn to us (mercifully); surely Thou art the Oft-returning (to mercy), the Merciful.

رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمَيْنِ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَاۤ
اُمَّةً مُّسْلِمَةً لَّكَ ۪ وَاَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ
عَلَيْنَا ۚ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿۱۲۸﴾

129 Our Lord, and raise up in them a Messenger from among them who shall recite to them Thy messages and teach them the Book and the Wisdom, and purify them. Surely Thou art the Mighty, the Wise.[172]

رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيْهِمْ رَسُوْلًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ
اٰيٰتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيْهِمْ ؕ
اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿۱۲۹﴾

References to Ishmael, the eldest son of Abraham, are very frequent in the Holy Qur'ān. For further references see 2:133, 136, 140; 3:83; 4:163; 6:87; 14:39; 19:54, 55; 21:85; 37:101-107 (where he is not mentioned by name); and 38:48.

For references to Isaac, Abraham's younger son, which are always brief, see 2:133,136,140; 3:83; 4:163; 6:85; 11:71; 12:6; 14:39; 19:49; 21:72; 29:27; 37:112, 113; 38:45-47.

170 It was Abraham who when settling Hagar and Ishmael near the Sacred House, which was already there, laid the foundations of a city there. Makkah is elsewhere spoken of as *hādh-al-Balad* (14:35; 90:1, 2) or This City. In 3:95, it is mentioned by the name Bakkah. It was built in a place which was unproductive of fruit (14:37) and therefore devoid of the primal necessities of life. Hence Abraham's prayer for the residents of the city that they might be provided with fruits. But while Abraham prayed for provisions of life for the righteous only, God's acceptance of the prayer included the wicked as well. Elsewhere the acceptance of this prayer is referred to thus: "Have We not settled them in a safe, sacred territory to which fruits of every kind are drawn — a sustenance from Us" (28:57).

170a, 171, 172, see next page.

SECTION 16: **The Religion of Abraham**

130 And who forsakes the religion of Abraham but he who makes a fool of himself. And certainly We made him pure[173] in this world and in the Hereafter he is surely among the righteous.

وَمَنْ يَّرْغَبُ عَنْ مِّلَّةِ اِبْرٰهٖمَ اِلَّا مَنْ سَفِهَ نَفْسَهٗ ؕ وَلَقَدِ اصْطَفَيْنٰهُ فِى الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَاِنَّهٗ فِى الْاٰخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿۱۳۰﴾

131 When his Lord said to him, Submit, he said: I submit myself to the Lord of the worlds.

اِذْ قَالَ لَهٗ رَبُّهٗٓ اَسْلِمْ ۙ قَالَ اَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿۱۳۱﴾

132 And the same did Abraham enjoin on his sons, and (so did) Jacob: O my sons, surely Allāh has chosen for you (this) religion, so die not unless you are submitting ones.[174]

وَوَصّٰى بِهَآ اِبْرٰهٖمُ بَنِيْهِ وَيَعْقُوْبُ ؕ يٰبَنِىَّ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ اصْطَفٰى لَكُمُ الدِّيْنَ فَلَا تَمُوْتُنَّ اِلَّا وَاَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۲﴾

133 Or were you witnesses when death visited Jacob, when he said to his sons: What will you serve after me? They said: We shall serve thy God and the God of thy fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac, one God only, and to Him do we submit.

اَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَآءَ اِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوْبَ الْمَوْتُ ۙ اِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيْهِ مَا تَعْبُدُوْنَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِىْ ؕ قَالُوْا نَعْبُدُ اِلٰهَكَ وَاِلٰهَ اٰبَآئِكَ اِبْرٰهٖمَ وَاِسْمٰعِيْلَ وَاِسْحٰقَ اِلٰهًا وَّاحِدًا ۚۖ وَّنَحْنُ لَهٗ مُسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۳﴾

170a Abraham and Ishmael rebuilt the Ka'bah, which was already there; see 14:37.

171 The word translated as submissive is *Muslim* in the original. A Muslim is so called because he surrenders himself to the will of God or because he is secure from the slavery of the Devil (R) or because he enters into peace. Though all prophets were Muslims but only the followers of the Prophet Muḥammad are known as a Muslim nation. At the time when these verses were revealed, there existed only a few Muslims in Madīnah, and reference to a Muslim nation was still prophetical.

172 The Messenger had appeared but the great task of teaching the Book and the Wisdom to the progeny of Ishmael, the Arabs, and the still greater task of purifying them of evil, had yet to be performed, and its mention at this time was therefore prophetical. The more one ponders on the unique transformation brought about by the Prophet in Arabia, and through Arabia in the world, the more his head bows before the grandeur of this prophecy.

173 *Iṣṭafainā-hu* means *we made him pure from all dross* (AH); also *We chose him* (LL). The root is *ṣafw* meaning *purity*. *Muṣṭafā, the Purified One* or *the Chosen One,* is one of the titles of our Prophet.

174 Jacob, elsewhere called Israel, was the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham. Compare Gen. 18:19: "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgement"

134 Those are a people that have passed away; for them is what they earned and for you what you earn; and you will not be asked of what they did.

تِلْكَ اُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ ۚ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَّا كَسَبْتُمْ ۚ وَلَا تُسْـَٔلُوْنَ عَمَّا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۴﴾

135 And they say: Be Jews or Christians, you will be on the right course. Say: Nay, (we follow) the religion of Abraham, the upright one, and he was not one of the polytheists.[175]

وَقَالُوْا كُوْنُوْا هُوْدًا اَوْ نَصٰرٰى تَهْتَدُوْا ؕ قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ اِبْرٰهٖمَ حَنِيْفًا ؕ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ﴿۱۳۵﴾

136 Say: We believe in Allāh and (in) that which has been revealed to us, and (in) that which was revealed to Abraham, and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and (in) that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and (in) that which was given to the prophets from their Lord, we do not make any distinction between any of them and to Him do we submit.[176]

قُوْلُوْٓا اٰمَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْنَا وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلٰٓى اِبْرٰهٖمَ وَاِسْمٰعِيْلَ وَاِسْحٰقَ وَيَعْقُوْبَ وَالْاَسْبَاطِ وَمَآ اُوْتِيَ مُوْسٰى وَعِيْسٰى وَمَآ اُوْتِيَ النَّبِيُّوْنَ مِنْ رَّبِّهِمْ ۚ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ ۖ وَنَحْنُ لَهٗ مُسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۶﴾

137 So if they believe as you believe, they are indeed on the right course; and if they turn back, then they are only in opposition. But Allāh will suffice thee against them; and He is the Hearing, the Knowing.[177]

فَاِنْ اٰمَنُوْا بِمِثْلِ مَآ اٰمَنْتُمْ بِهٖ فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا ۚ وَاِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاِنَّمَا هُمْ فِيْ شِقَاقٍ ۚ فَسَيَكْفِيْكَهُمُ اللّٰهُ ۚ وَهُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿۱۳۷﴾

For further references to Jacob, see 2:133, 136, 140; 3:83, 92; 4:163; 6:85; 12th chapter; 21:72, 73; 38:45-47.

175 *Ḥanīf* is from the root *ḥanf*, meaning *inclining* or *declining* (LL). Hence *ḥanīf* is *one inclining to a right state* or *tendency* (R, LL). The word is often mentioned in connection with the name of Abraham and the Holy Prophet, and his followers are also enjoined to be *ḥanīf*. It seems to signify firmness in sticking to the right state, and has, no doubt, reference to the inclining to error on the part of both the Jews and the Christians. As opposed to both these professed followers of Abraham, the Muslims are enjoined to remain firm in the right state, and thus to be the true representatives of the Abrahamic faith in the world. It is for this reason that the word *ḥanīf* is used here in opposition to the attitude of both the Jews and the Christians.

176 This shows the cosmopolitan nature of a Muslim's belief. Not only is belief in the great prophets of Israel an article of faith with a Muslim, but the words *that which was given to the prophets from their Lord* make the Muslim conception of belief in prophets as wide as the world. And it should be noted that this broad conception was promulgated at a time when the Jews and the Christians were exerting themselves to the utmost against the new faith.

177 Islām recognized the prophets of the Jews and the Christians and the prophets of all other nations. How could a follower of any religion reject

138 (We take) Allāh's colour, and who is better than Allāh at colouring, and we are His worshippers.[178]

صِبْغَةَ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَمَنْ اَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللّٰهِ صِبْغَةً ۫ وَّنَحْنُ لَهٗ عٰبِدُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۸﴾

139 Say: Do you dispute with us about Allāh, and He is our Lord and your Lord. and for us are our deeds and for you your deeds; and we are sincere to Him?[179]

قُلْ اَتُحَآجُّوْنَنَا فِي اللّٰهِ وَهُوَ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ ۚ وَلَنَآ اَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ اَعْمَالُكُمْ ۚ وَنَحْنُ لَهٗ مُخْلِصُوْنَ ﴿۱۳۹﴾

140 Or do you say that Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes were Jews or Christians?[180] Say: Do you know better or Allāh? And who is more unjust than he who conceals a testimony that he has from Allāh? And Allāh is not heedless of what you do.

اَمْ تَقُوْلُوْنَ اِنَّ اِبْرٰهٖمَ وَاِسْمٰعِيْلَ وَاِسْحٰقَ وَيَعْقُوْبَ وَالْاَسْبَاطَ كَانُوْا هُوْدًا اَوْ نَصٰرٰى ؕ قُلْ ءَاَنْتُمْ اَعْلَمُ اَمِ اللّٰهُ ؕ وَمَنْ اَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَتَمَ شَهَادَةً عِنْدَهٗ مِنَ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَمَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿۱۴۰﴾

141 Those are a people that have passed away; and for them is what they earned and for you what you earn; and you will not be asked of what they did.

تِلْكَ اُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ ۚ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَّا كَسَبْتُمْ ۚ وَلَا تُسْـَٔلُوْنَ عَمَّا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿۱۴۱﴾

Islām? Yet the Jews not only did not accept Islām, but actively opposed it, so much so that they were making plans to take the Prophet's life and annihilate a religion which was based on such broad principles. The words *Allāh will suffice thee against them* mean that *Allāh will guard thee against their evil plans to annihilate thee* (AH).

178 *Ṣabgh* means *dyeing* or *colouring*, and also *dipping* or *immersing in water;* hence *ṣibghah* indicates *baptism*, which the Christians effect by immersing in water. *Ṣibghah* also means religion (T), because religion brings about a change in mentality and gives its own colour to a man's views. The religion of Islām is called Allāh's colour because God is uppermost in a Muslim's ideas, and because his views are as broad as humanity. This particular word *ṣibghah* has also been adopted here as a hint to the Christians that the baptism of water does not effect any change in a man. It is the baptism of the broad principle of faith, accepting the prophets of all nations, that brings about change in the mentality of man. It is through this baptism that the new birth is received, because it opens the mind for the reception of all truth, and inspires it with love and reverence for all good men.

179 A Muslim's conception of Allāh is very broad. It includes all that is best in all other religions, but is free from the limitations they put. Therefore no one who is true to his religion can dispute the Muslim conception of the Divine Being. Moreover, every religion of the world limits the spiritual sustenance of God to one nation or one country. A Jew thinks that God revealed truth only to the Israelites; a Christian thinks that the truth was revealed only to Jesus; a Hindu thinks that God revealed the truth only to the sages of India; a Zoroastrian thinks that the truth was revealed to none but Zoroaster. Not so Islām, which says that the truth was revealed to every nation. Every nation thus accepts partial truth, only that part of the truth which was revealed to it, but Islām accepts the whole truth.

180, see next page.

PART II

SECTION 17: **The Ka'bah as the Spiritual Centre**

142 The fools among the people will say: "What has turned them from their qiblah which they had?"[181] Say: The East and the West belong only to Allāh; He guides whom He pleases to the right path.

سَيَقُولُ السُّفَهَآءُ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَا وَلّٰىهُمْ عَنْ قِبْلَتِهِمُ الَّتِىْ كَانُوْا عَلَيْهَا ۭ قُلْ لِّلّٰهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَ الْمَغْرِبُ ۭ يَهْدِىْ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ اِلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ﴿١٤٢﴾

143 And thus We have made you an exalted[182] nation that you may be the bearers of witness to the people and (that) the Messenger may be a bearer of witness to you.[183] And We

وَكَذٰلِكَ جَعَلْنٰكُمْ اُمَّةً وَّسَطًا لِّتَكُوْنُوْا شُهَدَآءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُوْنَ الرَّسُوْلُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيْدًا ۭ

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180 The interrogation here is simply to reprove the Jews and the Christians, for the Jewish claim was that only acceptance of the Jewish law could save man, and the Christians claimed that none could be saved unless he accepted the atonement of Jesus. They are told that their ancestors who were prophets were the followers of neither the one nor the other. Islām was, in fact, a reversion to the simple faith of sincerity, the faith of Abraham and his immediate followers and descendants.

181 *Qiblah* means *the direction* or *point towards which one turns his face* (LL). In its religious usage it means the direction towards which one turns his face when saying his prayers, and the *qiblah* is thus the Spiritual Centre of a people. The change here referred to is the change which took place at Madīnah about sixteen months after the Prophet's flight to that city (B. 2:29). It should be noted that while the Holy Prophet was at Makkah among the idolaters of Arabia, he used to pray with his face to the Holy Temple at Jerusalem, but when he came to Madīnah, where the Jewish element was strong and powerful, he was directed by Divine Revelation to turn his face to the Ka'bah as his *qiblah*. The Jews are here spoken of in particular, and the subject continues what is said in the last two sections. If Abraham's seed was to be blessed in Ishmael's progeny, it was necessary that the new Spiritual Centre should be the house purified by Abraham and Ishmael, the First House appointed for men, the temple at Jerusalem being only the spiritual centre of the Israelites. This change contained a clear indication that Makkah would be conquered by the Muslims, for, an idolatrous temple could not be the spiritual centre of a religion of pure monotheism. To this conquest of Makkah there is also a reference in the words, "*The East and the West belong only to Allāh*".

182 The word in the original is *wasaṭ*, which signifies *the middle part of any thing*; and therefore, as being removed from either extreme, it signifies the *best part of a thing*, according to LL, who translates *ummat wasaṭ* as meaning *a just, equitable* or *good nation*; that is, *one not inclining to either extreme*. The commentators explain *wasaṭ* as meaning *equitable* and *exalted* (Rz, AH, Kf), and this sense fits the context. By making the Ka'bah their *qiblah*, Allāh had made it known that they were the people, the Muslim nation, for whom Abraham had prayed (v. 128), and therefore they were the inheritors of all those Divine blessings which had been promised to the seed of Abraham.

183, see next page.

did not make that which Thou wouldst have to be the qiblah[184] but that We might distinguish[185] him who follows the Messenger from him who turns back upon his heels. And it was indeed a hard test except for those whom Allāh has guided. Nor was Allāh going to make your faith to be fruitless.[186] Surely Allāh is Compassionate, Merciful, to the people.

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ
مَنْ يَتَّبِعُ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَىٰ عَقِبَيْهِ
وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ
هَدَى اللَّهُ ۗ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ ۚ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٤٣﴾

144 Indeed We see the turning of thy face to heaven, so We shall surely make thee master of the qiblah which thou likest;[187] turn then thy face towards the Sacred Mosque. And wherever you are turn your faces towards it. And those who have been given the book certainly know that

قَدْ نَرَىٰ تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ ۖ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ
قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا ۚ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ
الْحَرَامِ ۚ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ
شَطْرَهُ ۗ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَيَعْلَمُونَ

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183 One explanation of *shahīd*, or *bearer of witness*, is given in the following words: "*So that you may carry to them what you have learned of the revelation and the faith as Allāh's Messenger has brought to you*" (AH, Rz). Therefore *the bearers of witness* are the persons who carry knowledge to others, bearing testimony to its truth in their own persons. Some commentators explain the word as meaning a purifier (AH). But *shahīd* also signifies *one possessing much knowledge* (LL), and it means also *an Imām* or *a leader*, and the significance is that just as the Prophet delivered the message of truth to the Muslims and was their purifier and leader, the role of the Muslim community was to deliver the message of truth to the whole of humanity and to be its purifiers and leaders.

184 Rz explains the words *kunta 'alai-hā* as meaning *on which thou hadst firmly set thy heart that it should be thy qiblah.* It thus appears that the Prophet longed that the Ka'bah should be his *qiblah,* yet he did not take any step until he had received the Divine Revelation. If his revelations had been the outcome of his own desires he would not have waited for sixteen months for a revelation from on high to change the *qiblah.*

185 *Na'lama* means *We might know;* but I have followed AH in translating it as meaning *We might distinguish,* for *'ilm* is not followed by *min* except when it is used in the sense of *distinguishing one thing from another.* Taking the ordinary meaning, the significance would be that God might know how they act when confronted with the test.

186 By some the word *īmān,* lit., *faith,* is explained as meaning *prayer* (IAb-B). Adopting the ordinary significance, the words would mean that the faithful had no hesitation in accepting the change, and thus their faith bore fruit by keeping them on the right path.

187 The words *fa-la-nuwalliyanna-ka qiblat-an* are generally translated as *We shall turn thee to a qiblah.* But the order to make the Ka'bah a *qiblah* had already been given, see v. 125; and this section deals with the objections arising from this change, as vv. 142 and 143 show. One of the objections the Jews advanced was that while the Prophet claimed that his religion was the religion of

it is the truth from their Lord.[188] And Allāh is not heedless of what they do.

أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَّبِّهِمْ ۗ وَمَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ
عَمَّا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

145 And even if thou shouldst bring to those who have been given the Book every sign they would not follow thy qiblah, nor canst thou be a follower of their qiblah, neither are they the followers of each other's qiblah.[189] And if thou shouldst follow their desires after the knowledge that has come to thee, then thou wouldst indeed be of the wrongdoers.

وَلَئِنْ اَتَيْتَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ بِكُلِّ
اٰيَةٍ مَّا تَبِعُوْا قِبْلَتَكَ ۚ وَمَآ اَنْتَ بِتَابِعٍ
قِبْلَتَهُمْ ۚ وَمَا بَعْضُهُمْ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَةَ بَعْضٍ ۗ
وَلَئِنِ اتَّبَعْتَ اَهْوَآءَهُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَكَ
مِنَ الْعِلْمِ ۙ اِنَّكَ اِذًا لَّمِنَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿١٤٥﴾

146 Those whom we have given the book recognize him as they recognize their sons.[190] And a party of them surely conceal the truth while they know.

اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ يَعْرِفُوْنَهٗ كَمَا
يَعْرِفُوْنَ اَبْنَآءَهُمْ ۗ وَاِنَّ فَرِيْقًا مِّنْهُمْ
لَيَكْتُمُوْنَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿١٤٦﴾

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pure monotheism, he made the Ka'bah, which was full of idols, his Spiritual Centre; see 181. The Prophet turned his face to heaven, i.e., sought help from God in this matter, and the words that follow are an answer to this prayer, and could not mean *We shall turn thee to a qiblah,* because that had already been done. He is here told that the Ka'bah will not remain an idol temple, as he will soon be master of it, and idolatry will for ever be swept off from the new Spiritual Centre of the world. The words *wallā kadhā* mean *he made him guardian* or *possessor of a thing* (R), as *walī* means a guardian, and *wilāyat* means *government* or *management of a Province,* and *wallā* (inf.n. *tauliyah*) means *he set* anyone *over, entrusted* anyone *with the government* of a Province or *management* of an affair (F). *Wallā* when followed by *'an,* as in v. 142, means *he turned him back from* a thing, but when followed by two objects, as here, it means *he made him master of a thing.* So the Prophet was told to have no anxiety on that account and to turn his face to the Ka'bah.

188 The truth of the Prophet was manifest so far as the Jews and the Christians were concerned. There was a clear prophecy for the appearance of a Prophet who was to be the like of Moses; see Deut. 18:15-18. That Prophet was to appear from among the "brethren" of the Israelites, i.e., the Ishmaelites, and not a single prophet from among the Israelites, not even Jesus claimed to be the promised prophet of Deut. They also knew that God had promised to bless Ishmael (see 168), but that no prophet had up to this time appeared from among the Ishmaelites. They also knew that Ishmael was left in Arabia, and they identified his son, Kedar, with the Arabs. Is. 21:13 speaks in clear words of a prophecy about "Arabia" and of the Prophet's Flight. The *Bait Allāh* (Ka'bah) was the only *Beit-el* that the world knew.

189 Every sign of the Prophet's truth had been given to them already but their hearts were so hardened that they did not pay any attention to the clearest signs. But they were not agreed even among themselves. Notwithstanding that the Jews and Christians both looked to the temple at Jerusalem as their central temple, they were not agreed upon it as their *qiblah* or Spiritual Centre. The Christians turned towards the east (Muir). Moreover, there are differences among the Jews and the Samaritans, though both follow the law of Moses.

190 All the prophets of Abraham's seed had hitherto appeared among the Children of Israel, and hence *as they know their sons* is equivalent to *as they know the Israelite prophets,* the significance of the whole passage being that the Israelites or the Jews recognized the Prophet who appeared among the Children

147 The truth is from thy Lord, so be thou not of the doubters.[190a]

اَلْحَقُّ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِيْنَ ﴿١٤٧﴾

SECTION 18 : **The Ka'bah as the Spiritual Centre**

148 And every one has a goal to which he turns (himself), so vie with one another in good works.[191] Wherever you are, Allāh will bring you all together. Surely Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.

وَ لِكُلٍّ وِّجْهَةٌ هُوَ مُوَلِّيْهَا فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرٰتِ ؕ
اَيْنَ مَا تَكُوْنُوْا يَاْتِ بِكُمُ اللّٰهُ جَمِيْعًا ؕ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿١٤٨﴾

149 And from whatsoever place thou comest forth, turn thy face towards the Sacred Mosque.[191a] And surely it is the truth from thy Lord. And Allāh is not heedless of what you do.

وَ مِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ
الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ؕ وَ اِنَّهٗ لَلْحَقُّ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ ؕ
وَ مَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٤٩﴾

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of Ishmael, as they recognized the prophets who appeared among the Children of Israel. They knew this not only because blessings had equally been promised for both sons of Abraham, but also because of the clear prophecy of Moses that a prophet *like him* would be raised among the brethren of the Israelites, i.e., Ishmaelites, and because no prophet answering that description had appeared among the Israelites.

190a It is the reader who is addressed here.

191 In making the Ka'bah the Spiritual Centre the Muslims are told that their goal, as a nation, is to lead the world on to the greatest good. Their race is not a race for material benefits, a race for riches or power, but a race for the attainment of good and for the spread of good. As stated in clear words in v. 143, they are made leaders of the world, and this lead they are now told they must give in doing good, and hence they must vie with one another in doing good. In the words that follow — wherever you are Allāh will bring you all together — they are told that they will be spread far and wide in the world, yet their goal must be one. The outward unity of the *qiblah* has a deeper meaning under it; it stands for their *unity of purpose,* as being a nation which strives after one goal, and it forms the basis on which rests the brotherhood of Islām; hence the saying of the Prophet: "Do not call those who follow your *qiblah* unbelievers" (N. under *Kufr*).

191a A great honour is thus given to the Sacred Mosque but it must be remembered that the Ka'bah has never been supposed by any Muslim to possess any Divine attribute. The strange conclusion drawn by some Christian writers, that the honour thus given to the Ka'bah is a remnant of the pre-Islāmic Arab polytheism or idolatry, is quite erroneous. The Muslims honour the Ka'bah because it is their Spiritual Centre; they do not worship it. Even the idolatrous Arabs never worshipped the Ka'bah, though they had placed idols in it which they worshipped.

It should also be borne in mind that the famous Black Stone was not one of the Arab idols, nor can the kissing of it in performing the pilgrimage be looked upon as a remnant of idolatry. That Stone stands only as a monument: "The stone which the builders refused is become the head-stone of the corner" (Ps. 118:22). Ishmael was looked upon as rejected, and the covenant was considered to have been made with the children of Isaac, yet it was that rejected stone, for which the Black Stone at the Ka'bah stands as a monument, that was to become "the head-stone of the corner". The Black Stone is unhewn, so it is the stone that was "cut out of the mountain without hands" (Dan. 2:45). Jesus

150 And from whatsoever place thou comest forth turn thy face towards the Sacred Mosque. And wherever you are turn your faces towards it, so that people may have no plea against you except such of them as are unjust — so fear them not and fear Me — and that I may complete My favour to you and that you may go aright.[192]

وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ
شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۚ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ
فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ
عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ ۙ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ ۚ
فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِي ۚ وَلِأُتِمَّ نِعْمَتِي
عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٠﴾

151 Even as We have sent among you a Messenger from among you, who recites to you Our messages and purifies you and teaches you the Book and the Wisdom and teaches you that which you did not know.[193]

كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِنْكُمْ يَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ
آيَاتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَيُعَلِّمُكُمْ مَا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٥١﴾

Christ made this clear in the parable of the husbandmen, when he plainly told the Israelites that the vineyard (i.e., the kingdom of God) would be taken away from them and given to "other husbandmen", i.e. to a non-Israelite people, giving indication of that people in the words: "Did ye never read in the Scripture, the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?" (Matt. 21:42). And he added: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21:43), thus showing that he was referring to a rejected nation. Hence if the Black Stone is kissed, it is not kissed as an idol or as a god, but as a monument of the rejection of a nation which was to become the corner-stone of the Divine kingdom.

192 By completing of favour is meant the bestowing of spiritual favours on them. The Muslim nation was not like any other nation of the world, nor was mere advancement in the world their goal. The words with which the next verse opens are a further explanation: "Even as We have sent among you a Messenger who recites to you Divine messages and purifies you". They are thus told that they have been raised to carry the Divine message to other people and to purify them and teach them the Book and the Wisdom. Spiritual light was henceforth to shine from one Spiritual Centre alone. If that message was not conveyed to other people they had a plea against the Muslims that they had not conveyed the Truth to them. The turning of the face to the Sacred Mosque is thus equivalent to proclaiming the Truth which had its origin in the Ka'bah to the whole world. If the Muslims did not do it, they failed in their duty to God and man.

The Prophet and his followers are told in this verse that with the change of prophethood from the Israelites to the Ishmaelites it was necessary to change the Spiritual Centre too, *so that people may have no plea against you.* The Ka'bah was the house rebuilt by Abraham and Ishmael, and with prophethood now being transferred to the descendants of Ishmael, the Spiritual Centre had necessarily to be changed. The Ka'bah was moreover the first Spiritual Centre of the world (3:95), and it was in the fitness of things that it should be the last Spiritual Centre of the whole world. The words of the next verse which speak of the Messenger in almost the same words as the Messenger of Abraham's prayer in v. 129 make this significance still more clear. In the *completion of favours* in the concluding words of the verse there is a reference to the Muslim nation being the exalted nation of v. 143 whose sole object was to carry the truth to the whole world.

193 The reference is to Abraham's prayer in v. 129, as pointed out in the

152 Therefore glorify Me, I will make you eminent, and give thanks to Me and be not ungrateful to Me.[194]

فَاذْكُرُونِيٓ أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ ﴿١٥٢﴾

SECTION 19 : **Hard Trials necessary to establish Truth**

153 O you who believe, seek assistance through patience and prayer; surely Allāh is with the patient.[195]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَوٰةِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٥٣﴾

154 And speak not of those who are slain in Allāh's way as dead. Nay, (they are) alive, but you perceive not.[196]

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَن يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَٰتٌ ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَآءٌ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٥٤﴾

155 And We shall certainly try you with something of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits. And give good news to the patient,[197]

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُم بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَٰلِ وَالْأَنفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَٰتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّٰبِرِينَ ﴿١٥٥﴾

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last note. The functions of the Promised Prophet there are exactly the same as here.

194 The opening words of the verse *fa-dhkurū-nī adhkur-kum* may be translated either as *remember Me I will remember you* or as *glorify Me I will make you eminent,* for the word *dhikr* carries either significance, *remembrance* or *honouring*. Adopting either significance, what is stated here is that if the Muslims keep God in the forefront of their programme, they will be made great as a nation.

195 The Sacred Mosque at Makkah was in the possession of the idolaters, but by making it the *qiblah* of the Muslims promise was given to them that it would soon be theirs, purified of idol-worship. But to attain this great object they must seek Divine assistance, which would be granted them if they faced hardships with perseverance and kept up praying to God. There is, however, a deeper reference in these words to the Muslims' duty to proclaim the great spiritual Truth, with which they had been favoured, to the whole world. This was a work which could only be done with Divine help, and this they were required to seek through perseverance and prayer.

196 The sacrifice of life which must be undertaken in the cause of Truth is hinted at in this passage. The words *fī sabīl Allāh,* frequently occurring in the Holy Qur'ān, rendered literally *in the way of Allāh or in the cause of Allāh,* signify the cause of Truth. That the cause of the Muslims is really the cause of truth, right and justice, and that they were compelled to fight to defend the Truth has been discussed in various places. Sale's comment that the words *fī sabīl Allāh* always "meant war undertaken against unbelievers for the propagation of the Muhammadan faith" is baseless. Carrying the message of Islām to non-Muslims is indeed the duty of a Muslim, and anyone engaged in this work is undoubtedly working *in the way of Allāh,* but that a Muslim was required to carry the message of God at the point of the sword is no more than a myth.

197 The Muslims had already made great sacrifices in the cause of Allāh. They had left their homes, their near and dear ones and everything they had, behind them at Makkah, and had come to Madīnah empty-handed, but they were now told that they would have to make more sacrifices yet. They would have to

156 Who, when a misfortune befalls them say: "Surely we are Allāh's, and to Him we shall return."[198]

الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُم مُّصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ﴿١٥٦﴾

157 Those are they on whom are blessings and mercy from their Lord; and those are the followers of the right course.

أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

158 The Ṣafā and the Marwah are truly among the signs of Allāh;[199] so whoever makes a pilgrimage to the House or pays a visit (to it), there is no blame on him if he goes round them.[200] And whoever does good spontaneously — surely Allāh is Bountiful in rewarding, Knowing.

إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِن شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوِ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَن يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا وَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥٨﴾

159 Those who conceal the clear proofs and the guidance that We revealed after We have made it clear in the Book for men, these it is whom Allāh curses, and those who curse, curse them (too),[201]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنزَلْنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالْهُدَىٰ مِن بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّاهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِي الْكِتَابِ أُولَٰئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّاعِنُونَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

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face fear and hunger and all kinds of losses, even death itself. If they bore all these sufferings with steadfastness, they would have a great future, of which the good news is given to them beforehand.

That those who sacrifice their lives in the cause of Truth never die is a truth which is generally recognized. As truth lives and falsehood must die, so those who make the triumph of Truth the object of their lives do not die, even though they are slain in the cause of truth. Or those who have sacrificed their lives in the cause of truth gain the life eternal, while the dead are really those who are dead in ignorance.

198 This is the true expression of a Muslim's resignation under trials: *We are Allāh's and to Him we shall return.* He resigns himself to the will of God so thoroughly that no trial or misfortune can disturb the course of his life, which has a much higher goal before it than mere comfort. Come what may, the contentment of his mind is never lost.

199 The *Ṣafā* and the *Marwah* are two mountains near Makkah. They were the scene of Hagar's running to and fro in quest of water when left alone with Ishmael in the wilderness. These two mountains now serve as two monuments of the reward which patience brought, and it is as a memorial to Hagar's patience that they are now gone round by the pilgrims.

200 On the Ṣafā was an idol called Usāf, and on the Marwah one called Nā'ilah, which the pilgrims touched in the days of ignorance, and hence the apprehensions of the Muslims in going round them (IJ). "The people of Madīnah were averse to going round the Ṣafā and the Marwah", though no reason for their aversion is given (B. 65: ii, 21). The concluding portion of the verse again

201, see next page.

160 Except those who repent and amend and make manifest (the truth), these it is to whom I turn (mercifully) ; and I am the Oft-returning (to mercy), the Merciful.

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَبَيَّنُوا فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَأَنَا التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٦٠﴾

161 Those who disbelieve and die while they are disbelievers, these it is on whom is the curse of Allah and the angels and men, of all (of them) :[201a]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٦١﴾

162 Abiding therein ; their chastisement shall not be lightened nor shall they be given respite.

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۖ لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنْظَرُونَ ﴿١٦٢﴾

163 And your God is one God ; there is no God but He ! He is the Beneficent, the Merciful.[202]

وَإِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَاحِدٌ ۖ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَٰنُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٦٣﴾

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generalizes the subject. The suffering which a man has to endure in the doing of good is not left unrewarded, for Allāh is Bountiful in rewarding. In these words the Muslims are in fact exhorted to prepare themselves for enduring sufferings to establish Truth, being at the same time told that they will be amply rewarded for their sacrifices.

201 As against those who willingly endure all kinds of sufferings in the cause of truth, the Qur'ān now speaks of people who hide the truth, i.e., they neither act according to it, nor do they carry the message to others. Though speaking of the Jews, the words convey a warning to the Muslims.

For the meaning of *la'nat*, or *curse*, see 131. The reference in *those who curse* seems to be to Moses and the Israelite prophets: "But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command thee this day, that all these curses shall come upon thee and overtake thee: cursed shalt thou be in the city and cursed shalt thou be in the field, cursed shall be thy basket and thy store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kind and the flocks of thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out" (Deut. 28:15-19). After enumerating the curses of the Lord, His sending upon them "cursing, vexation, and rebuke", His making the pestilence "cleave" to them, His smiting them with "a consumption, and with a fever, and with an inflammation, and with an extreme burning, and with the sword, and with blasting . . . and the botch of Egypt . . . and madness and blindness", the curses of men are thus spoken of: "Thou shalt go out one way against them and flee seven ways before them", "thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore", "thou shalt betroth a wife and another man shall lie with her: thou shalt build a house and thou shalt not dwell therein", "thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people . . . the fruit of thy land and all thy labours shall a nation thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed always" (Deut. 28:20-68).

201a This verse continues the subject-matter of v. 159, the disbelievers spoken of here being those who hide the truth. The curse of God stands for their estrangement from God, the curse of the angels signifies their loss of all incentive to good and noble deeds, and the curse of men signifies their subjugation to other people.

202 The mention of Divine Unity in this, the concluding verse of the section, is to show that it was for this object that the trials and privations spoken

SECTION 20: **Unity must prevail**

164 In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, and the ships that run in the sea with that which profits men, and the water that Allāh sends down from the sky, then gives life therewith to the earth after its death and spreads in it all (kinds of) animals, and the changing of the winds and the clouds made subservient between heaven and earth, there are surely signs for a people who understand.[203]

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ
الَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي
الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ
مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ
بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ
وَّتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيٰحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ
السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَّعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿١٦٤﴾

165 Yet there are some men who take for themselves objects of worship besides Allāh,[204] whom they love as they should love Allāh. And those who believe are stronger in (their) love for Allāh.[205] And O that the wrongdoers had seen, when they see the chastisement, that power is wholly Allāh's, and that Allāh is severe in chastising!

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَّتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ
أَنْدَادًا يُّحِبُّوْنَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللّٰهِ ۖ وَالَّذِيْنَ
اٰمَنُوْٓا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِّلّٰهِ ۗ وَلَوْ يَرَى الَّذِيْنَ
ظَلَمُوْٓا إِذْ يَرَوْنَ الْعَذَابَ ۙ أَنَّ الْقُوَّةَ لِلّٰهِ
جَمِيْعًا ۙ وَّأَنَّ اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ الْعَذَابِ ﴿١٦٥﴾

166 When those who were followed renounce those who followed (them), and they see the chastisement and their ties are cut asunder.

إِذْ تَبَرَّأَ الَّذِيْنَ اتُّبِعُوْا مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّبَعُوْا
وَرَاَوُا الْعَذَابَ وَتَقَطَّعَتْ بِهِمُ الْأَسْبَابُ ﴿١٦٦﴾

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of in this section were to be undergone. The ultimate triumph of Divine Unity is spoken of in the next section.

203 The Unity of Allāh is declared by the whole of nature, and being such a clear doctrine, must no doubt at last prevail over idolatry and polytheism of every kind. Not only did Arabia witness the truth of this thirteen hundred years ago, but even to-day we see that, as man is freed from the trammels of prejudice, he realizes the truth of Divine Unity more and more. The uniformity that is clearly observed in the diversity of nature is constantly appealed to in the Qur'ān as a sign of the Unity of the Maker.

204 The objects of worship here referred to may include idols, but the reference is apparently to the leaders who lead their followers into evil. This is made plain by the verses that follow, where "those who were followed", i.e., *the leaders,* renounce those who followed them.

205 While Allāh's love for His creatures is the ever-recurring theme that finds expression in the Holy Qur'ān, the believer's love for Allāh, or absolute submission to the Divine Being, is here declared to be stronger than all other ties of love and friendship, including that which unites a man to his idols or other false deities.

167 And those who followed will say: If we could but return, we would renounce them as they have renounced us. Thus will Allāh show them their deeds to be intense regret to them, and they will not escape from the Fire.[206]

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا لَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَتَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُمْ كَمَا تَبَرَّءُوا مِنَّا ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُرِيهِمُ اللَّهُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ حَسَرَاتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ وَمَا هُمْ بِخَارِجِينَ مِنَ النَّارِ ﴿١٦٧﴾

SECTION 21 : **Prohibited Foods**

168 O men, eat the lawful and good things from what is in the earth, and follow not the footsteps of the devil. Surely he is an open enemy to you.[207]

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ ﴿١٦٨﴾

169 He enjoins on you only evil and indecency, and that you speak against Allāh what you know not.

إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالسُّوءِ وَالْفَحْشَاءِ وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾

170 And when it is said to them, "Follow what Allāh has revealed," they say: "Nay, we follow that

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا

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206 The mutual renouncement of the leaders and their followers takes place sometimes in this very life. It should also be noted that is the *intense regret* for the evil deeds done here described as being the *Fire* from which there is no escape.

207 The fundamental principle of faith, Divine Unity, having been discussed at full length, certain secondary rules and regulations are now considered, and among these the subject of prohibited foods is introduced first with a twofold object. In the first place it enjoins that only lawful and good things should be eaten. The lawful things are not only those which the law has not declared to be forbidden, but even unforbidden things become unlawful if they are acquired unlawfully, by theft, robbery, cheating, bribery, etc. The Israelites stood in special need of being reminded of this, for while they laid too much stress upon the ceremonies of religion, they were utterly indifferent to internal purity, and they would make a show of utter abhorrence to forbidden things but gladly devoured what was unlawfully acquired, a practice of which they are elsewhere condemned in plain words: "Why do not the learned men and the doctors of law prohibit them from their speaking of what is sinful and their eating of what is unlawfully acquired?" (5:63).

Secondly, by adding the injunction *follow not the footsteps of the devil*, the real object of the prohibition is made plain. The Holy Qur'ān recognizes some sort of relation between the physical and the spiritual conditions of man. There is not the least doubt that food plays an important part in the formation of character, and the heart and the brain powers are clearly affected by the quality of food. The same law is seen working in the whole of the animal kingdom. As the Holy Qur'ān is meant for all stages of the development of human society, it contains rules and regulations for the betterment of the physical as well as the moral and the spiritual conditions of man.

wherein we found our fathers. What! Even though their fathers had no sense at all, nor did they follow the right way."

بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَآ أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ ءَابَآءَنَا ۗ أَوَلَوْ
كَانَ ءَابَآؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْـًٔا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾

171 And the parable of those who disbelieve is as the parable of one who calls out to that which hears no more than a call and a cry. Deaf, dumb, blind, so they have no sense.[208]

وَمَثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ ٱلَّذِى يَنْعِقُ
بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَآءً وَنِدَآءً ۚ صُمٌّۢ بُكْمٌ
عُمْىٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٧١﴾

172 O you who believe, eat of the good things that We have provided you with, and give thanks to Allāh if He it is Whom you serve.[209]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَٰتِ مَا رَزَقْنَٰكُمْ
وَٱشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿١٧٢﴾

173 He has forbidden you only what dies of itself, and blood, and the flesh of swine, and that over which any other (name) than (that of) Allāh has been invoked.[210] Then whoever is driven by necessity, not desiring, nor exceeding the limit, no sin is upon him. Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.[211]

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ ٱلْمَيْتَةَ وَٱلدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ
ٱلْخِنزِيرِ وَمَآ أُهِلَّ بِهِۦ لِغَيْرِ ٱللَّهِ ۖ فَمَنِ
ٱضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَلَآ إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ
إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٧٣﴾

174 Those who conceal aught of the Book that Allāh has revealed and take for it a small price, they eat nothing but fire into their bellies,[212] and Allāh will not speak to them on the day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them; and for them is a painful chastisement.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ
ٱلْكِتَٰبِ وَيَشْتَرُونَ بِهِۦ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۙ أُولَٰٓئِكَ
مَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِى بُطُونِهِمْ إِلَّا ٱلنَّارَ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ
ٱللَّهُ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧٤﴾

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208 The Prophet is likened to the crier who calls out, but the disbelievers are deaf to reason, and are like cattle which only hear the cry of the driver, but do not understand the meaning of what he says. This is in accordance with what is said in the previous verse. Some commentators are of the opinion that the crier is the disbeliever, who cries for help or guidance to his false gods, who do not know what he says. But these false gods do not hear even the cry, and hence the words cannot apply to them.

209 The injunction to eat of the *good things* is directed against the use of things which are injurious to health, though they may not be forbidden by law.

210 That which dies of itself and that which was torn by beasts was forbidden by the law of Moses also (Lev. 17:15); so was blood (Lev. 7:26); and the flesh of swine (Lev. 11:7). The Jews held the swine in great detestation, and

211, 212, see next page.

175 Those are they who buy error for guidance and chastisement for forgiveness; how bold they are to challenge the Fire!

أُولَٰٓئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الضَّلٰلَةَ بِالْهُدٰى وَالْعَذَابَ بِالْمَغْفِرَةِ ۚ فَمَآ أَصْبَرَهُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ ﴿١٧٥﴾

176 That is because Allāh has revealed the Book with truth. And surely those who disagree about the Book go far in opposition.[213]

ذٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللّٰهَ نَزَّلَ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ ۗ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِي الْكِتٰبِ لَفِي شِقَاقٍۭ بَعِيدٍ ﴿١٧٦﴾

SECTION 22 : **Retaliation and Bequests**

177 It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West,[213a] but righteous is the one who believes in Allāh, and the Last Day, and the angels[214] and the

لَّيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَن تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلٰكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْءَاخِرِ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ وَالْكِتٰبِ وَالنَّبِيِّـۧنَ وَءَاتَى

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the mention of the animal in the Gospels shows that Jesus Christ held it in equal abhorrence, which proves that he too regarded the animal as impure. Neither does he appear to have broken the Jewish law in this respect.

The commentators are of opinion that the reference in *that over which any other name than that of Allāh has been invoked* is to *the animals slaughtered by the worshippers of idols, which they used to slaughter as offerings to their idols* (Rz), or to *that over which the name of an idol is invoked at the time of its slaughter* (Bd), for among the Arabs the practice was that animals were slaughtered in the name of an idol. But the statement made in the Holy Qur'ān is general, and the invocation of any name other than that of Allāh makes the animal slaughtered unlawful.

211 *Ghaira bāgh-in* signifies *not desiring to eat it for the sake of enjoyment, lā 'ād-in* means *not exceeding the bare limit of want.*

212 The physical and the spiritual are beautifully welded together in the Holy Qur'ān. The prohibition to eat certain impure or injurious foods is followed by a warning against the *eating of fire*, and thus the connection is established. Caution is always given lest too much stress should be laid upon the outward ceremonial of the law. Here we are told that even more dangerous than the prohibited foods is the eating of fire, which means the concealing of what is revealed in the Book. The concealment in this case means *not acting upon the teaching of the Book.* Though the Jews may serve as an example, the Muslims are equally warned of the danger of being strict in external acts of purity while neglecting internal purity.

213 By *those who disagree about the Book* are meant people who accept one part of the Divine Revelation and reject the other, as the Jews and the Christians did, the Book in this case standing for the whole of the Divine Revelation which is accepted by the Muslims only. Or, the Book stands for the Qur'ān, and their disagreement means their rejection of it. The words may, however, be also translated as meaning *those who go against the Book.*

213a While discussing the subject of minor details of the law, a warning is given to the Muslims that they should not fall into the error into which the previous people fell, who sacrificed the spirit of religion for the outward ceremonial. The essence of religion we are here told is faith in God and benevolence towards men. The turning of the face to the East and the West

214, see next page.

Book[215] and the prophets, and gives away wealth out of love for Him[216] to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask and to set slaves free[217] and keeps up prayer and pays the poor-rate ; and the performers of their promise when they make a promise,[218]

الْمَالَ عَلٰى حُبِّهٖ ذَوِي الْقُرْبٰى وَالْيَتٰمٰى وَ الْمَسٰكِيْنَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيْلِ ۙ وَالسَّآئِلِيْنَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ ۚ وَاَقَامَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتَى الزَّكٰوةَ ۚ وَ الْمُوْفُوْنَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ اِذَا عٰهَدُوْا ۚ وَالصّٰبِرِيْنَ

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refers to the outward act of facing a certain direction when saying prayers. This, though necessary, should not be taken as the real object of prayer, which is in fact meant to enable one to hold communion with the Divine Being and to imbue oneself with Divine morals as explained further on. But the words may also carry another significance. The Muslims were told again and again that all opposition to the Truth would ultimately fail and they would be masters of the land. But temporal greatness was not their real object. They may conquer Eastern and Western lands but their real aim was to attain righteousness and bring others to righteousness.

214 A belief in angels, while hinted at in the opening verses of this chapter, is clearly spoken of here as one of the basic principles of Islām. The belief in angels may not be as universal as a belief in the Divine Being, but it is accepted generally in all monotheistic religions. As in the case of all other principles of faith, Islām has pointed out a certain significance underlying the belief in angels. Just as our physical faculties are not by themselves sufficient to enable us to attain any object in the physical world without the assistance of other agents — as, for instance, the eye cannot see unless there is light — so our spiritual powers cannot by themselves lead us to good or evil deeds, but here, too, intermediaries which have an existence independent of our internal spiritual powers are necessary to enable us to do good or evil deeds. Now, there are two attractions placed in man — the attraction to good or to rise up to higher spheres of virtue, and the attraction to evil or to stoop down to a kind of low, bestial life ; but to bring these attractions into operation, external agencies are needed, as they are needed in the case of the physical powers of man. The external agency which brings the attraction to good into work is called an *angel,* and that which assists in the working of the attraction to evil is called the *devil.* If we respond to the attraction for good we are following the angel or the Holy Spirit, and if we respond to the attraction for evil we are following Satan. Our belief in angels carries, therefore, the significance that whenever we feel a tendency to do good we should at once obey that call and follow the inviter to good. That it does not simply mean that we should admit that there are angels is clear from the fact that not only are we not required to believe in devils, whose existence is as certain as that of the angels, but we are plainly told that we should disbelieve in the devils (v. 256). As a disbelief in the devil means that we should repel the attraction for evil, so a belief in angels means that we should follow the inviter to good.

215 While a belief in all the prophets is stated to be necessary, *the Book* is spoken of in the singular. The Book therefore stands for Divine Revelation in general or the scriptures of all the prophets. Or, because the Qur'ān is a Book " wherein are all the right books " (98 : 3), the Book might mean the Qur'ān.

216 The love of Allāh is here, as in many other places in the Holy Qur'ān, stated to be the true incentive to all deeds of righteousness.

217 *Riqāb* is the plural of *raqabah,* which literally signifies *a neck,* and then comes to signify by a synecdoche, *a slave.* or *a captive* (T, LL). Hence *fi-l-riqāb* means *ransoming of slaves.* The basis was thus laid down for the abolition of slavery.

218 The performance of promise on the part of individuals as well as of nations is one of the first essentials of the welfare of humanity, and hence the

and the patient in distress and affliction and in the time of conflict.[219] These are they who are truthful; and these are they who keep their duty.

فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ
الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

178 O you who believe, retaliation is prescribed for you in the matter of the slain: the free for the free, and the slave for the slave, and the female for the female.[220] But if remission is made to one by his (aggrieved) brother, prosecution (for blood-wit) should be according to usage, and payment to him in a good manner.[221] This is an alleviation from your Lord and a mercy. Whoever exceeds the limit after this, will have a painful chastisement.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ
فِي الْقَتْلَى ۖ الْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ وَالْعَبْدُ بِالْعَبْدِ
وَالْأُنْثَىٰ بِالْأُنْثَىٰ ۚ فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ
شَيْءٌ فَاتِّبَاعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَاءٌ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ ۗ
ذَٰلِكَ تَخْفِيفٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۗ فَمَنِ
اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧٨﴾

179 And there is life for you in retaliation, O men of understanding, that you may guard yourselves.[222]

وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَاةٌ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٩﴾

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stress laid upon it by the Holy Qur'ān. Faithlessness to treaties and pledges on the part of nations has wrought the greatest havoc on humanity. Just as no society can prosper until its individual members are true to their mutual agreements and promises to each other, so humanity at large can never have peace unless the nations are true to their agreements.

219 In the concluding words of the verse, *the patient . . . in time of conflict,* there is a clear reference to the coming conflicts with the opponents of Islām, ultimately leading to the triumph of Islām over those who were bent upon extirpating it.

220 The Jewish law of retaliation is greatly modified in Islām, being limited only to cases of murder, while among the Jews it extended to all cases of grievous hurt. The words *retaliation is prescribed for you in the matter of the slain,* mean that the murderer should be put to death. After promulgating that law in general terms, the Qur'ān proceeds to describe a particular case, viz. that if a free man is the murderer, he himself is to be slain; if a slave is the murderer, that slave is to be executed; if a woman murdered a man, it was she that was to be put to death. The pre-Islāmic Arabs used in certain cases to insist, when the person killed was of noble descent, upon the execution of others besides the murderer; they were not content with the execution of the slave or the woman, if one of them happened to be the murderer. The Holy Qur'ān abolished this custom (AH, Rz).

221 There may be circumstances which alleviate the guilt. In such cases

222, see next page.

180 It is prescribed for you, when death approaches one of you, if he leaves behind wealth for parents and near relatives, to make a bequest in a kindly manner; it is incumbent upon the dutiful.[223]

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ إِنْ تَرَكَ خَيْرًا ۖ الْوَصِيَّةُ لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۖ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٨٠﴾

181 Then whoever changes it after he has heard it, the sin of it is only upon those who change it. Surely Allāh is Hearing, Knowing.

فَمَنْ بَدَّلَهُ بَعْدَ مَا سَمِعَهُ فَإِنَّمَا إِثْمُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يُبَدِّلُونَهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٨١﴾

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the murderer may be made to pay a fine to the relatives of the murdered person. Such money is called *diyat* or *blood-wite.* The reference to the alleviation of the guilt is plainly contained in the concluding words of the verse: *This is an alleviation from your Lord.* A comparison with 4:92 makes it clear that when homicide is not intentional, blood-wite may be paid.

222 Life cannot be safe, we are here told, unless those who are guilty of homicide are sentenced to capital punishment.

223 Some commentators hold the opinion that the direction to make a bequest, as contained in this verse, is abrogated by 4:11, which fixes the shares of the heirs of the deceased person. A perusal of that verse shows clearly that it recognizes the validity of any bequest that may have been made. As a further evidence that the law of making a bequest was not abrogated by 4:11, see 5:106 (the revelation of which is decidedly later than 4:11), where the calling of witnesses at the time of making a bequest is enjoined. In practice, however, traced to the Prophet himself, the right to make a will as regards one's property has been subject to the condition that not more than a third of the property shall be bequeathed, and that those who take as heirs shall not be entitled to take under the bequest. This is made clear in a ḥadīth related by Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās: "The Messenger of Allāh used to visit me at Makkah, in the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage, on account of my illness which had become very severe. So I said: 'My illness has become very severe and I have much wealth, and there is none to inherit from me but a daughter; shall I then bequeath two-thirds of my property as a charity?' He said, 'No'. I said, 'Half?' He said, 'No'. Then he said: 'Bequeath one-third, and one-third is much, for if thou leave thy heirs free from want, it is better than that thou leave them in want, begging from people; and thou dost not spend anything seeking thereby the pleasure of Allāh but thou art rewarded for it, even for that which thou puttest into the mouth of thy wife'" (B. 23:36). The mention of the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage shows clearly that the incident relates to the last year of the Prophet's life, to a time when both the verse under discussion and 4:11 had long been revealed. Hence the making of a bequest was not contrary to 4:11, and this verse really speaks of bequests made for charitable purposes and not of bequests to heirs. It should be further noted that the making of bequest is necessary only if a person leaves behind him khair which means *abundant,* or *considerable, wealth.*

There are two other incidents of a still later date which make it clear that the companions of the Prophet did not consider this verse to be abrogated. A man who intended to make a bequest came to 'Ā'ishah. She asked him how much property he had, and being told that he had 3000 Dirhems and four heirs, told him not to make a bequest and to leave the amount to his heirs, and recited the words *in taraka khairā* occurring in this verse, as showing that the leaving of *a large property* was a condition for a bequest (Bd). A similar incident is reported in connection with 'Alī, the fourth Caliph. He had a freedman possessing 700 Dirhems and he expressed a desire to make a bequest. 'Alī told him not to

182 But if one fears a wrong or a sinful course on the part of the testator, and effects an agreement between the parties, there is no blame on him. Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.[224]

فَمَنْ خَافَ مِنْ مُّوْصٍ جَنَفًا اَوْ اِثْمًا فَاَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَلَآ اِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿١٨٢﴾

SECTION 23 : **Fasting**

183 O you who believe, fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard against evil.[225]

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿١٨٣﴾

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do so, reciting the same words *in taraka khairā* in support of his contention (Bd). Both these incidents happening after the death of the Prophet, show conclusively (1) that v. 180 was not regarded as abrogated, because people still made bequests under it; and (2) that the bequests spoken of in this verse were never meant for those who would inherit under 4:11, but for charitable purposes, or for those relatives who could not inherit under 4:11.

224 Proper advice may be tendered to the testator, not to show undue favour to any one or not to exceed the limits of the law to the detriment of the legal heirs. This was what the Prophet himself, and 'Ā'ishah and 'Alī did in the three cases cited in the above note.

225 Fasting is a religious institution almost as universal as prayer, and in Islām it is one of the five fundamental practical ordinances, the other four being prayer, poor-rate, pilgrimage and jihād. "Fasting has in all ages and among all nations been an exercise much in use in times of mourning, sorrow and affliction" (Cr. Bib. Con.). It is also in vogue among the Hindus. Even Christians were recommended by Jesus to keep the fasts: "Moreover when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance. . . . But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head and wash thy face" (Matt. 6:16, 17). Again, when the Pharisees objected to Jesus' disciples not keeping the fasts as often as John's, his answer was that when he was taken away, "then shall they fast in those days" (Luke 5:33-35).

But Islām has introduced quite a new meaning into the institution of fasting. Before Islām, fasting meant the suffering of some privation in times of mourning and sorrow; in Islām, it becomes an institution for the improvement of the moral and spiritual condition of man. This is plainly stated in the concluding words, *so that you may guard against evil*. The object is that man may learn how he can shun evil, and hence fasting in Islām does not mean simply abstaining from food, but from every kind of evil (B. 30:2). In fact, abstention from food is only a step to make a man realize that if he can, in obedience to Divine injunctions, abstain from that which is otherwise lawful, how much more necessary is it that he should abstain from the evil ways which are forbidden by God. All the institutions of Islām are, in fact, practical steps leading to perfect purification of the soul. But along with moral elevation, which is aimed at in fasting, another object seems to be hinted at, i.e., that the Muslims should habituate themselves to suffer tribulations and hardships physically as well.

184 For a certain number of days.[225a] But whoever among you is sick or on a journey, (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days. And those who find it extremely hard may effect redemption by feeding a poor man.[226] So whoever does good spontaneously, it is better for him; and that you fast is better for you if you know.[226a]

أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودٰتٍ ۚ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيضًا
أَوْ عَلٰى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۚ وَعَلَى
الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ۚ
فَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُ ۚ وَأَنْ
تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٤﴾

185 The month of Ramaḍān[227] is that in which the Qur'ān[227a] was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِيٓ أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْاٰنُ
هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنٰتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدٰى وَ

225a The indefiniteness in *a certain number of days* is removed in the next verse which states it to be definitely the month of Ramaḍān.

226 The first two classes exempted are (a) those who are sick and (b) those journeying. Both are required to fast afterwards when sickness or journey ends. What is sickness or journey every man can determine for himself. A man who needs a medicine or is unable to bear the hardship of hunger or thirst should not fast. In journeying again, whether a man can easily fast or not is the determining factor. The companions of the Prophet, we are told, did not find fault with each other in these matters: "We used to be on a journey with the Prophet and he who kept the fast did not find fault with him who broke it, nor did he who broke the fast find fault with him who kept it" (B. 30:43). The third exception is in the case of those who find it extremely difficult to bear the hardship of fasting. The word used in the original is *yuṭīqūna* from *ṭāqat* which means *the utmost that a man can do* (R). The persons meant are *those who find it extremely hard* (*yaṣūmūna-hū jahda-hum wa ṭāqata-hum*). Such people *may effect a redemption* by giving food daily to a poor man. This exception covers the case of the woman who gives suck and the one with child, as also the old man who cannot bear fasting (B. 65: ii, 25); also such sick people whose sickness is prolonged and such people whose journey extends over the whole year.

226a Fasting is here called *taṭawwu'*, or the *spontaneous doing of good,* but it also means the *doing of an act with effort,* and fasting requires great effort on the part of man. The concluding words of this verse again point out the object of fasting. It no doubt entails hardship but it serves a very good purpose and brings about great good in the end.

227 The revelation of the Holy Qur'ān commenced in the month of Ramaḍān, which is the ninth month of the Arabian year (Rz); hence, the month of Ramaḍān is particularly spoken of as being the month in which the Holy Qur'ān was revealed. The root meaning of *Ramaḍān* is *excessiveness of heat;* the month was so called because "when they changed the names of the months from the ancient language, they named them according to the seasons in which they fell, and this month agreed with the days of excessive heat".

227a *Al-Qur'ān* is the name by which the Holy Book revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad (peace and the blessings of Allāh be upon him!) is known, and by this name the Holy Book is frequently mentioned in the Divine revelation. The word is an infinitive noun from the root *qara'a,* which signifies primarily *he collected together the things* (LL). The secondary significance of the root word is *reading* or *reciting* a book, the word being applied to reading or recitation because, in reading, letters and words are joined to each other in a certain order (R). The name *Qur'ān* really refers to both the root-meanings, for on the

Criterion.[228] So whoever of you is present in the month, he shall fast therein,[229] and whoever is sick or on a journey, (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days. Allāh desires ease for you, and He desires not hardship for you, and (He desires) that you should complete the number and that you should exalt the greatness of Allāh for having guided you and that you may give thanks.

الْفُرْقَانِ ۚ فَمَنْ شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ
فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۖ وَمَنْ كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ
فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ
الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا
الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ
وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٨٥﴾

186 And when My servants ask thee concerning Me, surely I am nigh. I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me, so they should hear My call and believe in Me that they may walk in the right way.[230]

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ
دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي
وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ﴿١٨٦﴾

one hand it signifies *a book in which are gathered together* all the Divine Books, a distinction to which the Qur'ān itself lays claim in 98:3 and elsewhere (R), on the other, it means *a book that is* or *should be read,* the Holy Qur'ān being *the book* " that has been truly described as the most widely read book in existence " (En. Br.). There are thirty-one different names under which the Holy Qur'ān is spoken of in the revelation itself, the most important of these being *al Kitāb,* or *the Book,* and *al-Dhikr,* or the *Reminder.* The statement is made here that the Qur'ān was revealed in the month of Ramaḍān. Elsewhere we are told that it was revealed on the *lailat al-Qadr* or the *Grand night* or *the night of Majesty* (97:1), which is a well-known night in the month of Ramaḍān, being the 25th or 27th or 29th night of that month. By the revelation of the Qur'ān in the month of Ramaḍān is therefore meant the commencement of its revelation. The month of Ramaḍān is thus a memorial of the revelation of the Qur'ān.

228 There are three statements made here regarding the Holy Qur'ān. Firstly, that it is a guidance for all men, and that therefore it contains teachings which are suitable and sufficient for all men in all countries and ages. Secondly, that it contains comprehensive arguments for the guidance, thus demonstrating the truth of what it asserts. Thirdly, that it contains arguments which afford a criterion, separating truth from falsehood, by making the faithful taste the fruits of faith and the rejecters the evil consequences of their rejection of truth.

229 There are places on this globe where the days and the nights are so long that there exists no division into twelve months. Such cases are exceptional and rare. People there have no doubt some arrangements to work and rest and to carry on their own business, and they can also make arrangements for prayers and fasting. See further 233.

230 In the midst of ordinances relating to fasting occurs this verse which speaks of the nearness of God to man and of the acceptance of his prayers. This is to show that fasting is a spiritual exercise and it brings about spiritual awakening in man. A man is required to abstain from satisfying the natural desires of hunger and thirst and to suffer certain privations, not because there is any harm or any moral delinquency in doing so, but simply because he believes that it is the commandment of God that he should abstain. As the Prophet said:

187 It is made lawful for you to go in to your wives on the night of the fast. They are an apparel for you and you are an apparel for them.[231] Allāh knows that you acted unjustly to yourselves, so He turned to you in mercy and removed (the burden) from you.[232] So now be in contact with them and seek what Allāh has ordained for you, and eat and drink until the whiteness of the day becomes distinct from the blackness of the night at dawn, then complete the fast

أحل لكم ليلة الصيام الرفث إلى نسائكم
هن لباس لكم وأنتم لباس لهن علم
الله أنكم كنتم تختانون أنفسكم فتاب
عليكم وعفا عنكم فالئن باشروهن
وابتغوا ما كتب الله لكم وكلوا واشربوا
حتى يتبين لكم الخيط الأبيض من الخيط
الأسود من الفجر ثم أتموا الصيام إلى

"He gives up his food and his drink and his sexual desire *for My sake: Fasting is for Me*" (B. 30:2). This undoubtedly awakens a living consciousness of the existence of God in the mind. This is the idea underlying the words: *My servants ask thee about Me.* A real and earnest search for God is raised in the mind through fasting.

I am near is the reply to that inner search. And then follow the words: *I answer the call of the suppliant when he calls on Me. God is near,* but that consciousness only raises the further desire to get nearer and nearer to Him. For that man calls on God; he prays to Him to draw him closer and closer to Himself. And he is told that God accepts this prayer. The sincere yearning of the soul of a man to get nearer and nearer to God is always accepted. But this yearning and this prayer, the verse goes on to say, must be implemented by acts of obedience: *So they should hear My call.* Prayer to draw closer to God is therefore accepted when the earnestness of the soul's yearning is shown by acts of sacrifice in the way of God.

It should be borne in mind that the acceptance spoken of here is primarily in relation to prayers for the attainment of the nearness of God. As regards the acceptance of prayers generally, prayers for deliverance from distress and affliction and prayers for the attainment of certain temporal benefits, we are told elsewhere: "Him you call upon, so He removes that for which you pray if He pleases" (6:41). He accepts such prayers or does not accept them as He pleases. And while God accepts sometimes the prayers even of the unbelievers and the transgressors (10:22, 23; 17:67), and much more frequently of His faithful and righteous servants, He tries even the latter by making them suffer hardships: "And We shall certainly try you with some fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits" (v. 155). Thus while God's dealing with even the transgressors is merciful, so that, He sometimes accepts their prayers, His dealing with the faithful who call on Him and pray to Him is that of a friend — listening to their prayers or requiring them to submit to His will as He pleases.

231 The mutual relations of husband and wife are here described in words which could not be surpassed in beauty. In the first place, the sex instinct, a desire for the opposite sex, is classed with hunger and thirst. It is a natural desire and man could not live without satisfying it as he could not live without satisfying hunger and thirst. And then in these words — *your wives are an apparel for you and you are an apparel for them* — we are told that while satisfying a natural desire, the relation of husband and wife has higher ends in view. They serve as a garment for each other, i.e., they are a means of protection, comfort and even embellishment for each other, and the weakness of one is made up by the strength of the other.

232 *Takhtānūn,* or *you acted unjustly to yourselves,* is in reference to the injury which they caused to themselves by unnecessarily resisting the sexual

till nightfall,[233] and touch them not while you keep to the mosques.[234] These are the limits of Allāh, so go not near them. Thus does Allāh make clear His messages for men that they may keep their duty.

الَّيْلِ ۚ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوْهُنَّ وَاَنْتُمْ عٰكِفُوْنَ ۙ فِى الْمَسٰجِدِ ؕ تِلْكَ حُدُوْدُ اللّٰهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوْهَا ؕ كَذٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ اٰيٰتِهٖ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿۱۸۷﴾

188 And swallow not up your property among yourselves by false means, nor seek to gain access thereby to the judges, so that you may swallow up a part of the property of men wrongfully while you know.[235]

وَلَا تَاْكُلُوْۤا اَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتُدْلُوْا بِهَاۤ اِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِتَاْكُلُوْا فَرِيْقًا مِّنْ اَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْاِثْمِ وَاَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۱۸۸﴾

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craving or hunger and thirst. A case is recorded in which a man overpowered by hunger swooned at midday (B. 30:15). *'Afā* which means generally *he pardoned* or *obliterated a wrong,* also means *he removed* or *did away with his mistake* or *misunderstanding* or *burden* (LL). The reports narrated in connection with the revelation of this verse show that the Muslims at first thought that it was illegal to have intercourse with their wives, even at night, on the days during which they kept fasts. Others abstained from eating, etc., after going to sleep till next evening (B. 30:15). But this practice was, according to the unanimous opinion of all commentators, not based on any Quranic revelation or any order of the Prophet. Speaking of the revelation of this verse Barā' said: "When fasting in Ramaḍān was enjoined, the Muslims did not approach their wives during the whole month of Ramaḍān and some people thus caused injury to themselves; so Allāh revealed these words" (B. 65:ii, 28). The revelation of these words made it clear that intercourse with their wives was permitted to the Muslims during the nights of fasting as the satisfaction of hunger and thirst was permitted. The burden whose removal is referred to in the words *'afā 'an-kum* was therefore a self-imposed one.

233 *Khaiṭ,* which ordinarily means *thread,* stands here for the *tint of the dawn* as the words *min al-fajr* make it clear; *al-khaiṭ al-abyaḍ* means *the whiteness of the day* and *al-khaiṭ al-aswad the blackness of the night* (LL). This happens generally about an hour and a half before sunrise. The fast is to be broken with the coming of the night which starts with sunset.

An important question arises here regarding countries in which the days are sometimes very long, where it would be beyond the power of ordinary men to abstain from food from the breaking of the dawn to sunset. There is a report according to which the companions of the Prophet are related to have asked him about their prayers in a day which extended to a year or a month, and the Prophet is related to have answered that they should measure according to the measure of their days (AD. 36:13). From this it would follow that in countries where the days are too long the time of fasting may be measured in accordance with the length of an ordinary day, or where practicable postpone the fasts to shorter days of about normal length.

234 Those people are meant who cut themselves off from all worldly connections during the last ten days of the month of Ramaḍān, passing day and night in the mosques. This practice is known as *I'tikāf.* It is voluntary and not obligatory.

235 The injunction to abstain from illegally taking other men's property is a fitting sequel to the injunction relating to fasting, for by fasting a man abstains

SECTION 24 : **Fighting in Defence**

189 They ask thee of the new moons. Say : They are times appointed for men, and (for) the pilgrimage.[236] And it is not righteousness that you enter the houses by their backs,[237] but he is righteous who keeps his duty. And go into the houses by their doors ; and keep your duty to Allāh, that you may be successful.

يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهِلَّةِ ۖ قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ ۗ وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا وَلَٰكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنِ اتَّقَىٰ ۗ وَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهَا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٨٩﴾

190 And fight in the way of Allāh against those who fight against you but be not aggressive. Surely Allāh loves not the aggressors.[238]

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾

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from using what he has a legal right to, simply in obedience to Divine commandments. Fasting, in fact, enables a man to control his passions, and the more the passions are mastered, the less the greed for illegal acquisition.

236 The month of Ramaḍān begins with a new moon and ends with the new moon of *Shawwāl*. The latter is followed by three months, *Dhu-l-Qa'dah*, *Dhu-l-Ḥijjah* (with which the year closes) and *Muḥarram* (the first month of the new year). These three along with *Rajab*, the seventh month of the year, form the four sacred months, which are referred to here in the word *ahillah*, pl. of *hilāl*, meaning *the new moon*.

The indefiniteness of the question is removed by the answer. These were the months which were observed by the Arabs as sacred, in which the bitterest hostilities ceased and peace was established throughout the land, and thus trade was carried on peacefully and without molestation. It was also during these months that the pilgrimage to the sacred sanctuary at Makkah was performed. As this section deals with the injunctions relating to fighting, the question relating to the sacred months, which is made clearer in v. 217, is appropriately put here, and the answer recognizes the sacred character of those months. Their sacredness afforded to the people the material advantage of being able to carry on trade and the spiritual benefit of performing the pilgrimage.

237 The Arabs were a very superstitious people. When one of them set before himself an important object and was unable to attain it, he would not go into his house by the door, but entered it by the back and kept on doing so for a year (Rz). Or, the reference may be to the practice of entering the houses by the back on entering into a state of *iḥrām* for pilgrimage (B. 65 : ii, 29). With Islām all superstitions were swept away. Or, entering by the back indicates turning aside from the right course, while entering by the doors signifies sticking to the right course (Rz).

238 This is one of the earliest revelations permitting the Muslims to fight. The subject is dealt with here in six verses, closing with v. 195, being again taken up in the following sections. It is remarkable that *fighting in the way of Allāh* is here expressly limited to *fighting in defence*. Muslims were required to fight *in the way of Allāh*, but they could fight only against those who waged war on them. Exactly the same limitation is placed on what was in all probability the first revelation permitting fighting: "Permission to fight is given to those

191 And kill them wherever you find them,[239] and drive them out from where they drove you out,[240] and persecution[241] is worse than slaughter. And fight not with them at the Sacred Mosque until they fight with you in it;[242] so if they fight you (in it), slay them. Such is the recompense of the disbelievers.

وَاقْتُلُوْهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوْهُمْ وَاَخْرِجُوْهُمْ
مِّنْ حَيْثُ اَخْرَجُوْكُمْ وَالْفِتْنَةُ اَشَدُّ مِنَ
الْقَتْلِ ۚ وَلَا تُقٰتِلُوْهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ
حَتّٰى يُقٰتِلُوْكُمْ فِيْهِ ۚ فَاِنْ قٰتَلُوْكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوْهُمْ ؕ
كَذٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿۱۹۱﴾

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upon whom war is made because they are oppressed" (22:39).

It is clear from both these references that the Muslims were allowed to take up the sword only as a measure of self-defence. The enemies of Islām, being unable to suppress Islām by persecution, and seeing that Islām was now safe at Madīnah and gaining strength, took up the sword to annihilate it. They knew that as yet the Muslims were very few in number and they thought they could extirpate Islām, by resorting to the sword. Their war against Islām was a war for the annihilation of Islām, as stated further on: "They will not cease fighting against you until they turn you back from your religion if they can" (v. 217). No course was left for the Muslims but either to be swept off the face of the earth or take up the sword in defence against an enemy which was a thousand times stronger.

It should be noted that it is this *defensive fighting* which is called *fighting in the way of Allāh.* Fighting for the propagation of faith is not once mentioned in the whole of the Qur'ān.

239 The personal pronoun in the words *kill them* refers to those with whom fighting is enjoined in the previous verse. When there is a state of war, the enemy may be killed wherever he is found.

240 The persecutors had driven the Muslims out from their houses in Makkah and from the Sacred Mosque there, which was now the Muslim Spiritual Centre. Thus the Muslims were ordered to carry on war against their persecutors until they were dispossessed of that which they had taken possession of by force. These words further show that the enemy was not to be exterminated, but only to be dispossessed of what he had unlawfully taken.

241 The word which I have rendered as persecution is *fitnah,* which originally means *a burning with fire,* and then *affliction, distress* and *hardship, slaughter, misleading* or *causing to err,* and *seduction from faith by any means* (LL). An explanation of these words is met with in v. 217: "They ask thee about fighting in the sacred month. Say: Fighting in it is a grave offence. But hindering (men) from Allāh's way and denying Him and the Sacred Mosque and turning its people out of it are still graver with Allāh, and persecution is graver than slaughter." *Fitnah* is thus synonymous with *hindering men from Allāh's way and the Sacred Mosque,* and *denying Allāh and turning people out of the Sacred Mosque,* and indicates the persecution of the Muslims. Ibn 'Umar explained the word *fitnah* when he said: "*And there were very few Muslims, so a man used to be persecuted on account of his religion: they either murdered him or subjected him to tortures until Islām became predominant, then there was no fitnah,* i.e., *persecution*" (B. 65:ii, 30).

242 The sacredness of the Inviolable place was not to be violated by the Muslims, notwithstanding the terrible afflictions that they had to suffer there, so long as the disbelievers were not the aggressors in this respect too and fought with the Muslims within the sacred territory.

192 But if they desist, then surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.[243]

فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿١٩٢﴾

193 And fight them until there is no persecution, and religion is only for Allāh.[244] But if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors.[245]

وَقٰتِلُوْهُمْ حَتّٰى لَا تَكُوْنَ فِتْنَةٌ وَّيَكُوْنَ
الدِّيْنُ لِلّٰهِ ۖ فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَلَا عُدْوَانَ إِلَّا
عَلَى الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿١٩٣﴾

194 The sacred month for the sacred month, and retaliation (is allowed) in sacred things. Whoever then acts aggressively against you, inflict injury on him according to the injury he has inflicted on you and keep your duty to Allāh, and know

اَلشَّهْرُ الْحَرَامُ بِالشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْحُرُمٰتُ
قِصَاصٌ ۚ فَمَنِ اعْتَدٰى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاعْتَدُوْا
عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا اعْتَدٰى عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ وَاتَّقُوا

243 Note the clemency of the Islāmic fighting injunctions. The Muslims were to sheathe their swords if the enemy desisted from fighting. The disbelievers took advantage of such directions in practising deception on the Muslims: "Those with whom thou makest an agreement then they break their agreement every time" (8:56).

244 When persecution ceases, and men are not forced to accept or renounce a religion, being at liberty to profess any religion of the truth of which they are convinced, then there should be no more fighting. The words that follow make the sense quite clear. *If they desist* from persecution, the Muslims are at once to stop fighting against them, and hostilities are not to be continued against any except the aggressors.

A comparison with 22:40 will show that this is the correct explanation. There the object of the Muslim fights is plainly set forth in the following words: "And if Allāh did not repel some people by others, cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques in which Allāh's name is much remembered would have been pulled down". This shows clearly that the Muslims fought not only in defence of mosques, but also in that of churches and synagogues, and even of the cloisters of monks. The same object is stated here in the words *religion is for Allāh,* so that there is no persecution on the score of religion, and every one is at liberty to hold any belief which he likes. The verse, in fact, lays down the broad principles of religious freedom.

If we interpret these words as meaning that fighting is to be continued until all people accept Islām, all those verses in which agreements with the enemy and desisting from fighting are spoken of become meaningless. Such an interpretation is belied not only by the Holy Qur'ān, but by history itself, for many a time did the Prophet make peace with the unbelievers.

245 The word *'udwān* here, as also the word *i'tadā* used thrice in the following verse, indicates *an exceeding of the proper limit,* and hence it is applied to *wrongful* or *unjust conduct,* but the punishment by which an injury is inflicted on the offender for wrongful conduct is called *i'tidā,* for "it is sometimes in the way of aggression and sometimes in the way of requital" (LL). According to R, *i'tadū* here means *requite* or *punish him according to his wrongful conduct.* The punishment of an evil is frequently spoken of in the terms of that evil in the Holy Qur'ān and in Arabic literature; see 27. The words *except against the oppressors* signify that hostilities can only be carried on against the oppressors, so that when they desist from oppressing, hostilities against them must be stopped.

that Allāh is with those who keep their duty.[246]

اللّٰهَ وَ اعۡلَمُوۡۤا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الۡمُتَّقِيۡنَ ﴿۱۹۴﴾

195 And spend in the way of Allāh and cast not yourselves to perdition with your own hands and do good (to others). Surely Allāh loves the doers of good.[247]

وَ اَنۡفِقُوۡا فِيۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ وَلَا تُلۡقُوۡا بِاَيۡدِيۡكُمۡ اِلَى التَّهۡلُكَةِ ۖۚ وَ اَحۡسِنُوۡا ۚ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الۡمُحۡسِنِيۡنَ ﴿۱۹۵﴾

196 And accomplish the pilgrimage and the visit[248] for Allāh. But if you are prevented, (send) whatever offering is easy to obtain;[249] and shave not your heads until the offering reaches its destination.[250] Then who-

وَ اَتِمُّوا الۡحَجَّ وَ الۡعُمۡرَةَ لِلّٰهِ ؕ فَاِنۡ اُحۡصِرۡتُمۡ فَمَا اسۡتَيۡسَرَ مِنَ الۡهَدۡىِ ۚ وَلَا تَحۡلِقُوۡا رُءُوۡسَكُمۡ حَتّٰى يَبۡلُغَ الۡهَدۡىُ مَحِلَّهٗ ؕ

246 This is similar to what is said in v. 191 regarding the Sacred Mosque. If the opponents violated the sacred months by attacking the Muslims first in those months, the Muslims were permitted to fight against them in the sacred months. And generally retaliation or requital within the limits of the original act of aggression is permitted in the case of all sacred objects, for inaction in that case would be suicidal.

247 The defensive wars of the Muslims needed funds and so the Muslims are told that they should contribute to the war fund; it is here called spending *in the way of Allāh*. If they withheld monetary aid to defend themselves when attacked, they would be casting themselves to perdition with their own hands.

248 Apparently a new subject, the subject of pilgrimage is introduced here, but it would be seen that the Holy Qur'ān has generally linked up the two subjects of war and pilgrimage. The reason is that the Muslims were free at Madīnah to perform all the religious ordinances required by Islām, but they were not free to perform the pilgrimage, their Spiritual Centre, Makkah, being in the possession of their enemies who were at war with them.

Ḥajj and *'umrah*, the latter of which is generally translated as *the minor pilgrimage*, but which may more correctly be rendered as the *visit*, differ slightly. The *'umrah* may be performed at any time, whilst the *ḥajj* or *the pilgrimage proper* can only be performed at a particular time. Of the ceremonies connected with pilgrimage proper, the staying on the plain of 'Arafāt is dispensed with in the case of the *'umrah*. Thus the principal requirements of *'umrah* are *iḥrām*, making circuits round the *Ka'bah* and running between the *Ṣafā* and the *Marwah*.

The pilgrimage in fact represents the last stage in the progress of the spiritual pilgrim. Of the principal requirements of the pilgrimage, the first, or *iḥrām*, represents the severance of all worldly connections for the love of God. All costly dresses in which the inner self is so often mistaken for the outward appearance, are cast off, and the pilgrim has only two seamless wrappers to cover himself. The other important requirement is making circuits round the Ka'bah, called *ṭawāf*, and running between the Ṣafā and the Marwah, called *sa'y*, and both these are external manifestations of that fire of Divine love which has been kindled within the heart, so that like the true lover, the pilgrim makes circuits round the house of his beloved One. He shows in fact that he has completely surrendered himself to his beloved Master, and sacrificed all his interests for His sake.

249 Makkah was still in the hands of the opponents of Islām, who prevented the Muslims from performing the pilgrimage. According to I'Ab and many other authorities, prevention here means prevention by the enemy and not by a disease, while according to others prevention of both sorts is included (Rz).

250 The shaving of the head is a sign of the pilgrim getting out of the state of *iḥrām*. In case of prevention, the offering should be sent to the Sacred

ever among you is sick or has an ailment of the head, he (may effect) a compensation by fasting or alms or sacrificing. And when you are secure,[251] whoever profits by combining the visit with the pilgrimage[252] (should take) whatever offering is easy to obtain. But he who cannot find (an offering) should fast for three days during the pilgrimage and for seven days when you return.[253] These are ten (days) complete. This is for him whose family is not present in the Sacred Mosque.[254] And keep your duty to Allāh, and know that Allāh is severe in requiting (evil).

فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَرِيضًا أَوْ بِهِ أَذًى مِنْ
رَأْسِهِ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِنْ صِيَامٍ أَوْ صَدَقَةٍ
أَوْ نُسُكٍ ۚ فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَمَنْ تَمَتَّعَ بِالْعُمْرَةِ
إِلَى الْحَجِّ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ ۚ فَمَنْ
لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ فِي الْحَجِّ وَ
سَبْعَةٍ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ ۗ تِلْكَ عَشَرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ ۗ
ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلُهُ حَاضِرِي الْمَسْجِدِ
الْحَرَامِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ
شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿١٩٦﴾

SECTION 25 : **The Pilgrimage**

197 The months of the pilgrimage are well known ;[255] so whoever determines to perform pilgrimage therein there shall be no immodest speech, nor abusing, nor altercation in the pilgrimage.[256] And whatever good you do, Allāh knows it. And make

الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَعْلُومَاتٌ ۚ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ
الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ
فِي الْحَجِّ ۗ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمْهُ

House, or if this is not possible, it should be sacrificed where the pilgrims are detained.

251 This is a prophecy that a time would come when the power of the enemy would be completely broken down, and the Muslims would make their pilgrimage to Makkah, safe and secure, not having to fear detention.

252 A combination of *the visit* and *the pilgrimage* means that after the performance of the *visit,* the pilgrim does not remain in the state of *iḥrām,* but again enters into that state at the time of the pilgrimage.

253 That is, when you return home after the performance of the pilgrimage.

254 By this are understood those who do not live in Makkah.

255 The well-known months are *Shawwāl, Dhu-l-Qa'dah* and the first nine days of *Dhu-l-Ḥijjah.* It is in these days that a man can enter into the state of *iḥrām* for performing the pilgrimage.

256 Three things are prohibited in pilgrimage, *rafath, fusūq* and *jidāl. Rafath* means *foul, unseemly, immodest* or *obscene speech* (LL). *Fusūq,* according to a saying of the Prophet, signifies *abusing* (Rz). *Jidāl* signifies *contending in an altercation* or *disputing* or *litigating* (LL). The pilgrimage represents the final stage of spiritual progress, and hence the pilgrim is enjoined not to speak words which should be a source of annoyance to anybody. Perfect love of God requires perfect peace with man ; hence no offence should be caused to any man. The doing of good to others is recommended instead in the words ***whatever good you do, Allāh knows it.***

provision[257] for yourselves, the best provision being to keep one's duty. And keep your duty to Me, O men of understanding.

اللّٰهُ ۗ وَتَزَوَّدُوْا فَاِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوٰى ۫ وَاتَّقُوْنِ يٰٓاُولِي الْاَلْبَابِ ﴿۱۹۷﴾

198 It is no sin for you that you seek the bounty of your Lord.[258] So when you press on from 'Arafāt,[259] remember Allāh near the Holy Monument,[260] and remember Him as He has guided you, though before that you were certainly of the erring ones.

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ اَنْ تَبْتَغُوْا فَضْلًا مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ ؕ فَاِذَآ اَفَضْتُمْ مِّنْ عَرَفٰتٍ فَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ ۪ وَاذْكُرُوْهُ كَمَا هَدٰىكُمْ ۚ وَاِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلِهٖ لَمِنَ الضَّآلِّيْنَ ﴿۱۹۸﴾

199 Then hasten on from where the people hasten on, and ask the forgiveness of Allāh. Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.[261]

ثُمَّ اَفِيْضُوْا مِنْ حَيْثُ اَفَاضَ النَّاسُ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللّٰهَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۱۹۹﴾

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257 By provision (*zād*) is meant *provision for the journey to Makkah*. Some people used to start for a pilgrimage without sufficient means, on the pretence that they trusted in God for their sustenance. But the words carry a deeper significance, to which a reference is contained in the words *the best provision being to keep one's duty*, or *the guarding of oneself against evil* (*taqwā*), showing that provision for the soul which is the keeping of one's duty is more important than provision for the body.

258 Seeking the bounty of the Lord (*al-faḍl*) here stands for *trading* (Rz). The word is used in this sense in the Holy Qur'ān in several places, as in 73:20. What is meant is that there is no harm in seeking an increase of wealth by trading in Makkah in the pilgrimage season. Before the advent of Islām, fairs were held for trading purposes in the pilgrimage season, the most well-known of which were the *'Ukāẓ, Majinnah* and *Dhu-l-Majāz*. The Muslims thought that to do any work for worldly gain was inconsistent with the lofty spiritual object which they had in view in the pilgrimage (B. 25:150). They were told that it was not so and that worldly advancement could be combined with spiritual progress. Conferences could also be called at Makkah during the pilgrimage, to inspire the Muslim world with a unity of purpose in their political outlook as also for the solution of other world problems.

259 'Arafāt is the place where the pilgrims assemble on the 9th *Dhu-l-Ḥijjah*. It is at a distance of about nine miles from Makkah. Here the vast gathering from all countries and nations clad in one dress, with one utterance, *labbaika Allāh-umma labbaika* (here I am, O Allāh, in Thy Presence), declares the glory of God. Here the Imām standing on *Jabal Raḥmat*, the Mountain of Mercy, addresses the whole meeting. The word *'Arafāt* is derived from *'arafa, he knew*, or *acquainted himself with*, a thing, and there is undoubtedly a reference in this name to the fact that here men feel truly the august Divine presence. *Ifāḍah* signifies *the advancing* or *pressing on in journeying with multitude* (LL).

260 The *Mash'ar al-ḥarām*, which literally signifies *the Holy Monument*, stands for the place known as Muzdalafah, or the ground bordering on it, where the pilgrims stop for the night after their return from 'Arafāt on the evening of the ninth *Dhu-l-Ḥijjah*.

261 The Quraish and the Kanānah, who styled themselves the *Ḥams*, as indicating their strength and vehemence, used to stay at *Muzdalafah*, thinking it beneath their dignity to join other pilgrims in going forth to the plain of 'Arafāt. As all distinctions were levelled by Islām, they were told to consider themselves on a par with others (B. 25:91).

200 And when you have performed your devotions, laud Allāh as you lauded your fathers,[262] rather a more hearty lauding. But there are some people who say, Our Lord, give us in the world. And for such there is no portion in the Hereafter.

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُم مَّنَاسِكَكُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ
كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا ۗ فَمِنَ
النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا
وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَاقٍ ﴿٢٠٠﴾

201 And there are some among them who say: Our Lord, grant us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and save us from the chastisement of the Fire.[263]

وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً
وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿٢٠١﴾

202 For those there is a portion on account of what they have earned. And Allāh is Swift in reckoning.

أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا ۚ وَاللَّهُ
سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٠٢﴾

203 And remember Allāh during the appointed days.[264] Then whoever hastens off in two days, it is no sin for him; and whoever stays behind, it is no sin for him,[265] for one who keeps his duty. And keep your duty to Allāh, and know that you will be gathered together to Him.

وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْدُودَاتٍ ۚ فَمَن
تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ وَمَن تَأَخَّرَ
فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ لِمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٢٠٣﴾

204 And of men is he whose speech about the life of this world pleases thee, and he calls Allāh to witness as to that which is in his heart, yet he is the most violent of adversaries.[266]

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهُ فِي
الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهِدُ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا فِي
قَلْبِهِ وَهُوَ أَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ ﴿٢٠٤﴾

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262 In the days of ignorance they used to boast among themselves of the greatness of their fathers after they had performed the pilgrimage, when they assembled in 'Ukāẓ and other places. This shows what the Qur'ān destroyed and what it constructed; what it swept away, and what it established in its place. They were forbidden to boast of the greatness of their fathers, and bidden to celebrate the praise of Allāh instead, as He would make them much greater than their forefathers. And the insignificant Arab nation became a great nation, the greatest nation of the world, as it combined its physical conquests with intellectual and moral conquests.

263 This is the true Muslim's prayer. As he is taught to pray for both the good of this life and that of the next, so he should exert himself to attain good in this life as well as in the Hereafter. Islām offers a middle course between materialism and monkery.

264 The appointed days are the three days following the day of Sacrifice, and are called the days of *Tashrīq*.

265, 266, see next page.

205 And when he holds authority, he makes effort in the land to cause mischief in it and destroy tilth and offspring; and Allāh loves not mischief.

وَإِذَا تَوَلَّىٰ سَعَىٰ فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَسَادَ ﴿٢٠٥﴾

206 And when it is said to him, Be careful of thy duty to Allāh, pride carries him off to sin — so hell is sufficient for him. And certainly evil is the resting-place.[267]

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ أَخَذَتْهُ الْعِزَّةُ بِالْإِثْمِ فَحَسْبُهُ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ وَلَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ ﴿٢٠٦﴾

207 And of men is he who sells himself to seek the pleasure of Allāh. And Allāh is Compassionate to the servants.

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿٢٠٧﴾

208 O you who believe, enter into complete peace[267a] and follow not the footsteps of the devil. Surely he is your open enemy.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَافَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ ﴿٢٠٨﴾

209 But if you slip after clear arguments have come to you, then know that Allāh is Mighty, Wise.

فَإِنْ زَلَلْتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْكُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٠٩﴾

210 They wait for naught but that Allāh should come to them in the shadows of the clouds with angels, and the matter has (already) been decided. And to Allāh are (all) matters returned.[268]

هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظُلَلٍ مِنَ الْغَمَامِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ ۚ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ ﴿٢١٠﴾

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265 Ordinarily pilgrims leave on the afternoon of the last day of *Tashrīq* days, but they are allowed to leave on the evening of the second day.

266 Various conjectures have been made as to the particular person meant, but the best authorities agree that no particular person is meant (Rz). The context also shows that the words relate to mischief-makers, who assured the Prophet of their sympathy with him, but who were really waiting for an opportunity to inflict loss upon the Muslims.

267 *Mihād* (resting-place) means a *cradle*, and also *what a man has prepared for himself* (LL). Both these significances illustrate the nature of hell. It is a thing which a man prepares for himself; and for a new spiritual growth in the Hereafter in the case of those who retarded that growth here by their engrossment in the world or by pursuing an evil course, it serves the same purpose as the cradle for a child. Elsewhere hell is called an *umm* or *mother* (101 : 9).

267a Here the Muslims are told that Truth cannot be established unless they work for it whole-heartedly. The word *silm* means *peace* as well as *submission* (R). In fact, complete submission to God is synonymous with complete peace.

268 The coming of Allāh stands for the execution of His command or the coming of the threatened punishment for those who wanted to annihilate Islām. *The matter has already been decided,* we are told, because it was repeatedly made clear in the earliest revelations that all opposition to Islām would be brought to

SECTION 26 : **Trials and Tribulations**

211 Ask of the Children of Israel how many a clear sign We gave them! And whoever changes the favour of Allāh after it has come to him, then surely Allāh is Severe in requiting (evil).[269]

سَلْ بَنِيٓ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ كَمْ اٰتَيْنٰهُمْ مِّنْ اٰيَةٍۭ
بَيِّنَةٍ ۗ وَمَنْ يُّبَدِّلْ نِعْمَةَ اللّٰهِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ
مَا جَآءَتْهُ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٢١١﴾

212 The life of this world is made to seem fair to those who disbelieve, and they mock those who believe. And those who keep their duty will be above them on the Day of Resurrection. And Allāh gives to whom He pleases without measure.[270]

زُيِّنَ لِلَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوا الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا وَ
يَسْخَرُوْنَ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ۘ وَالَّذِيْنَ
اتَّقَوْا فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ يَرْزُقُ
مَنْ يَّشَآءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٢١٢﴾

213 Mankind is a single nation.[271] So Allāh raised prophets as bearers of good news and as warners, and He revealed with them the Book with truth, that it might judge between people concerning that in which they differed.[271a] And none but the very people who were given it differed

كَانَ النَّاسُ اُمَّةً وَّاحِدَةً ۗ فَبَعَثَ اللّٰهُ
النَّبِيّٖنَ مُبَشِّرِيْنَ وَمُنْذِرِيْنَ ۖ وَاَنْزَلَ
مَعَهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ
فِيْمَا اخْتَلَفُوْا فِيْهِ ۗ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ فِيْهِ اِلَّا
الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوْهُ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَتْهُمُ الْبَيِّنٰتُ

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naught. Elsewhere it is said: "They await naught, but that the angels should come to them or that thy Lord's command should come to pass". And it is added: "So the evil of what they did afflicted them and that which they mocked encompassed them" (16:33, 34). The same phrase is used to indicate the execution of the Divine punishment in 59:2, where the Jews, who were ultimately banished on account of their mischiefs, are spoken of: "They were certain that their fortresses would defend them against Allāh, but Allāh came to them from a place they expected not". In the *shadows of the clouds* there is a reference to the coming down of rain in the battle of Badr (8:11) which was one of the causes of the destruction of the enemy.

269 By *the favour of Allāh* is here meant the *Qur'ān* and its *change* implies *rejection*. Compare the buying of error for guidance in v. 16 and elsewhere. the clear signs which were given to the Israelites include the prophecies of the advent of the Prophet, which were repeatedly made known to them through their prophets, as well as the clear arguments of the truth of the Prophet's mission, which were clearly convincing when compared with the arguments they possessed of the truth of their own prophets.

270 The Emigrants, having left everything behind and being thus reduced to the last straits of poverty, were mocked by the wealthy Jews, whose trade of lending money at usurious rates brought to them the riches of other peoples. The concluding words not only show that moral worth which raised a man above another did not depend on wealth, but also contain a prophetic reference to the time when those who were mocked at on account of their poverty would have abundance even of the provisions of this life.

271 The word *kāna* does not necessarily refer to the past, but is often used in the Holy Qur'ān to convey the idea of a general truth, or to express what is

271a, see next page.

about it after clear arguments had come to them, envying one another.[272] So Allāh has guided by His will those who believe to the truth about which they differed.[273] And Allāh guides whom He pleases to the right path.

بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ فَهَدَى اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَا
اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ
يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢١٣﴾

214 Or do you think that you will enter the Garden,[274] while there has not yet befallen you the like of what befell those who have passed away before you. Distress and affliction befell them and they were shaken violently, so that the Messenger and those who believed with him said: When will the help of Allāh come? Now surely the help of Allāh is nigh![275]

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ
مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ ۖ مَسَّتْهُمُ
الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَّاءُ وَزُلْزِلُوا حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَ
الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَىٰ نَصْرُ
اللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ ﴿٢١٤﴾

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like an attribute of a thing (R). *Kān al-insānu kafūr-an* (17: 67) does not mean *man was ungrateful* but *man is ever ungrateful* or that the quality of ungratefulness is met with in him very frequently. Similarly, the Divine attributes are often expressed by the use of *kāna,* as in *kān-Allāhu 'Azīz-an Hakīm-an* (48:7) which means not that *Allāh was Mighty, Wise,* but that *Allāh is ever Mighty, Wise;* or *kān-Allahu Ghafūr-an Rahīm-an* (48: 14) which means *Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful.* Hence the significance adopted. *The oneness of humanity* is a truth on which the Qur'ān lays the greatest stress. They are sometimes told that they have all been "created of a single soul" (4:1); again that they are all descended from the same parents (49:13); still again that they are as it were dwellers in one home, having the same earth as a resting-place and the same heaven as a canopy (v. 22). It thus lays down the principle of the oneness of humanity in the clearest words. Hence also the conclusion that prophets were raised among all nations which is conveyed in the words that follow.

271a A universal law of Divine Revelation has been disclosed in these words. As all people are a single nation, God, too, has been revealing Himself to all. This Law of Divine Revelation has, we are told, found expression through prophets, to every one of whom a revealed Book was given to show them the right way.

272 The universal law given expression to in this part of the verse is that corruption followed guidance. As time passed on, the very people to whom the Book was given so that they might follow it, went against it. Thus, though a prophet had been raised in every nation, yet every nation had forsaken the right way, and acted against the very directions which had been given to it. Thus differences again arose, which necessitated the advent of another prophet. Hence it was necessary to raise a prophet who should show the right way to all nations, and this is what is stated in the words that follow.

273 Allāh's guiding those who believe refers to the raising of the Prophet Muḥammad, through whom the Muslims were guided to the right path, to the truth, regarding which differences had arisen among all people. If a prophet was needed by every nation to settle its own differences, one was surely now needed to settle the differences of the various nations, for the truth which had been shown to different nations by different prophets had again become obscured. Thus among the different national religions of the world, Islām occupies the position of an international religion.

274, 275, see next page

215 They ask thee as to what they should spend. Say: Whatever wealth you spend, it is for the parents and the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer. And whatever good you do, Allāh surely is Knower of it.[276]

يَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُوْنَ ؕ قُلْ مَآ اَنْفَقْتُمْ
مِّنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْاَقْرَبِيْنَ وَالْيَتٰمٰى
وَالْمَسٰكِيْنِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيْلِ ؕ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوْا
مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِهٖ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۲۱۵﴾

216 Fighting is enjoined on you, though it is disliked by you; and it may be that you dislike a thing while it is good for you, and it may be that you love a thing while it is evil for you; and Allāh knows while you know not.[277]

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ وَ
عَسٰۤى اَنْ تَكْرَهُوْا شَيْـًٔا وَّهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ وَ
عَسٰۤى اَنْ تُحِبُّوْا شَيْـًٔا وَّهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ
يَعْلَمُ وَاَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۲۱۶﴾ ع

274 The Garden stands for triumph in this life and Paradise in the next. The concluding words of the verse, *Allāh's help is nigh,* make the reference to the triumph of the cause of Truth very clear. Truth will only triumph when the upholders of the cause of Truth make sacrifices for it and undergo the severest trials for its sake.

275 This verse inculcates faith and perseverance under the hardest trials and is an indication of the Prophet's own unequalled endurance and faith. It refers not only to the great trials and the hardships which the Muslims had already suffered at Makkah and the privations which they had to undergo in their exile, but more particularly to the hardships which were yet in store for them, and which they could clearly see in the massing of all forces that could be used to annihilate them. As regards the trials and tribulations of the former prophets, the case of Jesus Christ crying "*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*" on the cross was the most recent in the history of prophets.

276 As the fund for the defence of the Muslim society was also utilized for the help of the parents of some and relatives of others, and the fatherless children and the poor men who had not the means to quit their homes, who were still being oppressed at Makkah by the unbelievers, and for the wayfarer who had no security, the Muslims are told that what they spent on wars was really for the good of their own helpless relatives and brethren.

277 Let those ponder who think that the Muslims fought for plunder! They were too weak to carry on the struggle against the mighty forces that were bent upon their destruction, and they disliked the war. Only a diseased brain could come to the conclusion that the Prophet "had now determined to resort to the sword to accomplish what his preaching had failed to do". Where were the military forces with which the Prophet was going to convert the proud and warring Arabs who had not listened to his word? His first army at Badr, when the Quraish of Makkah were marching upon Madīnah with a thousand of their most experienced warriors, was 313, including boys of thirteen years of age. Could any sensible man say that the Prophet was now going to convert the hundreds of thousands of Arab warriors with his 313 unequipped and inexperienced followers? And do not the very words of the verse give the lie to this most irrational conclusion? A picture of distresses and afflictions to which the few converts to Islām were subjected is drawn in v. 214. They were few in numbers, poor, exiled, and distressed, yet it became inevitable that they should fight in self-defence or they would be destroyed. It was their utter weakness and the enormous disparity of numbers that made them dislike the fighting. And I

SECTION 27 : **Miscellaneous Questions**

217 They ask thee about fighting in the sacred month. Say: Fighting in it is a grave (offence). And hindering (men) from Allāh's way and denying Him and the Sacred Mosque and turning its people out of it, are still graver with Allāh; and persecution is graver than slaughter. And they will not cease fighting you until they turn you back from your religion, if they can.[278] And whoever of you turns back from his religion, then he dies while an unbeliever — these it is whose works go for nothing in this world and the Hereafter. And they are the companions of the Fire: therein they will abide.[279]

يَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيْهِ ۭ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيْهِ كَبِيْرٌ ۭ وَصَدٌّ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَكُفْرٌۢ بِهٖ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۤ وَاِخْرَاجُ اَهْلِهٖ مِنْهُ اَكْبَرُ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَالْفِتْنَةُ اَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ ۭ وَلَا يَزَالُوْنَ يُقَاتِلُوْنَكُمْ حَتّٰى يَرُدُّوْكُمْ عَنْ دِيْنِكُمْ اِنِ اسْتَطَاعُوْا ۭ وَمَنْ يَّرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِيْنِهٖ فَيَمُتْ وَھُوَ كَافِرٌ فَاُولٰۗىِٕكَ حَبِطَتْ اَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ ۚ وَاُولٰۗىِٕكَ اَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ ۚ ھُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ۝٢١٧

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may add that not a single instance is recorded in the whole of the Prophet's history showing the conversion of an unbeliever under pressure of the sword, not a single case is met with of an expedition undertaken to convert a people. If ever in the world's history a people were compelled to fight in the defence of a great cause, no nobler instance of it could be given than that of the Prophet with his few faithful followers braving the whole of Arabia, with enemies on all sides who had taken up the sword to annihilate them. If ever there was a just cause for war, there never was one more just than the cause of humanity at large, the combined cause of the Christian church, of the Jewish synagogue, of the Sabian's house of worship, and of the Muslim mosque, which the early Muslims set before themselves (22:40). Read along with this verse what is stated in v. 190 and 22:39, and the conditions under which this injunction was given will become clear. It was an injunction to fight against those who took up the sword first and turned the Muslims out of their homes. It was an injunction to fight to end persecution and to establish religious freedom, and to save the houses of worship of every religion from being ruined.

278 The opening words of this verse prohibit fighting in the sacred months (the reasons for which are given in v. 189), except by way of reprisal (see v. 194). But at the same time the unbelievers are told that the wrongs they inflicted on the Muslims, never caring for the sacred months and the sacred territory were worse than slaughter. Then we are told that the unbelievers took up the sword to force the Muslims back into unbelief and that they were determined to carry on the war until they gained this end. Note the words *they will not cease fighting with you until they turn you back from your religion, if they can,* which give the lie direct to the assertion that the Muslims started war to convert the unbelievers by force.

279 The persons spoken of in this passage are the apostates. A wrong impression exists among non-Muslims, and among many Muslims as well, that the Holy Qur'ān requires those who apostatize from Islām to be put to death.

218 Those who believed and those who fled (their homes) and strove hard in Allāh's way — these surely hope for the mercy of Allāh. And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٢١٨﴾

219 They ask thee about intoxicants[280] and games of chance.[281] Say: In both of them is a great sin and (some) advantage for men, and their sin is greater than their advantage. And they ask thee as to what they should spend. Say: What you can spare. Thus does Allāh make clear to you the messages that you may ponder,

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ ۖ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَفْعِهِمَا ۗ وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلِ الْعَفْوَ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١٩﴾

This is not true. One Christian writer has gone so far as to misconstrue the word *fa-yamut* as meaning *he shall be put to death,* while even a beginner knows that the significance of these words is *then he dies.* What is stated here is that the opponents of Islām exerted themselves to their utmost to turn back the Muslims from their faith by their cruel persecutions, and therefore if a Muslim actually went back to unbelief he would be a loser in this life as well as in the next, because the desertion of Islām would not only deprive him of the spiritual advantages which he could obtain by remaining a Muslim, but also of the physical advantages which must accrue to the Muslims through the ultimate triumph of Islām. Neither here nor anywhere else in the Holy Qur'ān is there even a hint at the infliction of capital or any other punishment on the apostate.

The only report which records a case of death being inflicted on apostates is that of the party of 'Ukl, who, after professing Islām, feigned that the climate of Madīnah was insalubrious, and, being told to go to the place where the herds of camels belonging to the state were grazed, murdered the keepers and drove the herds along with them. The facts of the case clearly show that capital punishment in this case was not inflicted for change of faith, but on account of the crime of murder and dacoity. This case is generally cited by the commentators under 5:33, which speaks of the punishment of dacoits. There is no other case showing that the punishment of death was ever inflicted on apostasy from Islām.

It may, however, be added that after the first eighteen months of their residence at Madīnah, the Muslims were in a state of constant warfare with the Quraish and the Arab tribes, and apostasy, under these circumstances, meant the desertion of the cause of the Muslims and joining their enemies. Even if death had been prescribed for the apostates, it would have been on the ground of their joining the enemy forces, not on the ground of change of religion. In the matter of religion, the Qur'ān gives perfect freedom to everyone to adopt whatever religion he likes: "Say, The Truth is from your Lord; then whosoever will, let him believe, and whosoever will, let him disbelieve" (18:29).

280 "Khamr means *wine* or *grape-wine*. . . . It has a common application *to intoxicating expressed juice of anything* (Q, T) or *any intoxicating thing that clouds or obscures* (lit., *covers*) *the intellect,* as some say . . . and the general application is the more correct, because *khamr* was forbidden when there was not in El-Madīnah any *khamr* of grapes" (LL). It will thus be seen that the word *khamr* includes all intoxicating substances, and therefore I make a departure in translating it as *intoxicants,* and not as *wine* or *intoxicating liquors.* The prohibition of intoxicants in connection with the mention of war shows that Islām wanted to inspire true courage into its followers and disliked the reckless

281, see next page.

220 On this world and the Hereafter. And they ask thee concerning the orphans.[282] Say : To set right their (affairs) is good ; and if you mix with them, they are your brethren. And Allāh knows him who makes mischief from him who sets right. And if Allāh pleased, He would have made matters difficult for you.[283] Surely Allāh is Mighty, Wise.

فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۗ وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَىٰ ۖ قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَّهُمْ خَيْرٌ ۖ وَإِن تُخَالِطُوهُمْ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَعْنَتَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٠﴾

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daring which a man shows under the influence of intoxicating liquors and which has so often led to acts of butchery in wars. The prohibition spoken of here as regards both intoxicating liquors and games of chance is made plainer in 5:90: "O you who believe, intoxicants and games of chance . . . are only an uncleanness, the devil's work ; shun it therefore that you may be successful".

The change which these simple words brought about in Arabia will always remain a riddle to the social reformer. The constant fighting of Arab tribes, one against the other, had made the habit of drink second nature to the Arab, and wine was one of the very few objects which could furnish a topic to the mind of an Arab poet. Intoxicating liquors were the chief feature of their feasts, and the habit of drink was not looked upon as an evil, nor had there ever been a temperance movement among them, the Jews and the Christians being themselves addicted to this evil. Human experience with regard to the habit of drink is that of all evils it is the most difficult to be uprooted. Yet but one word of the Holy Qur'ān was sufficient to blot out all traces of it from among a whole nation, and afterwards from the whole of the country as it came over to Islām. History cannot present another instance of a wonderful transformation of this magnitude brought about so easily, yet so thoroughly. It may also be added here that Sale's remark that "the moderate use of wine is allowed" and that only drinking to excess is prohibited, according to some, is absolutely without foundation. The companions of the Prophet never made use of a drop of wine after the prohibition was made known, and the Prophet is reported to have said: "A small quantity of anything of which a large quantity is intoxicating is prohibited" (AD. 25:5). Nor does Kf say what Sale attributes to him, for the words which give rise to Sale's misconception deal with, not wine, but another preparation regarding which there is a difference of opinion among the jurists.

281 The original word is *maisir*, derived from *yasara*, meaning *he divided anything into parts or portions*. *Maisir* was a game of hazard with the Arabs, and in the legal language of Islām includes all *games of chance*. Some derive it from *yusr*, meaning *ease* because of the ease with which wealth could be attained by it. Wine and gambling are both declared in 5:91 as causing "enmity and hatred to spring in your midst", and a society the members of which are imbued with feelings of hatred and enmity towards each other could never prosper.

282 In consequence of the fighting, it was inevitable that many children would be left orphans, so an injunction regarding the care of orphans is added here. But it may be added that the earliest revelations of the Holy Qur'ān always speak of the orphans, the needy, and the slave in the kindest words, and lay special stress on helping and feeding them. See 90:11-16. and other places.

283 The word used here is *tukhāliṭū-hum* which carries a double significance: (1) *Mix* or *associate with them*, (2) *Join with them in their affairs*, i.e., become co-partners with them. So orphans are not to be treated as a separate class, and they should not be treated as living on the charity of others, which would develop an inferiority complex in them ; they must be treated as brethren, as plainly stated here. And further, co-partnership with an orphan is expressly allowed here, because when strict injunctions were given regarding the safeguarding of orphans'

221 And marry not the idolatresses until they believe; and certainly a believing maid is better than an idolatress even though she please you. Nor give (believing women) in marriage to idolaters until they believe, and certainly a believing slave is better than an idolater, even though he please you.[284] These invite to the Fire and Allāh invites to the Garden and to forgiveness by His will[285] and He makes clear His messages to men that they may be mindful.

وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكٰتِ حَتّٰى يُؤْمِنَّ ۭ وَلَاَمَةٌ
مُّؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكَةٍ وَّلَوْ اَعْجَبَتْكُمْ ۚ
وَلَا تُنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ حَتّٰى يُؤْمِنُوْا ۭ وَلَعَبْدٌ
مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكٍ وَّلَوْ اَعْجَبَكُمْ ۭ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ
يَدْعُوْنَ اِلَى النَّارِ ښ وَاللّٰهُ يَدْعُوْٓا اِلَى الْجَنَّةِ
وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِاِذْنِهٖ ۚ وَيُبَيِّنُ اٰيٰتِهٖ لِلنَّاسِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿۲۲۱﴾

SECTION 28 : **Divorce**

222 And they ask thee about menstruation.[286] Say: It is harmful;[287] so keep aloof from women during menstrual discharge and go not near them until they are clean. But when they have cleansed themselves, go in to them as Allāh has commanded you. Surely Allāh loves those who turn much (to Him), and He loves those who purify themselves.

وَيَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيْضِ ۭ قُلْ هُوَ اَذًى ۙ
فَاعْتَزِلُوا النِّسَاۗءَ فِي الْمَحِيْضِ ۙ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوْهُنَّ
حَتّٰى يَطْهُرْنَ ۚ فَاِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَاْتُوْهُنَّ مِنْ
حَيْثُ اَمَرَكُمُ اللّٰهُ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِيْنَ
وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِيْنَ ﴿۲۲۲﴾

property, some men thought that it was a sin to have anything to do with it (Rz). The concluding words of the verse show that the object in allowing co-partnership with them is simply to facilitate matters. If a person aims at mischief, he cannot escape God's punishment.

284 The questions dealt with in this section arose in connection with the war. The previous verse speaks of the orphans whose numbers were no doubt to be greatly increased by the wars. This verse deals with intermarriages with idolaters. The war with the idolaters, who were now not a people differing in religious views only but enemies bent upon the destruction of the Muslims, had brought new conditions into existence. Intermarriages with those who were warring upon the Muslims could have led to serious troubles and numerous complications. A reference to 60:10 will show that even the marital relations already existing with these people had to be ended on account of the war. Hence the prohibition of such intermarriages. The subject of intermarriages with non-Muslims generally is fully dealt with in 667.

285 The reference in these words is not only to the religious beliefs of the

286, 287, see next page.

223 Your wives are a tilth for you, so go in to your tilth when you like,[288] and send (good) beforehand for yourselves. And keep your duty to Allāh, and know that you will meet Him. And give good news to the believers.

نِسَآؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّىٰ
شِئْتُمْ وَقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
وَاعْلَمُوٓا أَنَّكُم مُّلَٰقُوهُ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٢٣﴾

224 And make not Allāh by your oaths a hindrance to your doing good and keeping your duty and making peace between men.[289] And Allāh is Hearing, Knowing

وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ عُرْضَةً لِّأَيْمَٰنِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوا
وَتَتَّقُوا وَتُصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٢٤﴾

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two parties, the idolater and the believer in the Unity of God, but also to the constant struggle which would be going on in such a household. The outlook on life of the Muslim and the idolater are poles asunder and the harmony and the mutual love between husband and wife which marriage aims at can never be attained. Moreover such a union would mean ruination of the offspring which would have to be brought up in such an atmosphere.

286 Just as war made many children orphans, it made many women widows, but questions relating to widowhood and divorce being somewhat analogous, the two questions are treated together in this section and the two that follow. In fact war conditions also necessitated divorce in certain cases, for which see 60:10. The subject of monthly courses of women comes in as a preliminary to the question of divorce, for which see 65:1. As the answer shows, the question relates to relations with women during the monthly courses.

287 *Adh-an* signifies *a slight evil,* slighter than what is termed *ḍarar* (LL), or anything that causes a slight harm (LL). It is not, however, the menstrual discharge that is called harmful here but having sexual relations while the woman is in that condition. The Jewish law contains a similar prohibition in Lev. 18:19 and 20:18, though Jewish practice rendered it necessary that the separation between husband and wife should be complete. In Islām, it is limited to the cessation of sexual intercourse.

288 *Annā* means either *matā,* i.e., *when,* or *kaifa,* i.e., *how* (AH). As the previous verse prohibits certain relations when the woman has her courses on, this one states that keeping that prohibition in view, a man may go in to his wife when he likes and as he likes.

The Qur'ān contains directions for the physical as well as the moral and spiritual welfare of man, and it deals with the most delicate questions in language unapproached in its purity in any other law dealing with similar questions. Many of the phrases dealing with the delicate relations of the sexes were introduced by the Holy Qur'ān itself, and its literature is therefore one which brings no shudder to the fair reader, unlike many of the descriptions contained in the Bible. The comparison of the woman to the tilth is simply to show that it is she who brings up the children and through whom is made the character of the man, and to show that the real object of conjugal relations is not simply the satisfaction of carnal desires.

289 This verse introduces another preliminary to the subject of divorce. *Īlā'* was a way of temporarily putting off the wife, for which see 291, and this was effected by an oath in Allāh's name not to go in to one's wife, the result of which was that the husband considered himself free from all marital obligations. The first step to bring about a reform in the relations of husband and wife was that this practice was abolished. It is in reference to this that the taking of oaths against the doing of good to others is prohibited. The fulfilment of marital obligations is thus referred to as *the doing of good* and *observance of duty* and

225 Allāh will not call you to account for what is vain in your oaths, but He will call you to account for what your hearts have earned. And Allāh is Forgiving, Forbearing.[290]

لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللّٰهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِيْٓ اَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلٰكِنْ يُّؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ قُلُوْبُكُمْ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ حَلِيْمٌ ﴿۲۲۵﴾

226 Those who swear that they will not go in to their wives[291] should wait four months; then if they go back, Allāh is surely Forgiving, Merciful.[292]

لِلَّذِيْنَ يُؤْلُوْنَ مِنْ نِّسَآئِهِمْ تَرَبُّصُ اَرْبَعَةِ اَشْهُرٍ ۚ فَاِنْ فَآءُوْ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۲۲۶﴾

227 And if they resolve on a divorce,[293] Allāh is surely Hearing, Knowing.

وَاِنْ عَزَمُوا الطَّلَاقَ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۲۲۷﴾

228 And the divorced women should keep themselves in waiting for three courses.[294] And it is not lawful

وَالْمُطَلَّقٰتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِاَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلٰثَةَ قُرُوْٓءٍ ۭ

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making peace between men. But the subject is generalized and the taking of all oaths to forbid oneself the doing of good or fulfilment of obligations is prohibited.

290 By *vain oaths* are meant *unintentional* or *thoughtless oaths* in ordinary conversation, and by *what the hearts have earned* is meant *an oath intentionally taken.*

291 *Īlā'* signifies *an oath that one shall not go in to one's wife.* In the days of ignorance the Arabs used to take such oaths frequently, and as the period of suspension was not limited, the wife was compelled sometimes to pass her whole life in bondage, having neither the position of a wife nor that of a divorced woman free to marry elsewhere. The Qur'ān declares that if the husband does not reassert conjugal relations within four months, the wife shall be divorced. Cases in which husbands desert wives, having neither conjugal relations with them nor divorcing them, are similar to the case of *īlā'*, and must be dealt with practically as amounting to *īlā'*, so that after four months the wife should be set free if she wants a divorce.

292 By going back is meant the re-establishing of conjugal relations.

293 *Ṭalāq* is an infinitive noun from *ṭalaqat*, said of a woman, meaning *she was left free to go her way* or *become separated from her husband,* and signifies *the dissolving of the marriage tie* (LL). The subject of divorce, which is introduced here, is dealt with in this and the following two sections, and further on in the 4th, 33rd and 65th chapters.

Divorce is one of the institutions of Islām regarding which much misconception prevails, so much so that even the Islamic law as administered in the courts, is not free from these misconceptions. The chief features of the Islamic law of divorce, as dealt with in the Holy Qur'ān, are discussed in vv. 228-233 and 236; the procedure is laid down in 4:35, while further questions are dealt with in 33:49 and 65:1-7. The Islāmic law has many points of advantage as compared with both the Jewish and Christian laws as formulated in Deut. and Matt. The chief feature of improvement is that the wife can claim a divorce according to the Islamic law, neither Moses nor Christ conferring that right on the woman, though it is to be regretted that this very feature is the one that is not recognized now even in some Muslim countries. Another feature of the Islamic law of divorce is that it is elastic and does not strictly limit the causes of divorce. In fact, if the civilized nations of Europe and America, who

for them to conceal that which Allāh has created in their wombs, if they believe in Allāh and the Last Day. And their husbands have a better right to take them back in the meanwhile if they wish for reconciliation.[295] And women have rights similar to those against them in a just manner,[296] and men are a degree above them.[297] And Allāh is Mighty, Wise.

وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللّٰهُ فِيْ
أَرْحَامِهِنَّ إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنَّ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ ؕ
وَبُعُوْلَتُهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوْا
إِصْلَاحًا ؕ وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِيْ عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ
وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿٢٢٨﴾

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own the same religion, are at the same stage of advancement and have an affinity of feelings on most social and moral questions, cannot agree as to the causes of divorce, how could a universal religion like Islām, which was meant for all ages and all countries, for people in the lowest grade of civilization as well as those at the top, limit those causes, which must vary with the varying conditions of humanity and society?

It may also be added here that, though divorce is allowed by Islām if sufficient reason exists, yet the right is to be exercised under exceptional circumstances. The Qur'ān itself approves of the Prophet insisting on Zaid not divorcing his wife notwithstanding a dissension of a sufficiently long standing (33:37). And the Prophet's memorable words, *of all things which have been permitted divorce is the most hated by Allāh* (AD. 13:3), will always act as a strong check on any loose interpretation of the words of the Holy Qur'ān.

295 These words give a clear right to the parties to effect a reconciliation and re-establish conjugal relations within the period of waiting. No special procedure is necessary for this but both the divorce and the reconciliation must take place in the presence of witnesses (IM. 10:5). If, however, the *'iddat* is over and no reconciliation has been effected, the relation of husband and wife can be re-established by re-marriage, which right is given to the parties by v. 232.

The period of waiting is really a period of temporary separation during which conjugal relations may be re-established as clearly stated in the words that follow. This period of temporary separation serves as a check upon divorce. If there is any love in the union, its pangs would assert themselves during the period of temporary separation, bringing about a reconciliation, and the differences would sink into insignificance. This is the best safeguard against a misuse of divorce, for in this way only such unions would be ended by divorce as really deserve to be ended, being devoid of the faintest spark of love. A conjugal union without love is a body without a soul, and the sooner it is ended the better.

296 The rights of women against their husbands are here stated to be similar to those which the husbands have against their wives. The statement must, no doubt, have caused a stir in a society which never recognized any rights for the woman. The change in this respect was really a revolutionizing one, for the Arabs hitherto regarded women as mere chattels. Women were now given a position equal in all respects to that of men, for they were declared to have rights similar to those which were exercised against them. This declaration brought about a revolution not only in Arabia but in the whole world, for the equality of the rights of women with those of men was never previously recognized by any nation or any reformer. The woman could no longer be discarded at the will of her "lord", but she could either claim equality as a wife or demand a divorce.

297 The statement that "men are a degree above them" does not nullify the rights asserted in the previous passage. The words are added simply to show that superior authority to run the house must be given to either the husband or the wife, and it is given to the husband for reasons stated in 4:34; see 568.

SECTION 29 : **Divorce**

229 Divorce may be (pronounced) twice ;[298] then keep (them) in good fellowship or let (them) go with kindness.[299] And it is not lawful for you to take any part of what you have given them,[300] unless both fear that they cannot keep within the limits of Allāh. Then if you fear that they cannot keep within the limits of Allāh, there is no blame on them for what she gives up to become free thereby.[301] These are the limits of Allāh, so exceed them not ; and whoever exceeds the limits of Allāh, these are the wrongdoers.

اَلطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتٰنِ ۖ فَاِمْسَاكٌۢ بِمَعْرُوْفٍ اَوْ تَسْرِيْحٌۢ
بِاِحْسَانٍ ؕ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ اَنْ تَاْخُذُوْا مِمَّآ
اٰتَيْتُمُوْهُنَّ شَيْـًٔا اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّخَافَآ اَلَّا يُقِيْمَا حُدُوْدَ
اللّٰهِ ؕ فَاِنْ خِفْتُمْ اَلَّا يُقِيْمَا حُدُوْدَ اللّٰهِ ۙ فَلَا
جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيْمَا افْتَدَتْ بِهٖ ؕ تِلْكَ
حُدُوْدُ اللّٰهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوْهَا ۚ وَمَنْ يَّتَعَدَّ
حُدُوْدَ اللّٰهِ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿۲۲۹﴾

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298 The divorce spoken of here is the revocable divorce of v. 228, after which a reconciliation may be effected in the waiting period. In the days of ignorance a man used to divorce his wife and take her back within the prescribed time, even though he might do this a thousand times. Islām reformed this practice by allowing a revocable divorce on two occasions only, so that the period of waiting in each of these two cases might serve as a period of temporary separation during which conjugal relations could be re-established. As shown in 295, even re-marriage of the same parties is allowed after the lapse of the waiting period.

299 The husband must make his choice after the second divorce either to retain the wife permanently or to bring about a final separation. The object of a true marriage union is indicated in the simple words *keep them in good fellowship.* Where the union is characterized by quarrels and dissensions instead of good fellowship, and two experiences of a temporary separation show that there is no real love in the union, and good fellowship is therefore entirely absent, the only remedy that remains is to let the woman *go with kindness.* It is both in the interests of the husband and the wife and in the interests of society itself that such a union should be brought to a termination, so that the parties may seek a fresh union. But even in taking this final step the woman must be treated kindly.

300 The full payment of the dowry to the woman is another condition relating to the Islamic law of divorce, and it serves as a very strong check upon the husband in resorting to unnecessary divorce.

301 These words give the wife a right to claim a divorce. It is one of the distinguishing characteristics of Islām that it gives the wife the right to claim a divorce, if she is willing to forgo the whole or part of her dowry. The case of Jamīlah, wife of Thābit Ibn Qais, is one that is reported in numerous reports of the highest authority. Here it was the wife who was dissatisfied with the marriage. There was not even a quarrel, as she plainly stated in her complaint to the Prophet: "I do not find any fault with him on account of his morals (i.e., his treatment) or his religion". She only hated him. And the Prophet had her divorced on condition that she returned to her husband the orchard which he had made over to her as her dowry (B. 68:12). It is even said that the husband's love for the wife was as intense as her hatred for him (Rz). If, then, a woman could claim a divorce for no reason other than the unsuitableness of the match, she had certainly the right to claim one if there was ill-treatment on the part of the husband or any other satisfactory reason, and among the early Muslims it was

230 So if he divorces her (the third time);[302] she shall not be lawful to him afterwards until she marries another husband. If he divorces her, there is no blame on them both if they return to each other (by marriage), if they think that they can keep within the limits of Allāh.[303] And these are the limits of Allāh which He makes clear for a people who know.

فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدُ حَتَّىٰ تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ ۗ فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا إِنْ ظَنَّا أَنْ يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٣٠﴾

231 And when you divorce women and they reach their prescribed time, then retain them in kindness or set them free with kindness and retain

وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ ۚ وَلَا تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا لِتَعْتَدُوا ۚ

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an established right. Even now it is a right which is maintained in many Muslim countries. Technically such a divorce is called Khul'.

It will be noted that though this verse forms the basis of the law relating to Khul', the words indicate an unwillingness on the part of both spouses to continue the marriage relation — *unless both fear that they cannot keep within the limits of Allāh.* This is explained as meaning their inability to perform towards each other their marital obligations and to maintain good fellowship (B. 68:13). The reason for this, apparently, is that the passage follows one requiring a permanence of relationship that can no more be broken when the husband has adopted this choice after a second divorce, so that the relation can only be broken if the wife finds it unbearable. Another reason seems to be that the woman is usually the last to be willing to break up the marriage relationship.

The words *if you fear* evidently refer to the properly constituted authorities and this shows that the authorities can interfere in the matter. Cases are actually on record in which a wrong done by an unjust divorce was mended by the authorities.

302 The words refer to the "putting off with kindness" of the previous verse, and hence by *divorce* here is meant the irrevocable divorce pronounced a third time, i.e., after there has been a divorce and a restitution of conjugal rights twice.

303 When the wife has been divorced twice, after each of which reconciliation has been effected and has failed, the third divorce becomes irrevocable, and the husband cannot remarry the divorced wife until she has been married elsewhere and divorced. The verse abolishes the immoral custom of *ḥalālah,* or temporary marriage gone through with no other object than that of legalizing the divorced wife for the first husband, a custom prevalent in the days of Ignorance, but abolished by the Prophet, according to a report which speaks of his having cursed those who indulge in the evil practice (Tr. 9:25). There must be a genuine marriage and a genuine divorce.

This restriction makes the third divorce a very rare occurrence, and thus acts as another check against frequent divorce. Muir's remarks as to the hardship which this rule involves not only for "the innocent wife" but also for the "innocent children", for "however desirous the husband may be of undoing the wrong, the decision cannot be recalled", are totally unjustified. The irrevocable divorce cannot be pronounced until a temporary separation has taken place twice and both experiences have shown that the marriage relationship cannot be continued. It is not simply by repeating the pronouncement of divorce thrice that the third pronouncement becomes irrevocable. A divorce should actually have taken place twice, followed each time by reconciliation, then and only then the

them not for injury[304] so that you exceed the limits. And whoever does this, he indeed wrongs his own soul. And take not Allāh's messages for a mockery,[305] and remember Allāh's favour to you, and *that* which He has revealed to you of the Book and the Wisdom, admonishing you thereby. And keep your duty to Allāh, and know that Allāh is the Knower of all things.

وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ ۚ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوًا ۚ وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٣١﴾

SECTION 30: **Remarriage of Divorced Women and Widows**

232 And when you divorce women and they end their term, prevent them not from marrying their husbands if they agree among themselves in a lawful manner.[306] With this is admonished he among you who believes in Allāh and the Last Day. This is more profitable for you and purer. And Allāh knows while you know not.

وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ إِذَا تَرَاضَوْا بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ يُوعَظُ بِهِ مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۗ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٣٢﴾

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third divorce becomes irrevocable. It would, in fact, be very rare. The case of Rukānah affords an illustration. He divorced his wife in the time of the Prophet thrice but this was counted as a single divorce, and he took back his wife by the Prophet's order. Then he divorced her in the time of 'Umar and reconciliation was again effected, and finally he divorced her in the time of 'Uthmān (AD. 13:3).

304 Hence, if the husband is proved to give injury to the wife, he cannot retain her, and she can claim a divorce. Injury to the wife may be of a general nature or one given with the object of compelling her to remit the whole or part of her dowry to obtain a divorce. This practice was resorted to by the pre-Islamic Arabs, and the words are meant to abolish the evil (Rz). It is for the judge to see that the husband is not taking undue advantage of his position. On the other hand, the husband is enjoined to show liberality to the divorced wife, and the judge would no doubt see that the injunctions of the Holy Book were observed. It is made clear in 4:35 that decision in matters of divorce rests with the judges appointed, not with the husband or the wife.

305 The injunctions relating to the kind treatment of women must not be taken lightly, we are told here. Retaining women to cause them injury has already been declared to be a transgression and emphasis is now laid on the proper observance of these injunctions by stating that these are most serious matters relating to the welfare of society as a whole.

306 It has already been stated that when a divorce is pronounced, the conjugal relations can be re-established within the period of waiting. Here it is stated that if the period of waiting has elapsed, even then the former husband can remarry the divorced wife. The sister of Ma'qil ibn Yasār was divorced by her husband and when the *'iddah* was over, the husband again approached Ma'qil to give her in marriage to him. She was willing but Ma'qil did not agree. Then this verse

233 And mothers[307] shall suckle their children for two whole years, for him who desires to complete the time of suckling. And their maintenance and their clothing must be borne by the father according to usage. No soul shall be burdened beyond its capacity. Neither shall a mother be made to suffer harm on account of her child, nor a father on account of his child ; and a similar duty (devolves) on the (father's) heir.[308] But if both desire weaning by mutual consent and counsel, there is no blame on them. And if you wish to engage a wet-nurse for your children, there is no blame on you so long as you pay what you promised according to usage. And keep your duty to Allāh and know that Allāh is Seer of what you do.

وَالْوَالِدٰتُ يُرْضِعْنَ اَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ
كَامِلَيْنِ لِمَنْ اَرَادَ اَنْ يُّتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ
وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُوْدِ لَهٗ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ
بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ نَفْسٌ اِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَا
تُضَآرَّ وَالِدَةٌ ۢبِوَلَدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُوْدٌ لَّهٗ
بِوَلَدِهٖ وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذٰلِكَ فَاِنْ
اَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا وَاِنْ اَرَدْتُّمْ اَنْ تَسْتَرْضِعُوْٓا
اَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ اِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَّآ
اٰتَيْتُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَاعْلَمُوْٓا
اَنَّ اللّٰهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ﴿۲۳۳﴾

234 And (as for) those of you who die and leave wives behind, such women should keep themselves in waiting for four months and ten days ;[309] when they reach their term, there is no blame on you for what they do for themselves in a lawful manner.[310] And Allāh is Aware of what you do.

وَالَّذِيْنَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُوْنَ اَزْوَاجًا
يَّتَرَبَّصْنَ بِاَنْفُسِهِنَّ اَرْبَعَةَ اَشْهُرٍ وَّعَشْرًا
فَاِذَا بَلَغْنَ اَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيْمَا
فَعَلْنَ فِيْٓ اَنْفُسِهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرٌ ﴿۲۳۴﴾

235 And there is no blame on you respecting that which you speak indirectly in the asking of (such) women in marriage or keep (the proposal) concealed within your minds. Allāh

وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيْمَا عَرَّضْتُمْ بِهٖ مِنْ
خِطْبَةِ النِّسَآءِ اَوْ اَكْنَنْتُمْ فِيْٓ اَنْفُسِكُمْ عَلِمَ
اللّٰهُ اَنَّكُمْ سَتَذْكُرُوْنَهُنَّ وَلٰكِنْ لَّا تُوَاعِدُوْهُنَّ

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was revealed (B. 65 : ii, 40). Thus the marriage of a divorced woman with her former husband is clearly allowed, and going through the mock ceremony of marriage with another person is an innovation.

307 By *mothers* here are meant in particular, as the context shows, *women who have been divorced having children to suckle.*

308 In case the father dies before the child is weaned, the heir is bound to pay the expenses.

309 The period of waiting in the case of a widow is four months and ten

310, see next page.

knows that you will have them in your minds, but give them not a promise in secret unless you speak in a lawful manner. And confirm not the marriage tie until the prescribed period reaches its end.[311] And know that Allāh knows what is in your minds, so beware of Him; and know that Allāh is Forgiving, Forbearing.

سِرًّا إِلَّآ أَنْ تَقُوْلُوْا قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوْفًا ۚ وَلَا تَعْزِمُوْا
عُقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ حَتّٰى يَبْلُغَ الْكِتٰبُ أَجَلَهٗ ۚ وَ
اعْلَمُوْٓا أَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِيْٓ أَنْفُسِكُمْ
فَاحْذَرُوْهُ ۚ وَاعْلَمُوْٓا أَنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ حَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٣٥﴾

SECTION 31 : **Provision for Divorced Women and Widows**

236 There is no blame on you if you divorce women while yet you have not touched them, nor appointed for them a portion. And provide for them, the wealthy according to his means and the strained according to his means, a provision according to usage. (This is) a duty on the doers of good.[312]

لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَآءَ مَا لَمْ
تَمَسُّوْهُنَّ أَوْ تَفْرِضُوْا لَهُنَّ فَرِيْضَةً ۚۖ وَّمَتِّعُوْهُنَّ ۚ
عَلَى الْمُوْسِعِ قَدَرُهٗ وَعَلَى الْمُقْتِرِ قَدَرُهٗ ۚ مَتَاعًا
بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ ۚ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿٢٣٦﴾

237 And if you divorce them before you have touched them and you have appointed for them a portion, (pay) half of what you have appointed unless they forgo or he forgoes in whose hand is the marriage tie.[313] And it is nearer to dutifulness that you forgo. Nor neglect the giving of free gifts between you.[314] Surely Allāh is Seer of what you do.

وَإِنْ طَلَّقْتُمُوْهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمَسُّوْهُنَّ
وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ فَرِيْضَةً فَنِصْفُ مَا
فَرَضْتُمْ إِلَّآ أَنْ يَّعْفُوْنَ أَوْ يَعْفُوَا الَّذِيْ
بِيَدِهٖ عُقْدَةُ النِّكَاحِ ۚ وَأَنْ تَعْفُوْٓا
أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوٰى ۚ وَلَا تَنْسَوُا الْفَضْلَ
بَيْنَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ﴿٢٣٧﴾

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days. But in case a divorced woman or a widow is with child, the period of waiting is extended to the time of delivery (65 : 4).

310 The meaning is that the widow may look out for a husband and remarry.

311 The word *kitāb*, lit. *writing*, means here *the period of waiting written down* for women, so that a marriage contracted during that period is illegal.

312 The *farīḍah* or *the portion* is the dowry, so that even when no dowry has been agreed upon, and marriage has not been consummated, liberality must be shown to the divorced wife, and some provision should be made for her, even though the husband may be in straitened circumstances.

313 The husband is the person in whose hand is the marriage tie. His forgoing his due is equivalent to not claiming the half of the dowry which he is entitled to by this verse. Note that forgoing on the part of husbands is here stated to be the more commendable course.

314 By *faḍl* is meant here *the doing of an act of grace* or *bounty* that which

238 Guard the prayers and the most excellent prayer, and stand up truly obedient to Allāh.[315]

حٰفِظُوْا عَلَى الصَّلَوٰتِ وَالصَّلٰوةِ الْوُسْطٰى وَقُوْمُوْا لِلّٰهِ قٰنِتِيْنَ ﴿٢٣٨﴾

239 But if you are in danger (say your prayers) on foot or on horseback. And when you are secure, remember Allāh as He has taught you what you knew not.[316]

فَاِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا اَوْ رُكْبَانًا ۚ فَاِذَآ اَمِنْتُمْ فَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُمْ مَّا لَمْ تَكُوْنُوْا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٢٣٩﴾

240 And those of you who die and leave wives behind, should make a bequest in favour of their wives of maintenance for a year without turning (them) out. Then if they themselves go away, there is no blame on you for what they do of lawful deeds concerning themselves. And Allāh is Mighty, Wise.[317]

وَالَّذِيْنَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُوْنَ اَزْوَاجًا ۚۖ وَّصِيَّةً لِّاَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَّتَاعًا اِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ اِخْرَاجٍ ۚ فَاِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيْ مَا فَعَلْنَ فِيْٓ اَنْفُسِهِنَّ مِنْ مَّعْرُوْفٍ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿٢٤٠﴾

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one is not in duty bound to do; and therefore what is implied is the giving of free gifts.

315 *Wasaṭ*, of which *wusṭā* is the comparative form, means both *middle* and *excellent*, for *wasaṭ* refers sometimes to place and sometimes to degree (R). *Al-Ṣalāt al-wusṭā* means *the best* or *the most excellent prayer*, not the *middle* prayer, because *wusṭā* is in the comparative degree, and *middle* does not admit of comparison. In Ḥadīth the later afternoon prayer, *'Aṣr*, is spoken of as *al-Ṣalāt al-wusṭā* (B. 56:98). This name may have been given to it, because from the point of the businessman it is the busiest part of the day and hence he finds it most difficult to find time for it. But there are several other suggestions regarding what is meant by it, and maybe it does not refer to any particular prayer and means simply attending to prayer in the most excellent form. The guarding of prayers is not simply the observance of the outward form; it is both the form and the spirit to which attention is drawn. Prayers are to be said at stated times and a particular method is to be observed, for if regularity and method had not been adopted, the institution of prayer which is so helpful in keeping alive a true faith in God in the heart of a Muslim would have passed into mere idealism as in other religions. The fact is that to keep the spirit of man in touch with the Divine Spirit, an external form was necessary, and it is absurd to jump to the conclusion that because Islām requires an external form to be kept up, the Islamic prayer is devoid of spirit. The external form is needed to bring the inner faculty into exercise. As regards the spirit of prayer, attention is called to it again and again in the Holy Qur'ān. On this very occasion, the injunction to guard the prayers is followed by the words: *Stand up truly obedient to Allāh.* That is the spirit which prayer aims at generating, the spirit of obedience to God. Elsewhere we are told: "Prayer keeps a man away from indecency and evil" (29:45). In fact, the Qur'ān condemns prayers which are devoid of spirit (107:4-6).

316 The reference to danger is danger from the enemy, who might make an onslaught on the Muslims if they neglected their defence when attending to prayer. There is thus a reversion here to the subject of fighting, which is really dealt with throughout this chapter. The laying of stress on prayers in the previous verse is

317, see next page.

241 And for the divorced women, provision (must be made) in kindness. This is incumbent on those who have regard for duty.[318]

وَلِلْمُطَلَّقٰتِ مَتَاعٌۢ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ ۭ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِيْنَ ۝۲۴۱

242 Allāh thus makes clear to you His messages that you may understand.

كَذٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُوْنَ ۝۲۴۲

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also due to the fact that prayer was in danger of being neglected when fighting. It should also be noted that the question of widowhood, which is being dealt with here, is closely associated with fighting, because wars must increase the number of widows. The subject of fighting is plainly reverted to in the next section.

317 There is nothing to show that this verse is abrogated by any other verse of the Holy Qur'ān. Neither v. 234, nor 4:12, contains anything contradicting this verse. The former of these speaks of the period of waiting for a widow, but here we have nothing about the period of waiting; it simply speaks of a bequest on the part of the husband that the widow should be given an additional benefit, a year's residence and maintenance. The latter portion of the verse plainly says that if the widow of her own accord leaves the house . . . she is not entitled to any further concession, and there is no blame on the heirs of the deceased husband for what the widow does of lawful deeds, i.e., if she remarries after her waiting period of four months and ten days is over. As regards 4:12, the fourth or eighth part of the property of the deceased husband is hers in addition to what she obtains under this verse, and 4:12 plainly says that anything which is to be paid under a will shall have precedence of the division of property into shares under that verse. Mujāhid's explanation of this verse is exactly the same: "Allāh gave her (i.e., the widow) the whole of a year, seven months and twenty days being optional under the bequest; if she desired she could stay according to the bequest (i.e., having maintenance and residence for a year), and if she desired she could leave the house (and remarry), as the Qur'ān says: *Then if they leave of their own accord, there is no blame on you*" (B. 65:ii, 41).

318 Note that this provision is in addition to the dowry which must be paid to them. Just as in the previous verse the widow is given an additional benefit, here a provision in addition to her dowry is recommended for the divorced woman. This shows how liberal are the injunctions of the Holy Qur'ān regarding women.

SECTION 32 : **Fighting in the Cause of Truth**

243 Hast thou not considered those who went forth from their homes, and they were thousands, for fear of death. Then Allāh said to them, Die. Then He gave them life. Surely Allāh is Gracious to people, but most people are not grateful.[319]

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِن دِيَارِهِمْ
وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ فَقَالَ لَهُمُ
اللَّهُ مُوتُوا ثُمَّ أَحْيَاهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَذُو
فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ
النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٢٤٣﴾

244 And fight in the way of Allāh, and know that Allāh is Hearing, Knowing.[320]

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ
سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٤٤﴾

245 Who is it that will offer to Allāh a goodly gift,[321] so He multiplies it to him manifold? And Allāh receives and amplifies,[322] and to Him you shall be returned.

مَن ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا
فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً وَاللَّهُ
يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْسُطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٢٤٥﴾

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319 *Ulūf* is plural either of *alf*, meaning *a thousand*, or *alif*, *a congregation* or *in a state of union* (LL). The thousands referred to in this verse are the Israelites who left Egypt with Moses, the whole body of the Israelites being called a congregation in the Torah, and the clear mention of *the Children of Israel after Moses* in v. 246 corroborates this. Here we have a people who left their homes for fear of death, and besides the Israelites' exodus from Egypt no incident in history answers to this description. In fact, the very word *kharajū* (*they went forth*) from *khurūj* (meaning *exodus*) contains a direct hint to the exodus of the Israelites. But in one respect, the Holy Qur'ān differs from the Bible. According to the latter, the number of the Israelites was over 600,000 when they left Egypt (Num. 1:46), but the Qur'ān says they were *thousands*, not hundreds of thousands. There is no doubt, too, that the Israelites left Egypt for fear of death, for death would surely have been their fate if they had not emigrated. Not only were orders given by Pharoah for their male offspring to be killed, but they were also kept in a state of bondage which would soon have brought them to a state of intellectual and moral death (compare v. 49).

The next incident in the history of that nation as referred to here is the Divine commandment to them, to "die". This is more fully stated in 5:21-26. Moses told them to enter the Holy Land "which Allāh has prescribed for you," but they refused and were made to wander about in the wilderness for forty years, so that that generation perished. This is also shown by their history as given in the Old Testament: "Your carcases shall fall in this wilderness . . . doubtless ye shall not come into the land" (Num. 14:29, 30). This was their death. After that, we are told, *Allāh gave them life*. This refers to the next generation, which was made to inherit the promised land: "But your little ones . . . they shall know the land which ye have despised" (Num. 14:31). The whole is meant as a warning for the Muslims, who are told that if they followed the footsteps of the Israelites, death must be their fate. This warning is made clear in the next verse: *And fight in the way of Allāh*.

320 See 2:190; fighting in Allāh's way is equivalent to fighting in defence of faith.

321 Commenting on this verse, LL says: "It means, according to AIs, the grammarian, *who is he who will offer unto God a good action* or *gift*, or *any thing for which a requital may be sought*; or, as Akh, one of the most famous grammarians says, *who will do a good action by following and obeying the*

322, see next page.

246 Hast thou not thought of the leaders of the Children of Israel after Moses? When they said to a prophet of theirs: Raise up for us a king, that we may fight in the way of Allāh.[323] He said: May it not be that you will not fight if fighting is ordained for you? They said: And what reason have we that we should not fight in Allāh's way and we have indeed been deprived of our homes and our children?[324] But when fighting was ordained for them, they turned back, except a few of them. And Allāh is Knower of the wrongdoers.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الْمَلَإِ مِنْ بَنِيٓ إِسْرَآءِيلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰٓ إِذْ قَالُوا لِنَبِيٍّ لَّهُمُ ابْعَثْ لَنَا مَلِكًا نُّقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۖ قَالَ هَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِن كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ أَلَّا تُقَاتِلُوا ۖ قَالُوا وَمَا لَنَآ أَلَّا نُقَاتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَقَدْ أُخْرِجْنَا مِن دِيَارِنَا وَأَبْنَآئِنَا ۖ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ تَوَلَّوْا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌۢ بِالظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٤٦﴾

247 And their prophet said to them: Surely Allāh has raised Saul to be a king over you.[325] They said: How can he have kingdom over us while we have a greater right to kingdom than he, and he has not been granted abundance of wealth?[326] He said:

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوتَ مَلِكًا ۚ قَالُوٓا أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا وَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِالْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ سَعَةً مِّنَ الْمَالِ ۚ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ

command of God"; and he adds: "The Arabs say, *qad aqraḍta-nī qarḍ-an ḥasan-an*, which signifies *thou hast done to me a good deed which I am bound to requite*" (T, LL). According to Zj, *qarḍ* signifies *any thing done on which a reward may be expected* (Rz).

322 *Allāh receives and amplifies* means that Allāh receives the gift that is offered to Him and then amplifies it; in other words, any sacrifice made in the cause of Truth is amply rewarded by Allāh. Or, it is a general statement indicating that the tightening of the means of subsistence and their amplification are in the hands of Allāh, for *yaqbiḍu* also means *he straitens*.

323 The prophet alluded to is Samuel: "Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us . . . that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles" (1 Sam. 8:19, 20). In the history which follows, the Qur'ān does not show any important difference with the Bible narrative.

324 1 Sam. 15:33 shows that the Amalekites had killed the Children of Israel, while 1 Sam. 17:1 shows that they had taken lands which belonged to Judah.

325 Saul is here called *Ṭālūt*, which is of the measure of *fa'lūt* from *ṭala* meaning *he or it was tall*, and he is so called on account of the tallness of his stature: "And when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people" (1 Sam. 10:23). The proper names used in the Holy Qur'ān, while differing slightly from the Hebrew originals, have a significance of their own.

326 The murmurings of the people on Saul's selection as king, as recorded in the Holy Qur'ān, have something corresponding to them in the Bible: "And Saul answered and said, Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin?" (1 Sam. 9:21). And again: "But the children of Belial said, How shall this

Surely Allāh has chosen him above you, and has increased him abundantly in knowledge and physique.[327] And Allāh grants His kingdom to whom He pleases. And Allāh is Ample-giving, Knowing.

اصْطَفٰهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهٗ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ
وَالْجِسْمِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ يُؤْتِيْ مُلْكَهٗ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ؕ
وَاللّٰهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۲۴۷﴾

248 And their prophet said to them: Surely the sign of his kingdom is that there shall come to you the heart[328] in which there is tranquillity from your Lord and the best[329] of what the followers of Moses and the followers of Aaron have left, the angels bearing it.[330] Surely there is a sign in this for you if you are believers.

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ اِنَّ اٰيَةَ مُلْكِهٖٓ اَنْ يَّاْتِيَكُمُ
التَّابُوْتُ فِيْهِ سَكِيْنَةٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ
مِّمَّا تَرَكَ اٰلُ مُوْسٰى وَاٰلُ هٰرُوْنَ تَحْمِلُهُ
الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ ؕ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيَةً لَّكُمْ اِنْ
كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿۲۴۸﴾

man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents" (1 Sam. 10:27).

327 Compare 1 Sam. 10:24: "And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people?".

328 The *tābūt* mentioned here has given rise to a number of stories, because of its twofold significance. It means a *chest* or a *box*, and it also signifies *the bosom* or *the heart* (LL). Taking the first significance, the reference is said to be to the *ark*, to which, however, it is objected that the ark was restored to the Israelites long before the time of Saul. But we cannot be so certain of the Bible narrative as to reject as untrue everything differing from it. I prefer, however, the latter significance, and the use of the word in that sense is well known. LL quotes the proverb, *mā auda'tu tābūtī shai-an faqadtu-hū*, i.e., *I have not deposited in my bosom anything of knowledge that I have lost*. R also says that *tābūt* denotes *qalb* or *the heart*, and he quotes 'Umar as speaking of IMsd, "a vessel filled up with knowledge," referring evidently to the heart. That the word is used in the Holy Qur'ān in this sense is clear from the description of it that follows. Tranquillity from the Lord is not a thing which is placed in boxes, but the heart is its real repository. On five other occasions the coming down of *sakīnah*, or *tranquillity*, is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān, and every time it is *the heart of the Prophet* or *the faithful* that is the recipient of it. For instance in 48:4 it is said: "He it is Who sent down tranquillity into the hearts of the believers that they may have more of faith". According to LA, *sakīnah* means also *mercy*; and he quotes a saying of the Prophet: "There came down upon them *mercy* (Ar. *sakīnah*) the angels bearing it."

By the coming of "*the heart in which there is tranquillity*" is meant the change which came over Saul when he was made king: "And it was so, that when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart" (1 Sam. 10:9). This exactly corresponds with the statement made in the Qur'ān. And further it is said: "And the Spirit of God came upon him and he prophesied" (1 Sam. 10:10). This is no doubt the best of what the true followers of Moses and Aaron left.

329 The word *baqiyyah* means both *a residue* and *excellence* or *the best of a thing* (LL). You say *baqiyyat al-qaum* meaning *the best of the people* (LL). *Ulū baqiyyat-in* in the Holy Qur'ān (11:116) means *persons possessed of excellence*. And *baqiyyat-Allāh* (11:86) signifies *obedience*, or *the state of goodness that remains*. Hence *baqiyyah* in either sense signifies *the blessings of the earlier days*. And thus it became a proverb among the Israelites: "Is Saul also among the prophets?" (1 Sam. 10:12).

330 The ark of 1 Samuel 4:4 was drawn by bullocks and not by angels, and

SECTION 33 : **Fighting in the Cause of Truth**

249 So when Saul set out with the forces, he said : Surely Allāh will try you with a river. Whoever drinks from it, he is not of me, and whoever tastes it not, he is surely of me, except he who takes a handful with his hand. But they drank of it save a few of them.[331] So when he had crossed it, he and those who believed with him, they said : We have to-day no power against Goliath[332] and his forces. Those who were sure that they would meet their Lord said : How often has a small party vanquished a numerous host by Allāh's permission! And Allāh is with the steadfast.[333]

فَلَمَّا فَصَلَ طَالُوتُ بِالْجُنُوْدِ قَالَ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ
مُبْتَلِيْكُمْ بِنَهَرٍ فَمَنْ شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ
مِنِّيْ وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَطْعَمْهُ فَاِنَّهٗ مِنِّيْٓ اِلَّا مَنِ
اغْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةًۢ بِيَدِهٖ فَشَرِبُوْا مِنْهُ اِلَّا
قَلِيْلًا مِّنْهُمْ فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهٗ هُوَ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا
مَعَهٗ قَالُوْا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا الْيَوْمَ بِجَالُوْتَ وَ
جُنُوْدِهٖ قَالَ الَّذِيْنَ يَظُنُّوْنَ اَنَّهُمْ مُّلٰقُوا
اللّٰهِ كَمْ مِّنْ فِئَةٍ قَلِيْلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً
كَثِيْرَةًۢ بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ وَاللّٰهُ مَعَ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ﴿۲۴۹﴾

250 And when they went out against Goliath and his forces, they said : Our Lord, pour out patience on us and make our steps firm and help us against the disbelieving people.

وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوْا لِجَالُوْتَ وَجُنُوْدِهٖ قَالُوْا رَبَّنَآ
اَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَّثَبِّتْ اَقْدَامَنَا وَ
انْصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿۲۵۰﴾

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since, according to the Holy Qur'ān, the bearers of the *tābūt* were angels, it is additional reason that by *tābūt* here is meant *the heart.* But see a saying of the Prophet quoted in 328, from which it is clear that "it" in the verse may refer not to *tābūt* but to *sakīnah* and *baqiyyah*, and the meaning would thus be that the tranquillity and inspiration were borne by the angels into the heart of Saul.

331 "The story of Saul is here confounded with that of Gideon" says a Christian critic. All that the Qur'ān states is that Saul tried his forces by a river, and the Bible does not say anything about it. On the other hand, the Bible speaks of a trial of a somewhat similar nature by Gideon (Judges 7 : 1-6), while the Qur'ān does not speak of Gideon at all. The Qur'ān does not undertake to give a full and detailed history of the Israelites, and no Christian does, I think, hold the belief that the Bible gives a full and detailed record of the whole of the Israelite nation, so that it could not have omitted a single incident. Nor is there anything strange if Saul followed the example of Gideon. That these are two different incidents is made clear by the fact that while Gideon tried his forces by "the well of Harod" (Judges 7 : 1), Saul tried his forces by a river, as stated in the Qur'ān. It further appears from the Bible that the river Jordan was there : "Some of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead" (1 Sam. 13 : 7).

332 The Arabic word is *Jālūt*, of the same measure as *Ṭālūt*, meaning *he assailed* or *assaulted* in the battle (LL), and thus instead of Goliath the Holy Qur'ān has adopted a name which expresses his chief characteristic.

333 Compare 1 Sam. 14 : 6 : "For there is no restraint to the Lord to save

251 So they put them to flight by Allāh's permission. And David slew Goliath, and Allāh gave him kingdom and wisdom,[334] and taught him of what He pleased. And were it not for Allāh's repelling some men by others, the earth would certainly be in a state of disorder:[335] but Allāh is Full of grace to the worlds.

فَهَزَمُوهُمْ بِإِذْنِ اللّٰهِ وَقَتَلَ دَاوُدُ جَالُوتَ
وَاٰتٰىهُ اللّٰهُ الْمُلْكَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَهٗ مِمَّا
يَشَآءُ ؕ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللّٰهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ
بِبَعْضٍ لَّفَسَدَتِ الْاَرْضُ وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ
ذُوْ فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٢٥١﴾

252 These are the messages of Allāh—We recite them to thee with truth; and surely thou art of the messengers.

تِلْكَ اٰيٰتُ اللّٰهِ نَتْلُوْهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ ؕ
وَاِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ ﴿٢٥٢﴾

PART III

253 We have made some of these messengers to excel others.[336] Among them are they to whom Allāh spoke, and some of them He exalted by (many) degrees of rank.[337] And We gave clear arguments to Jesus son of Mary, and strengthened him with the Holy Spirit. And if Allāh had pleased, those after them would not have fought one with another after clear arguments had come to them, but they disagreed; so some of them believed and some of them denied. And if Allāh had pleased they would not have fought one with another, but Allāh does what He intends.

تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ ۘ
مِنْهُمْ مَّنْ كَلَّمَ اللّٰهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجٰتٍ ؕ
وَاٰتَيْنَا عِيْسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنٰتِ وَاَيَّدْنٰهُ
بِرُوْحِ الْقُدُسِ ؕ وَلَوْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ مَا اقْتَتَلَ الَّذِيْنَ
مِنْۢ بَعْدِهِمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَتْهُمُ الْبَيِّنٰتُ
وَلٰكِنِ اخْتَلَفُوْا فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ اٰمَنَ وَمِنْهُمْ
مَّنْ كَفَرَ ؕ وَلَوْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ مَا اقْتَتَلُوْا ۟ وَلٰكِنَّ
اللّٰهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيْدُ ﴿٢٥٣﴾

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by many or by few". And on one occasion only six hundred men were left with him (1 Sam. 13:15).

334 David was both a king and a prophet.

335 Thus the Muslims are told that they have to fight to restore order and establish peace in the country.

336 The principle is here recognized that some messengers excel others, and it contains, apparently, a reference to the excellence of the Prophet Muḥammad. The mention of David and Jesus in particular here is to show that, notwithstanding that these two prophets represented two different aspects of the

337, see next page.

SECTION 34: **Compulsion in Religion forbidden**

254 O you who believe, spend out of what We have given you[338] before the day comes in which there is no bargaining, nor friendship, nor intercession. And the disbelievers — they are the wrongdoers.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْۤا اَنْفِقُوْا مِمَّا رَزَقْنٰكُمْ
مِّنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّاْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَّا بَيْعٌ فِيْهِ وَلَا
خُلَّةٌ وَّلَا شَفَاعَةٌ ۗ وَالْكٰفِرُوْنَ هُمُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿۲۵۴﴾

255 Allāh — there is no god but He, the Ever-living, the Self-subsisting by Whom all subsist. Slumber overtakes Him not, nor sleep. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission ?[339] He knows what is before them and what is behind them. And they encompass nothing of His knowledge except what He pleases. His knowledge[340] extends over the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of them both tires Him not. And He is the Most High, the Great.[341]

اَللّٰهُ لَاۤ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۚ اَلْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ ۚ لَا تَاْخُذُهٗ
سِنَةٌ وَّلَا نَوْمٌ ۗ لَهٗ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا
فِي الْاَرْضِ ۗ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِيْ يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهٗۤ
اِلَّا بِاِذْنِهٖ ۗ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَمَا
خَلْفَهُمْ ۚ وَلَا يُحِيْطُوْنَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهٖۤ اِلَّا
بِمَا شَآءَ ۚ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ ۚ
وَلَا يَـُٔوْدُهٗ حِفْظُهُمَا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيْمُ ﴿۲۵۵﴾

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advancement of the Israelite nation, David standing for their worldly eminence and Jesus for their spiritual eminence, they both sang praises of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, and both spoke of his advent as the advent of God Himself, thus indicating that, looked at from both standpoints, the excellence of the Prophet over other prophets was so immeasurable as to have led two of the most eminent Israelite prophets to speak of his advent as the coming of the Lord.

Numerous verses of the Holy Qur'ān bear testimony to the greatness of the Holy Prophet. He is repeatedly spoken of as being endowed with all those qualities of greatness in the highest degree which to others were given only partially and in a less degree. It is for this reason that the Prophet is declared to be a mercy to all nations (21:107), and his followers are called the best of the people (3:109), which shows that he is the greatest of the prophets.

337 Allāh spoke to all, but there were some who were exalted above others by many degrees. Compare this with v. 87: "And some of them (the prophets) you called liars, while others you would slay", whereas those whom they tried to kill were also called liars.

338 The carrying on of the struggle for existence against the numerous enemies of Islām required in the first place the raising of funds and other acts of self-sacrifice; hence the repeated exhortations to spend. The subject is dealt with at length in the two sections that follow the next.

339 The twofold significance of intercession has been explained in 79. The principle is here recognized that there may be intercession with Divine permission. It is true that Islām does not recognize the doctrine that man stands in need of any mediator to reconcile him with God, and therefore, mediation or

340, 341, see next page.

256 There is no compulsion in religion[342]—the right way is indeed clearly distinct from error. So whoever disbelieves in the devil[343] and believes in Allāh, he indeed lays hold on the firmest handle which shall never break. And Allāh is Hearing, Knowing.

لَآ إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّيْنِ ۙ قَدْ تَّبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ ۚ فَمَنْ يَّكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوْتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ بِاللّٰهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقٰى ۗ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا ۗ وَاللّٰهُ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٥٦﴾

257 Allāh is the Friend of those who believe—He brings them out of darkness into light.[344] And those who disbelieve, their friends are the devils who take them out of light into darkness. They are the companions of the Fire; therein they abide.

اَللّٰهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ۙ يُخْرِجُهُمْ مِّنَ الظُّلُمٰتِ إِلَى النُّوْرِ ۗ وَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا أَوْلِيٰٓـُٔهُمُ الطَّاغُوْتُ ۙ يُخْرِجُوْنَهُمْ مِّنَ النُّوْرِ إِلَى الظُّلُمٰتِ ۗ أُولٰٓئِكَ أَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ ۚ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿٢٥٧﴾

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intercession in the sense in which the Christian doctrine is held is unknown to Islām. But there is another aspect of it. The Prophet, to whom the Divine will is revealed, is the Model for his people. He is perfect and by pointing out a way enables others to attain to perfection. In this sense he is called a *shafī'* or *an intercessor*. Those who take the Prophet for their model may thus attain to perfection. But as all men are not equally gifted, nor have all equal occasion to attain to a state of perfection, though they exert themselves to their utmost, Divine mercy takes them by the hand and amends are made for such defects through the intercession of the Prophet. It is in this sense that Islām recognizes the doctrine of intercession in the life after death.

340 *Kursī* means *knowledge*. Ibn Jubair said: "His *Kursī* is *His Knowledge*" (B. 65 : ii, 44). It also means *chair* or *throne*, but the word is freely used in Arabic to indicate *knowledge* or *learning*, and a learned man is called *ahl al-kursī*. There is an Arabic proverb, *khair al-nāsi al-karāsī*, which means that *the best of men are the men of learning*. See further 895, where the meaning of *'arsh* is explained.

341 This is a very well-known verse which goes under the name of *āyat al-kursī*, or *the verse of knowledge*, because it deals with the all-comprehensive knowledge of Allāh.

342 To all the nonsense which is being talked about the Prophet offering Islām or the sword as alternatives to the pagan Arabs, this verse is a sufficient answer. Being assured of success, the Muslims are told that when they hold the power in their hand their guiding principle should be that there should be no compulsion in the matter of religion. The presumption that this passage was directed to the early converts and that it was abrogated later on is utterly baseless.

343 *Ṭāghūt* is derived from *ṭaghā*, meaning *he was inordinate* or *exorbitant*, and is variously explained as meaning "*the exorbitant in pride* or *corruptness* or *disbelief, of the people of the Scriptures,* or *any head* or *leader of error*, or *he who turns from the good*, or *the idols*, or *whatever is worshipped to the exclusion of God*, or *the devil*" (LL). As the word *devil* is freely used for most of the significances of *ṭaghūt* given above, I have adopted it as the significance throughout this translation. But it is not a proper name, as it accepts the definite article *al*. It is used as a plural here, though it has a separate plural form *ṭawāghīt*.

344 Faith is here spoken of as *light* and disbelief as *darkness*. The contrast is brought out to the best advantage in 24 : 35-40.

SECTION 35 : **How Dead Nations are raised to Life**

258 Hast thou not thought of him who disputed with Abraham about his Lord, because Allāh had given him kingdom?[345] When Abraham said, My Lord is He who gives life and causes to die, he said: I give life and cause death.[346] Abraham said: Surely Allāh causes the sun to rise from the East, so do thou make it rise from the West.[347] Thus he who disbelieved was confounded. And Allāh guides not the unjust people.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرٰهٖمَ فِي رَبِّهٖٓ أَنْ
اٰتٰىهُ اللّٰهُ الْمُلْكَ ۘ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرٰهٖمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِي
يُحْيٖ وَيُمِيتُ ۙ قَالَ أَنَا أُحْيٖ وَأُمِيتُ ۖ قَالَ
إِبْرٰهٖمُ فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ
فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ ۗ
وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٥٨﴾

345 The words "because Allāh had given him kingdom" are taken by the majority of commentators to refer to Abraham's opponent whose name is given as Nimrod (Gen. 10:8, 9), but the view of the minority that the personal pronoun *him* in the above quotation refers to Abraham is preferable. It is corroborated by 4:54: "We have given to Abraham's children the Book and the wisdom and We have given them a grand kingdom". Even in Genesis the promised land is spoken of as being given to Abraham: "I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it" (Gen. 15:7). The words *ātā-hu-llāhu* would in this case mean *Allāh had promised to give him*.

The Muslims are here told that just as a promise is given to them that they will be raised to great eminence from the state of insignificance in which they were, which is equivalent to raising the dead to life, a similar promise was given to Abraham, that promise being in fact the basis of the present promise to the Prophet: see 168.

346 It is not stated what it was to which the giving of life or bringing of death relates, but as the discussion arose out of the promise given to Abraham that his descendants would be made a great nation, it is clear that the reference here is to the life and death of nations. It should be noted that the words *ḥayāt* and *maut*, literally *life* and *death*, are as well applicable to nations and places as to men, animals and vegetation. Thus *mātati-l-arḍu* signifies the *land became destitute of vegetation and inhabitants* (LL). What is stated here is further illustrated in the verse that follows by the Divine promise as to the rebuilding of Jerusalem, where the *desolation* of the sacred city is spoken of as its *death* and its *rebuilding* is called its *life*.

347 The disputant belonged to a race of sun-worshippers, and therefore when he claimed that he could give life and cause death, Abraham advanced an argument which quite confounded his adversary. If he could give life and cause death he could control even his deity, the sun, for to give life and cause death were the work of the deity and not of the devotee, and hence he could make it rise from the opposite direction. The adversary was confounded, because he saw that he had made an assertion which was opposed to his own avowed belief.

259 Or like him who passed by a town, and it had fallen in upon its roofs. He said: When will Allāh give it life after its death? So Allāh caused him to die for a hundred years, then raised him. He said: How long hast thou tarried? He said: I have tarried a day, or part of a day. He said: Nay, thou hast tarried a hundred years; but look at thy food and drink — years have not passed over it! And look at thy ass! And that We may make thee a sign to men. And look at the bones, how We set them together then clothe them with flesh. So when it became clear to him, he said: I know that Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.[348]

أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ
عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا ۚ قَالَ أَنَّىٰ يُحْيِي هَٰذِهِ اللَّهُ
بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۖ فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ
ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ ۖ قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ ۖ قَالَ لَبِثْتُ
يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ ۖ قَالَ بَل لَّبِثْتَ مِائَةَ
عَامٍ فَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ
يَتَسَنَّهْ ۖ وَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ حِمَارِكَ وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ
آيَةً لِّلنَّاسِ ۖ وَانظُرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ
نُنشِزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا ۚ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ
قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٥٩﴾

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348 An illustration is afforded here from later Israelite history, as to how dead nations are raised to life. By "the town which had fallen in upon its roofs" is meant Jerusalem (Rz, AH), as it was left after its desolation by Nebuchadnezzar in 599 B.C.

The words "look at the bones, how we set them together, then clothe them with flesh", undoubtedly refer to Ezekiel's vision as related in Ezekiel, ch. 37 The first part of ch. 37 relates how Ezekiel was taken (in a vision) "in the midst of the valley which was full of bones," and asked, "Son of man, can these bones live?" After a Divine assurance, Ezekiel is made to witness the scene which is narrated here in the words—*Look at the bones, how We set them together:* "The bones came together, bone to his bone," and "the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them above," and then "the breath came into them, and they lived" (Ezek. 37:1-10). That what is narrated in Ezekiel, ch. 37, is a vision is clear from the introductory words of that chapter: "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord". What follows the incident makes it still more clear, for verse 11 (Ezekiel, ch. 37) goes on to say: "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: Behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost"; while verse 12 gives them the Divine promise, "Behold, O My people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel". This shows conclusively that the bones were only a symbol of the fallen condition of *the whole house of Israel.* I lay stress upon the word *whole* in Ezekiel 37:11, because the actual bones were only of the very few among them who were put to the sword, by far the greater number being in captivity or held in a slavish condition in subjugation to the Babylonians.

The identical incident related in v. 259 is also a vision. The Qur'ān usually dispenses with words showing an incident to be a vision when either the context or the nature of the incident or a reference to earlier history makes it clear that it is a vision. Compare the words in which Joseph narrated his vision to his father in 12:4: "O my father, I saw eleven stars and the sun and the moon — I saw them making submission to me," not making any mention at all that he had seen this in a vision. In the verse under discussion, however, it is not only its identity with Ezekiel 37:1-10 that shows the incident to be a vision, but

260 And when Abraham said, My Lord, show me how Thou givest life to the dead, He said: Dost thou not believe? He said: Yes, but that my heart may be at ease. He said: Then take four birds, then tame them to incline to thee, then place on every mountain a part of them, then call them, they will come to thee flying; and know that Allāh is Mighty, Wise.[349]

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرٰهِمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِي كَيْفَ تُحْيِ
الْمَوْتٰى قَالَ أَوَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ قَالَ بَلٰى وَلٰكِنْ
لِّيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي قَالَ فَخُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنَ الطَّيْرِ
فَصُرْهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ اجْعَلْ عَلٰى كُلِّ جَبَلٍ
مِّنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا ثُمَّ ادْعُهُنَّ يَأْتِينَكَ سَعْيًا
وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٠﴾

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the insertion of a *kāf*, signifying *likeness*, before the whole is a further indication of the same. If the incident had been a real one, as in the previous verse, the verse should have commenced with the words *or him* instead of *or like him*, the insertion of the *kāf* giving the incident the colour of a parable or a vision.

The causing the prophet to die for a hundred years is also an incident of the vision which, though not narrated in the Bible, is corroborated by facts, standing symbolically for the death of the Jewish nation, a death of disgrace and sorrow, or the desolation of Jerusalem, which covered a period of almost a hundred years. Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar in 599 B.C. (2 Kings 24: 10); Cyrus gave permission to rebuild the temple in 537 B.C. (Ezra 1: 2), the house being eventually finished in 515 B.C. (Ezra 6: 15). The Bible does not give us the history of the period from 515 B.C., and even if we are not allowed to conjecture that another fifteen years may have been taken by the Israelites to settle back in Jersualem and to rebuild the city itself for their own habitation, the period from 599 to 515 B.C. covers almost fully the whole of the sixth century B.C., and hence the hundred years of the prophet's death in this vision represent the hundred years of the death of the Israelite nation.

The reference to the food and drink of the prophet, which did not show any influence of years, and to his ass, which was still standing by, only proves that the hundred years' death which the prophet underwent was only a vision. The mention of the bones has been taken by some commentators to refer to the ass, but this is an obvious error, for the two statements are separated by a sentence: "And that We may make thee a sign to men"; and there is also a pause after the word ass, separating what follows from that which has preceded.

How was Ezekiel a sign to the people? Because the vision made him a symbol of the whole Jewish nation, and his symbolic death for a hundred years represented the sorrows and afflictions of Israel for a similar period, after which they were once more to be restored to life.

The word *yatasannah* (*sanah*, a *year*) means *the thing underwent the lapse of years*. The word applied to food and drink carries a similar significance, meaning *it became altered* (for the worse) *by the lapse of years* (LA, LL). Rz explains the lapse of years to be the real meaning of the word, for his explanation is *the years did not pass over it*. This shows that actually there was no lapse of years, and it is simply a vision.

349 This verse is a natural sequel to v. 258, which speaks of the manifestation of Allāh's power in the life and death of nations. Verse 259, as already noted, has been interposed to afford a proof of the assertion made in v. 258. In Gen. 15: 8 Abraham is made to say, after receiving a promise of the land of Canaan: "Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" The Quranic parallel to this is: "My Lord, show me how Thou givest life to the dead." He believed in

SECTION 36 : **Spending Money in the Cause of Truth**

261 The parable of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allāh[350] is as the parable of a grain growing seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains. And Allāh multiplies (further) for whom He pleases. And Allāh is Ample-giving, Knowing.[351]

مَثَلُ الَّذِيْنَ يُنْفِقُوْنَ اَمْوَالَهُمْ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ
اللّٰهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ اَنْۢبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ
فِيْ كُلِّ سُنْۢبُلَةٍ مِّائَةُ حَبَّةٍ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ
يُضٰعِفُ لِمَنْ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۲۶۱﴾

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the Divine promise, and was so sure of it that he had even contended with and overcome an adversary on this point. But was it not strange that out of his seed should arise a nation that should supplant the powerful nations that ruled the land ? The sign given to Abraham according to Gen. 15 : 9-11 is quite meaningless, not making it clear how Abraham's seed was to inherit the land. He is told to take "a heifer of three years old, a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon" ; he "divided them in the midst." "And when the fowls came down upon the carcases, Abraham drove them away." How this was a sign of Abraham inheriting the land of Canaan is a mystery. It only shows that the text here has been tampered with.

The answer to Abraham's *how* as given in the Qur'ān is a perfectly intelligible parable. If he should take four birds and tame them, they would obey his call and fly to him even from the distant mountains. If the birds, then, obey his call, he being neither their master nor the author of their existence, would not nations submit to the call of their Divine Master and the Author of their existence ? Or if the birds, being only tamed for a short time by a man who had otherwise no control over them, become so obedient to their tamer, has not Allāh the power to control all those causes which govern the life and death of nations ? Whenever He wishes to destroy a people He brings about the causes of their decline and evil fortune overtakes them ; and when He wishes to make a people prosperous He brings about causes which result in their rise and progress. That the word *ṭāir* (plural *ṭair* as used here) which signifies *a bird,* also signifies *the cause of good and evil,* or *misery* or *happiness* (T, LL), in which sense the word is used in 7 : 131 and elsewhere in the Holy Qur'ān, is a further indication of the significance of the parable of the *birds,* through which Abraham is made to realize how the Almighty controls the fortunes of nations. It is an error to suppose that Abraham actually took four birds and tamed them. The Qur'ān does not say so. It only makes Abraham realize the wonderful manifestation of Divine power by a parable.

The lexicologists are all agreed that the word *ṣur,* used here, is the imperative form of *ṣāra,* which means *he made it to incline* (LL), and *ṣur-hunna ilaika* means *amil-hunna,* or *make them incline, wa ajmi'-hunna, and gather them to thee* (LA). It is only in this sense that the word is followed by *ilā* as here. *Cutting into pieces* is not the significance of these words. Further, the words *place a part* (*juz'*) *of them* can only mean *one each of the four birds.* The commentators who introduce the story of *cutting the birds into pieces,* not traceable to any reliable authority, assert that the words *thumma qaṭṭi'-hunna* (then cut them into pieces) are omitted here after *ṣur hunna* or *tame them* which is absurd on the face of it.

350 The primary object of this and the following section in exhorting the faithful to spend money is the advancement of the cause of Islām, though other objects of charity are also included. The primary significance of the words *fī sabīl Allāh* (*in the way of Allāh*) is the cause of the Faith or the cause of Truth. This is made clear in 9 : 60, where *fī sabīl Allāh* is a head of expenditure in addition to helping the needy, etc.

351 The comparison of money spent in the cause of Truth to a grain yielding increase is to show : firstly, that the progress of Islām depended on the sacrifices

262 Those who spend their wealth in the way of Allāh, then follow not up what they have spent with reproach or injury, their reward is with their Lord, and they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve.[352]

الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ ثُمَّ لَا يُتْبِعُونَ مَا أَنْفَقُوا مَنًّا وَّلَا أَذًى لَّهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٢٦٢﴾

263 A kind word with forgiveness is better than charity followed by injury. And Allāh is Self-sufficient, Forbearing.

قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ وَّمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَّتْبَعُهَا أَذًى ۗ وَاللهُ غَنِيٌّ حَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٣﴾

264 O you who believe, make not your charity worthless by reproach and injury, like him who spends his wealth to be seen of men and believes not in Allāh and the Last Day.[353] So His parable is as the parable of a smooth rock with earth upon it, then heavy rain falls upon it, so it leaves it bare! They are not able to gain anything of that which they earn. And Allāh guides not the disbelieving people.[354]

يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوا لَا تُبْطِلُوا صَدَقٰتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذٰى ۙ كَالَّذِي يُنْفِقُ مَالَهٗ رِئَآءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ ۗ فَمَثَلُهٗ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ عَلَيْهِ تُرَابٌ فَأَصَابَهٗ وَابِلٌ فَتَرَكَهٗ صَلْدًا ۗ لَا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلٰى شَيْءٍ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا ۗ وَاللهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٦٤﴾

265 And the parable of those who spend their wealth to seek Allāh's pleasure and for the strengthening of

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمُ ابْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللهِ وَتَثْبِيتًا مِّنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ

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which the individual members of the community made; and secondly, that the expenditure of money must be accompanied with hard labour, as a seed cast on ground unaccompanied by any labour would not grow. It is noteworthy that while the Qur'ān represents the increase to be seven-hundredfold, even multiples of it, Jesus, in a similar parable — the parable of the sower — promises thirty, sixty or a hundredfold increase (Matt. 13:23; Mark 4:8).

352 *Mann* is originally *the conferring of a benefit* or *a favour* upon one (LL), and is so used in the Holy Qur'ān frequently; it also has a secondary meaning, i.e., *giving expression to the good done to anybody* (Rz), or, *reminding one of the favour done by way of reproach,* and this is the meaning here. *Adhā* signifies *harm* or *annoyance,* by speaking evilly of one or inflicting slight injury. Gifts, whether given in the cause of national or individual suffering, must not be accompanied by any interested motives; hence the donor is forbidden even to mention them afterwards.

353 The expression conveys a very strong disapproval of giving alms to be seen by men. It does not simply forbid the giving of alms "before men to be seen of them" (Matt. 6:1), but speaks of this as being the work of those "who believe not in Allāh and the Last Day," by which are meant the disbelievers, thus making it utterly hateful in the sight of true believers.

354 The concluding words of the parable show that the efforts of the disbelievers to deal a death-blow to Islām are meant here. They were spending their money to retard the advancement of Islām, but their efforts, they are told, would be fruitless; compare 8:36. The words *they are not able to gain anything of that which they have earned* leave no doubt as to its purport.

their souls is as the parable of a garden on elevated ground, upon which heavy rain falls, so it brings forth its fruit twofold; but if heavy rain falls not on it, light rain (suffices). And Allāh is Seer of what you do.[355]

جَنَّةٍ بِرَبْوَةٍ أَصَابَهَا وَابِلٌ فَآتَتْ أُكُلَهَا
ضِعْفَيْنِ فَإِن لَّمْ يُصِبْهَا وَابِلٌ فَطَلٌّ
وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٢٦٥﴾

266 Does one of you like to have a garden of palms and vines with streams flowing in it — he has therein all kinds of fruits — and old age has overtaken him and he has weak offspring; when (lo!) a whirlwind with fire in it smites it so it becomes blasted. Thus Allāh makes the messages clear to you that you may reflect.[356]

أَيَوَدُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَن تَكُونَ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ مِّن
نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا
الْأَنْهَارُ لَهُ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَ
أَصَابَهُ الْكِبَرُ وَلَهُ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضُعَفَاءُ فَأَصَابَهَا
إِعْصَارٌ فِيهِ نَارٌ فَاحْتَرَقَتْ كَذَٰلِكَ
يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٦٦﴾

SECTION 37 : **Spending in the Cause of Truth**

267 O you who believe, spend of the good things that you earn and of that which We bring forth for you out of the earth, and aim not at the bad to spend thereof, while you would not take it yourselves unless you connive at it. And know that Allāh is Self-sufficient, Praiseworthy.[357]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنفِقُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ
مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُم مِّنَ
الْأَرْضِ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا الْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ
تُنفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُم بِآخِذِيهِ إِلَّا أَن
تُغْمِضُوا فِيهِ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ ﴿٢٦٧﴾

355 This is the parable of the believers who will reap the fruits of the sacrifices they make. They are spoken of as spending *to seek Allāh's pleasure,* because all their efforts were for the upholding of truth, and *for the strengthening of their souls,* every act of self-sacrifice being due to their certainty of the ultimate triumph of the Truth, which in its turn gave them strength to make still greater sacrifices. The word *ṭall* means *slight rain,* or *dew.*

356 With great sacrifices during thirteen years at Makkah, the Muslims had built up a community to carry the message of the Truth to the world. But now when they had found a shelter at Madīnah and were making good progress, they were being attacked by an enemy who aimed at destroying them altogether. The Muslims were, therefore, now called upon to make still greater sacrifices to save the garden of Islām from being blasted, and to put their whole strength, their lives as well as their wealth, into the cause.

357 The Muslims are here enjoined to support the cause of Truth by spending good things, things which they love, and not to even think of giving bad things, things which they themselves would not accept from others. Elsewhere it is said: "You cannot attain righteousness unless you spend out of what you love" (3:91).

268 The devil threatens you with poverty and enjoins you to be niggardly,[357a] and Allāh promises you forgiveness from Himself and abundance. And Allāh is Ample-giving, Knowing:

اَلشَّيْطٰنُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَاْمُرُكُمْ بِالْفَحْشَآءِ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ يَعِدُكُمْ مَّغْفِرَةً مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلًا ۗ وَاللّٰهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٦٨﴾

269 He grants wisdom to whom He pleases. And whoever is granted wisdom, he indeed is given a great good. And none mind but men of understanding.

يُّؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُّؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ اُوْتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيْرًا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ اِلَّآ اُولُوا الْاَلْبَابِ ﴿٢٦٩﴾

270 And whatever alms you give or (whatever) vow you vow, Allāh surely knows it. And the wrongdoers shall have no helpers.

وَمَآ اَنْفَقْتُمْ مِّنْ نَّفَقَةٍ اَوْ نَذَرْتُمْ مِّنْ نَّذْرٍ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَعْلَمُهٗ ۗ وَمَا لِلظّٰلِمِيْنَ مِنْ اَنْصَارٍ ﴿٢٧٠﴾

271 If you manifest charity, how excellent it is! And if you hide it and give it to the poor, it is good for you.[358] And it will do away with some of your evil deeds; and Allāh is Aware of what you do.

اِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقٰتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ ۚ وَاِنْ تُخْفُوْهَا وَتُؤْتُوْهَا الْفُقَرَآءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنْكُمْ مِّنْ سَيِّاٰتِكُمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرٌ ﴿٢٧١﴾

272 Their guidance is not thy duty, but Allāh guides whom He pleases. And whatever good thing you spend, it is to your good. And you spend not but to seek Allāh's pleasure. And whatever good thing you spend, it will be paid back to you in full, and you will not be wronged.[359]

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدٰىهُمْ وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَهْدِيْ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوْا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِاَنْفُسِكُمْ ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوْنَ اِلَّا ابْتِغَآءَ وَجْهِ اللّٰهِ ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوْا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُّوَفَّ اِلَيْكُمْ وَاَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٢٧٢﴾

They are thus told that half-hearted support brings no good either to the cause or to the helper of the cause; what is required is that they should exert themselves to their utmost and support the cause whole-heartedly.

357a *Fahshā'* here signifies niggardliness or tenaciousness, being equivalent to *bukhl* (LL).

358 The *manifesting of charity* or *giving alms openly* is a thing quite different from giving them "to be seen of men", for which see v. 264. By the giving of charity openly is meant the giving of subscriptions for works of public utility or for national defence, or for the advancement of national or public welfare. The teaching of the Gospels (Matt. 6:1-4) lays all the stress upon private acts of charity, and makes no mention at all of subscriptions for works of public utility and for organized efforts for dealing with the poor, without which national growth is impossible. The rule laid down here takes into consideration the varying circumstances of human society and enjoins public as well as private acts of charity, mentioning public charity first, as that is of greater importance.

359 The opening words of the verse call attention to the special difficulties

273 (Charity) is for the poor who are confined in the way of Allāh,[360] they cannot go about in the land;[361] the ignorant man thinks them to be rich on account of (their) abstaining (from begging). Thou canst recognize them by their mark — they beg not of men importunately.[362] And whatever good thing you spend, surely Allāh is Knower of it.

لِلْفُقَرَآءِ الَّذِيْنَ اُحْصِرُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ لَا
يَسْتَطِيْعُوْنَ ضَرْبًا فِي الْاَرْضِ يَحْسَبُهُمُ
الْجَاهِلُ اَغْنِيَآءَ مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ تَعْرِفُهُمْ
بِسِيْمٰهُمْ لَا يَسْـَٔلُوْنَ النَّاسَ اِلْحَافًا وَمَا
تُنْفِقُوْا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِهٖ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٧٣﴾

SECTION 38 : **Usury Prohibited**

274 Those who spend their wealth by night and day, privately and publicly, their reward is with their Lord; and they have no fear, nor shall they grieve.[363]

اَلَّذِيْنَ يُنْفِقُوْنَ اَمْوَالَهُمْ بِالَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ
سِرًّا وَّعَلَانِيَةً فَلَهُمْ اَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ ﴿٢٧٤﴾

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of Muslim society, which was required to repel its enemies in the interests of its existence. It shows that the Muslims did not fight to bring the disbelievers into the fold of Islām; for that, the Prophet is told in plain words, was not his responsibility. It was for the good of their people, the defence of the Muslim community that the Muslims were required to raise subscriptions. Hence what they spent was for Allāh's pleasure, because it was in the cause of truth. In the concluding words they are assured that for these deeds of sacrifice they will be fully rewarded.

As regards private charity, reports mentioned under this verse show that Muslim charity was exercised not only for the welfare of their own co-religionists but also for that of the disbelievers and that Islām did not allow the difference of religion to be a hindrance to the bestowal of charity upon a deserving person.

360 The first qualification of those who deserve private charity is that they are *confined in the way of Allāh*. Among these are included: (1) Those who had to fight in defence of Islām, but had no means of livelihood; (2) those who could not go forth to trade because of the insecurity of the roads and the constant raids of the enemy; (3) those who were wounded in the fighting (Rz).

361 In translating *ḍarb-an fi-l-arḍ* as "*knocking about in the land*", Palmer has made a mistake. The unhappy similarity which he discovered between the colloquial English phrase "knock about", which means "to wander here and there in a rough, careless, and aimless way", and one of the significances of the Arabic word *ḍarb*, viz., *beating, striking*, or *smiting*, makes him draw the conclusion that the "language of the Qur'ān is really rude and rugged". He would have been nearer the mark if he had said *beating the land*. As a matter of fact, the phrase here used means *he journeyed in the land, seeking sustenance and for the purpose of traffic* (LL).

362 Here we have another qualification of those who deserve to be assisted by private acts of charity; these are the men who abstain from begging. This would show that the Holy Qur'ān does not countenance the practice of begging from door to door.

363 It is a prophetic assurance to the Muslims that if they made sacrifices for the national welfare, the fear of annihilation under which the Muslim community then lived would be dispelled, and they would not grieve for what they spent, as it would yield abundant fruit. This is, in fact, a prophecy of their final triumph over their enemies, for the party that is victorious in a struggle does not grieve for the sacrifices that it makes while the vanquished party does.

275 Those who swallow usury cannot arise except as he arises whom the devil prostrates by (his) touch.[364] That is because they say, Trading is only like usury. And Allāh has allowed trading and forbidden usury.[365] To whomsoever then the admonition has come from his Lord, and he desists, he shall have what has already passed.[366] And his affair is in the hands of Allāh. And whoever returns (to it) — these are the companions of the Fire : therein they will abide.

اَلَّذِيْنَ يَأْكُلُوْنَ الرِّبٰوا لَا يَقُوْمُوْنَ اِلَّا كَمَا
يَقُوْمُ الَّذِيْ يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطٰنُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ ؕ
ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ قَالُوْۤا اِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبٰوا ۘ
وَاَحَلَّ اللّٰهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبٰوا ؕ فَمَنْ
جَآءَهٗ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّهٖ فَانْتَهٰى فَلَهٗ
مَا سَلَفَ ؕ وَاَمْرُهٗۤ اِلَى اللّٰهِ ؕ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ
اَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ ۚ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿۲۷۵﴾

364 *Ribā* (literally, *an excess* or *addition*) means *an addition over and above the principal sum that is lent* (R, T, LL), and includes *usury* as well as *interest*. The subject is introduced here very appropriately, for as charity is the broad basis of human sympathy, usury annihilates all sympathetic affection and leads to the extreme of miserliness. Thus from one point of view the subject of usury stands in contrast with that of charity, while from another point of view the connection between these two subjects is, as pointed out in the two preceding sections and the verse with which this section opens, that, while the Muslims were promised great wealth and prosperity, they were warned against an inordinate desire for amassing wealth, to which usury would certainly have led them. Hence, those who devour usury are compared with those prostrated by the touch of the devil, which in this case stands for Mammon. The prohibition of usury in Islām is a very wide subject, and cannot be discussed within the limits of a footnote. But it may be noted in passing that Islām adopts the golden mean in all cases. It does not go to the extreme of the socialistic idea which aims at the annihilation of all distinction of property rights, but it establishes institutions which give the poor a certain proportion of the riches of the wealthier members of society. Such is the institution of *zakāt*, according to which one-fortieth of the amassed wealth of every member of society is taken yearly to be distributed among the poor. Hence *zakāt* is particularly spoken of in connection with this subject in v. 277. In perfect accordance with that institution, Islām refused to allow the rich to grow richer by reducing the poor to still greater poverty, which is the real aim of usury. Usury, moreover, promotes habits of idleness ; but its worst effect is on morals, as it causes man to be obsessed by love of wealth and selfishness ; and this is, in fact, what is meant by the devil prostrating a devourer of usury.

It may also be mentioned in this connection that while Islām enjoins acts of sacrifice to carry on the struggle for national existence, it prohibits usurious dealings which are the basis of modern warfare. All wars are now carried on with the help of loans, interest on which ultimately is a source of ruin to both the conquerors and the conquered. A just war, a war in self-defence, would always lead a community to acts of sacrifice to which they would be impelled in the interest of their own existence, while an aggressive war can only be carried on by heavy loans whose burden is not felt at the time but which ultimately crush the community.

365 The Qur'ān draws a distinction between trading and usury. In trade the capitalist takes the risk of loss along with the hope of profit, but in lending money on usury the whole of the loss is suffered by the man who uses his labour, while the capitalist may count upon his profit even in the case of loss in the

366, see next page.

276 Allāh will blot out usury, and He causes charity to prosper. And Allāh loves not any ungrateful sinner.[367]

يَمْحَقُ اللّٰهُ الرِّبٰوا وَيُرْبِي الصَّدَقٰتِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ اَثِيْمٍ ﴿۲۷۶﴾

277 Those who believe and do good deeds and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate — their reward is with their Lord; and they have no fear, nor shall they grieve.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ وَ اَقَامُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَ اٰتَوُا الزَّكٰوةَ لَهُمْ اَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ ﴿۲۷۷﴾

278 O you who believe, keep your duty to Allāh and relinquish what remains (due) from usury, if you are believers.[368]

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَذَرُوْا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبٰوۤا اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿۲۷۸﴾

279 But if you do (it) not, then be apprised of war from Allāh and His Messenger;[369] and if you repent, then you shall have your capital. Wrong not, and you shall not be wronged.[370]

فَاِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوْا فَاْذَنُوْا بِحَرْبٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ ۚ وَاِنْ تُبْتُمْ فَلَكُمْ رُءُوْسُ اَمْوَالِكُمْ ۚ لَا تَظْلِمُوْنَ وَلَا تُظْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۲۷۹﴾

280 And if (the debtor) is in straitness, let there be postponement till (he is in) ease. And that you remit (it) as alms is better for you, if you only knew.[371]

وَاِنْ كَانَ ذُوْ عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ اِلٰى مَيْسَرَةٍ ؕ وَاَنْ تَصَدَّقُوْا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۲۸۰﴾

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actual concern. Hence trading stands on quite a different footing from usury. It may be added that in the great struggle between capital and labour, Islām sides with labour. If labour does not bring profit, the capitalist should suffer along with the labourer.

366 Here is a prohibition to receive any interest on money lent, but if any one had actually received any interest before the prohibition he was not required to pay it back.

367 *Maḥaqa* signifies, *he took away the blessing thereof* or *he diminished it* (R). It also signifies the *blotting out* or *annihilating* of a thing. Usury is here condemned, while charitable deeds are commended as being the real source of the prosperity of a nation or of humanity in general. It is a prophetic reference to the general tendency in the growth of civilization to lessening rates of interest, so much so that usurious dealings, in the proper sense of the word, are becoming almost extinct, while the tendency for public charity or personal sacrifice in the interests of a community, or even humanity in general, is daily gaining ground.

368 The balance of interest which might be due at the time when the prohibition was made known must be given up.

369 Going directly against the commandments of Allāh is here described as a war with Allāh and His Messenger. So the money received as interest may be spent in the cause of Allāh and His Messenger or for the propagation of Islām, and thus from a war with Allāh and His Messenger it would be converted

370, 371, see next page.

281 And guard yourselves against a day in which you will be returned to Allāh. Then every soul will be paid in full what it has earned, and they will not be wronged.

وَاتَّقُوْا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُوْنَ فِيْهِ إِلَى اللّٰهِ ثُمَّ
تُوَفّٰى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۲۸۱﴾

SECTION 39 : **Contracts and Evidence**

282 O you who believe, when you contract a debt for a fixed time, write it down.[372] And let a scribe write it down between you with fairness; nor should the scribe refuse to write as Allāh has taught him, so let him write. And let him who owes the debt dictate, and he should observe his duty to Allāh, his Lord, and not diminish any thing from it. But if he who owes the debt is unsound in understanding or weak, or (if) he is not able to dictate himself, let his guardian dictate with fairness.[373] And call to witness from among your men two witnesses; but if there are not two men, then one man and two women[374] from among those whom you choose to be witnesses, so that if one of the two errs, the one may remind the other.[375] And the witnesses

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِذَا تَدَايَنْتُمْ بِدَيْنٍ
اِلٰٓى اَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَاكْتُبُوْهُ ؕ وَلْيَكْتُبْ
بَّيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌۢ بِالْعَدْلِ ۖ وَلَا يَاْبَ كَاتِبٌ
اَنْ يَّكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللّٰهُ فَلْيَكْتُبْ ۚ وَلْيُمْلِلِ
الَّذِىْ عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللّٰهَ رَبَّهٗ وَلَا
يَبْخَسْ مِنْهُ شَيْـًٔا ؕ فَاِنْ كَانَ الَّذِىْ عَلَيْهِ
الْحَقُّ سَفِيْهًا اَوْ ضَعِيْفًا اَوْ لَا يَسْتَطِيْعُ اَنْ
يُّمِلَّ هُوَ فَلْيُمْلِلْ وَلِيُّهٗ بِالْعَدْلِ ؕ
وَاسْتَشْهِدُوْا شَهِيْدَيْنِ مِنْ رِّجَالِكُمْ ۚ
فَاِنْ لَّمْ يَكُوْنَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَّامْرَاَتٰنِ
مِمَّنْ تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشُّهَدَآءِ اَنْ تَضِلَّ
اِحْدٰىهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ اِحْدٰىهُمَا الْاُخْرٰى ؕ

into a war for Allāh and His Messenger. In fact the Divine purpose in the prohibition of interest is fulfilled if interest is changed into charity.

370 The meaning is that the debtor shall not be made to pay more than the sum lent.

371 This indicates the kind of sympathy Islām demands, The poor man is not to be prosecuted and thrown into prison, and payment of debt must be postponed till the debtor is able to pay, or, better still, the whole may be remitted as charity.

372 The subject of usury, which is connected with the lending and borrowing of money and trading in general, brings us to the subject of contracts. If Islām enjoins charity and prohibits usury, it requires at the same time that the greatest precautions must be taken for safeguarding property rights. A noteworthy thing

373, 374, 375, see next page.

must not refuse when they are summoned. And be not averse to writing it whether it is small or large along with the time of its falling due. This is more equitable in the sight of Allāh and makes testimony surer and the best way to keep away from doubts. But when it is ready merchandise which you give and take among yourselves from hand to hand, there is no blame on you in not writing it down. And have witnesses when you sell one to another. And let no harm be done to the scribe or to the witnesses.[376] And if you do (it), then surely it is a transgression on your part. And keep your duty to Allāh. And Allāh teaches you. And Allāh is Knower of all things.

وَلَا يَأْبَ الشُّهَدَآءُ اِذَا مَا دُعُوْا ؕ وَلَا
تَسْـَٔمُوْۤا اَنْ تَكْتُبُوْهُ صَغِيْرًا اَوْ كَبِيْرًا اِلٰۤى
اَجَلِهٖ ؕ ذٰلِكُمْ اَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ وَاَقْوَمُ لِلشَّهَادَةِ
وَاَدْنٰۤى اَلَّا تَرْتَابُوْۤا اِلَّاۤ اَنْ تَكُوْنَ تِجَارَةً
حَاضِرَةً تُدِيْرُوْنَهَا بَيْنَكُمْ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ
جُنَاحٌ اَلَّا تَكْتُبُوْهَا ؕ وَاَشْهِدُوْۤا اِذَا تَبَايَعْتُمْ
وَلَا يُضَآرَّ كَاتِبٌ وَّلَا شَهِيْدٌ ؕ وَاِنْ
تَفْعَلُوْا فَاِنَّهٗ فُسُوْقٌ بِكُمْ ؕ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ؕ
وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ اللّٰهُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَیْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۲۸۲﴾

283 And if you are on a journey and you cannot find a scribe, a security may be taken into possession.[377] But if one of you trusts another, then he who is trusted should deliver his trust, and let him keep his duty to Allāh, his Lord. And conceal not testimony. And whoever conceals it, his heart is surely sinful. And Allāh is Knower of what you do.

وَاِنْ كُنْتُمْ عَلٰى سَفَرٍ وَّلَمْ تَجِدُوْا كَاتِبًا
فَرِهٰنٌ مَّقْبُوْضَةٌ ؕ فَاِنْ اَمِنَ بَعْضُكُمْ
بَعْضًا فَلْيُؤَدِّ الَّذِى اؤْتُمِنَ اَمَانَتَهٗ وَلْيَتَّقِ
اللّٰهَ رَبَّهٗ ؕ وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ ؕ وَمَنْ
يَّكْتُمْهَا فَاِنَّهٗۤ اٰثِمٌ قَلْبُهٗ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا
تَعْمَلُوْنَ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۲۸۳﴾

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about this is that the Arabs were quite an ignorant people, among whom writing was very rare. Even then they were required to put down all their transactions, great or small, in writing, except in hand-to-hand dealings.

373 These words form the basis of the guardian and ward law, as they point out when a guardian may be appointed for one who is not able to manage his own property. The word which I have translated as *weak* really signifies *one too young* (i.e. a minor) or *one too old* (Bd). Thus a guardian may be appointed not only when the owner is a minor, but also when his understanding is not sound on account of age or any other reason.

374 As women did not take much part in business, and were therefore unable to understand the transaction, two women are required instead of one man.

375 The personal pronoun *humā* may refer either to the testimony of the

376, 377, see next page.

SECTION 40 : **Muslims shall be made Victorious**

284 To Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. And whether you manifest what is in your minds or hide it, Allāh will call you to account according to it. So He forgives whom He pleases and chastises whom He pleases. And Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.[378]

لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ؕ وَاِنْ تُبْدُوْا مَا فِيْۤ اَنْفُسِكُمْ اَوْ تُخْفُوْهُ يُحَاسِبْكُمْ بِهِ اللّٰهُ ؕ فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿۲۸۴﴾

285 The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. They all believe in Allāh and His angels and His Books and His messengers. We make no difference between any of His messengers.[379] And they say: We hear and obey; our Lord, Thy forgiveness (do we crave), and to Thee is the eventual course.

اٰمَنَ الرَّسُوْلُ بِمَاۤ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَّبِّهٖ وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ؕ كُلٌّ اٰمَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتِهٖ وَكُتُبِهٖ وَرُسُلِهٖ ۟ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ مِّنْ رُّسُلِهٖ ۟ وَقَالُوْا سَمِعْنَا وَاَطَعْنَا ۟ غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَاِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿۲۸۵﴾

286 Allāh imposes not on any soul a duty beyond its scope. For it is that which it earns (of good) and against it that which it works (of evil). Our

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسًا اِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ؕ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ ؕ رَبَّنَا لَا

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two witnesses or *the two women*. *Reminding* here stands for *making up* the deficiency of the other's memory.

The Holy Qur'ān does not say that no case should be decided except on the testimony of two witnesses, but requires ordinarily the calling of two witnesses at the time of the transaction, so that the deficiency of one may be rectified by the other. Cases may be decided on circumstantial evidence as well, which is sometimes stronger than the evidence of witnesses. The Holy Qur'ān itself speaks of Joseph's innocence being established on circumstantial evidence (12:26, 27).

376 They must not be made to suffer loss in their own business. In other words, their convenience must be kept in view, and they should be paid.

377 This does not mean that a security cannot be taken in any other case. On the other hand, the words that follow show that security may be taken when the lender does not trust the debtor.

It further shows that advantage can be derived by the lender from the movable or immovable property which has been given into his possession as a security for the debt. Thus land mortgaged for a debt may be cultivated, or house-property may be rented or used. This is made clear in a saying of the Prophet: The mortgaged animal may be used for riding, when it is mortgaged, on account of what is spent on it, and the milk of a milch animal may be drunk when it is mortgaged, and the expenditure shall be borne by him who rides (the animal) and drinks the milk" (B. 48:4).

378 This verse has generally been misunderstood. It does not signify "Allāh will call you to account for it", but that "He will call you to account

379, see next page.

Lord, punish us not if we forget or make a mistake. Our Lord, do not lay on us a burden as Thou didst lay on those before us. Our Lord, impose not on us (afflictions) which we have not the strength to bear. And pardon us! And grant us protection! And have mercy on us! Thou art our Patron, so grant us victory over the disbelieving people.[380]

تُؤَاخِذْنَآ إِنْ نَّسِينَآ أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا
وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَآ إِصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهٗ
عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا
مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهٖ ۚ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا ۛ
وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ۛ وَارْحَمْنَا ۛ أَنْتَ مَوْلٰىنَا
فَانْصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿٢٨٦﴾

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according to it"; so that he who hides (i.e. keeps under control) his evil inclinations and he who manifests (i.e. gives vent to them) shall not be dealt with in the same manner, but according to their deserts. Almost the same statement is contained in 3:28, where it is said: "Say, whether you hide what is in your breasts or manifest it, Allāh knows it". Evil thoughts are not unpunishable; but evil inclinations which a man keeps suppressed, and which therefore gradually disappear, cannot be included in the category of evil thoughts; it is these that are meant here.

379 The breadth of the Muslim faith, which has been dealt with on several occasions in this chapter, is again mentioned in reference to the triumph of the Muslims; for even if the Muslims were triumphant, their religion could not triumph over other religions unless established on very broad principles which should commend themselves to all. The triumph of the Muslim religion, it is hinted, would not be due to political supremacy but to the excellence and breadth of its principles. Hence, even in these days of Muslim political decadence, Islām is making spiritual conquests. This is no doubt due to the breadth of its principles.

380 Some of the words in which these prayers are addressed require to be explained. *Iṣr* means *a burden which restrains one from motion*, and, therefore, *the burden of sin*, as sin hampers the spiritual progress of man and restrains him from advancing spiritually. *U'fu* is from *'afw*, which means *effacing* or *obliteration* (R), and generally indicates the effacing or pardoning of sins. *Ighfir* is from *ghafr*, which means *covering with that which protects* a thing *from dirt* (R). In religious terminology, the word *ghafr* is used, as Barmāwī explains in *Qasṭalānī* (commentary of *Bukhārī*), as meaning *protection* which, he says, is of two kinds, *protecting man from the commission of sin* or *protecting him from the punishment of a sin that he has committed*. This is in accordance with what is said in the *Nihāyah* where the Divine attributes *Ghāfir* and *Ghafūr* are explained as meaning *One Who protects men from the commission of sins and faults* and *One Who passes over their sins and faults — Al-Sātiru li-dhunūbi 'ibādi-hī wa 'uyūbi-him al-mutajāwizu 'an khaṭāyā-hum wa dhunūbi-him.*

It may be noted here that as a preliminary to the prayer for *victory over the disbelievers*, there is one set of three petitions in the first part of the verse and another set of three petitions in the second part. The first three petitions made to God are *punish us not, lay not on us the burden of sins, impose not on us afflictions which we have not the strength to bear.* Corresponding to these three petitions respectively are the three petitions in the second part, *pardon us, grant us protection, have mercy on us.* Thus corresponding to the desire to be saved from punishment is the petition that God may pardon His servant whatever faults he has committed; corresponding to the desire that one may not be burdened with sins is the petition that one may be granted protection from the commission of sins; and corresponding to the desire to be saved from afflictions which one has not the strength to bear is the petition for the mercy of God.

It is further necessary to remember that the two words *'afw* and *ghafr* and their derivatives, and the two corresponding Divine attributes *'Ufuww* and *Ghafūr*, are of very frequent occurrence in the Holy Qur'ān, and they are generally

taken as meaning *pardoning* and *forgiving,* but there is really a fine distinction between the significance of the two, as pointed out above. And when the two words are used together as here, *'afw* always implies the pardoning of sins so that one may be saved from the punishment which the commission of sin brings and *ghafr* protection from the commission of sin. *Istighfār* is thus really a prayer for sinlessness.

This, the concluding prayer of this chapter, is given very great importance in the Prophet's sayings. According to one ḥadīth, "whoever prays as taught in the last two verses of the *Baqarah,* they are sufficient for him" (B. 64:12).

It is noteworthy that if the Muslims are taught to pray for victory over disbelievers, they are at the same time taught to be humble and forgiving. What a spirit of humility does the Holy Word breathe even in the hour of triumph! The aspiration of the soul to be led to the promised victory is still subjected to the holier yearnings of the soul.

The end of the chapter shows that the triumph of Islām is its real object, and this is plainly outlined in the opening and closing sections of the chapter.

(٣) سُوۡرَةُ اٰلِ عِمۡرٰنَ مَدَنِيَّةٌ

CHAPTER 3

Āl 'Imrān : THE FAMILY OF AMRAN

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH : 20 sections ; 199 verses)

The name of this chapter is taken from the mention of *'Imrān* in v. 32. *'Imrān* is the same as Amran, the father of Moses and Aaron. It is an appropriate title as the chapter deals with the departure of prophethood from the Mosaic dispensation.

The chapter opens with a statement relating to the Divine origin of the Holy Qur'ān as well as the Torah and the Gospel. It then gives a rule of interpretation, neglect of which has led to numerous errors in religious beliefs. This rule of interpretation, which must be borne in mind in interpreting all Divine books, is that every allegorical statement must be interpreted in such a manner that it may not contradict any of the clear principles laid down by Divine revelation. As the Christian religion is based really on the wrong interpretation of certain allegorical statements, the rule is appropriately laid down as a preliminary to a discussion of the Christian religion.

The preliminary remarks of the first section are followed in the second by an assertion of the Unity of Allāh, which is laid down as the clear basis of all religions, and its ultimate triumph is predicted. The third section refers to the departure from the house of Israel of the spiritual kingdom which was now being granted to another people ; and the last chosen members of the Israelite race are mentioned in the fourth. Among these is Jesus, various misconceptions regarding whom necessitate rather a lengthy discussion in the two sections that follow. The seventh section continues the controversy with the Jews and the Christians, while the eighth deals with their machinations to discredit Islām. The ninth speaks of the testimony of previous Books and prophets to the truth of Islām, while the tenth mentions the overwhelming testimony afforded by the Ka'bah, the new spiritual centre of the world. This is followed by an exhortation in the following section to the Muslims to remain united if they would achieve triumph, and in view of the coming conflicts they are told in the next to have guarded relations with the Jews, who, while outwardly friendly, were inwardly hostile to the Muslims. The incidents of the battle of Uḥud, the causes of the misfortune experienced in it, and how triumph can be obtained are the points discussed from section thirteen to the eighteenth. The nineteenth speaks of the carpings of the People of the Book, while the twentieth deals with the ultimate triumph of the faithful.

The importance of the connection of this with the preceding chapter may be judged from the fact that, taken together, they are termed *zahrāwān* (meaning *the two bright and shining ones*). The two, in fact, may be treated as a single chapter, as each supplements and explains the other. The 2nd chapter opens with a controversy with the Jews, and deals at length with their contentions, referring only briefly to the Christians. The 3rd chapter opens with a controversy with the Christians, and deals at length with their contentions, referring only briefly to the Jews. Again, the second chapter deals particularly with the necessity of fighting against an enemy who was bent upon the extirpation of Islām, while the third deals with the events of one of the battles which the enemy waged with a view to wipe out Islām by destroying its stronghold in Madīnah.

The whole of this chapter was revealed at Madīnah and it is generally supposed to be the second or the third in order in the Madīnah revelation (Itq). The latter

SECTION 1 **Rule of Interpretation.**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 I, Allāh, am the best Knower,[380a]

الٓمّٓ ۝

2 Allāh, (there is) no god but He, the Ever-living, the Self-subsisting, by Whom all subsist.[381]

اللّٰهُ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ ۝

3 He has revealed to thee the Book with truth,[382] verifying that which is before it, and He revealed the Torah and the Gospel[383] aforetime, a guidance for the people,[384] and He sent the Discrimination.[385] Those who disbelieve in the messages of Allāh—for them is a severe chastisement. And Allāh is Mighty, the Lord of retribution.[386]

نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَاَنْزَلَ التَّوْرٰىةَ وَالْاِنْجِيْلَ ۝ مِنْ قَبْلُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَاَنْزَلَ الْفُرْقَانَ ۝ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيْدٌ وَاللّٰهُ عَزِيْزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ ۝

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portion, from sec. 13 almost to the end, distinctly relates the incidents of the battle of Uḥud, and therefore the third year of the Hijrah may be fixed as the date of its revelation. The first portion, especially that dealing with the birth and ministry of Jesus, is said by some to have been revealed on the occasion of the visit of a deputation of the Najrān Christians which took place in the tenth year of the Hijrah, but there is no evidence for it. The whole chapter belongs to the third year of the Hijrah, with the possible exception of v. 60 which speaks of *Mubāhalah*, and may have been revealed on the occasion of the visit of the Najrān deputation.

380a For explanation, see 11.

381 In consonance with its character as controverting Christian doctrines, this controversy being carried on to the 83rd verse, the chapter fitly opens with two attributes of the Divine Being, the Ever-living and the Self-subsisting, which deal a death-blow to the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus Christ. The statement that there is *no god but He* contains an ideal expression of the religion of Islām in four words.

382 For the sake of simplicity I render *ḥaqq* as meaning *truth*, but *ḥaqq* primarily signifies *suitableness to the requirements of wisdom, justice, right, truth*, or *fact*; or *to the exigencies of the case* (R, LL). Hence the true sense of the phrase is that the Qur'ān was revealed suitably to the requirements of wisdom and justice, and to the exigencies of the case; in other words, it was revealed at a time when revelation was sorely needed by humanity. This argument of its truth is one which even the most hostile critic is unable to refute. To say nothing of earlier religions, Christianity, which was then the latest phase of monotheism, was corrupt to the core. "The Christianity of the seventh century," says Muir, "was itself decrepit and corrupt. It was disabled by contending schisms, and had substituted the puerilities of superstition for the pure expansive faith of early ages" ("Life of Mohamet," intr., p. lxxxiii).

383, 384, 385, 386, see next page.

4 Surely nothing in the earth or in the heaven is hidden from Allāh.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ۝

5 He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He pleases. There is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise.

هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ ۚ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝

The commentators explain *bi-l-ḥaqq* as signifying the *pointing out of the right way in the differences which existed before it, or as giving a correct account of the past histories of the prophets,* or as *being true with respect to the promises and threats relating to the future, and thus making believers stick to the right path* (Rz). Some commentators explain it as meaning *with arguments and proof* (AH).

383 In the whole of the previous chapter the *Taurāt* and the *Injīl* are not mentioned by name, though frequently referred to, specially the former, as *that which is with you. Taurāt* is the name given to the books of Moses, or the Pentateuch, and hence its correct rendering is the Hebrew word *Torah.* The *Taurāt* does not signify the Old Testament, because the latter is the name of the whole collection of the books of the Israelite prophets. *Torah* in Hebrew literature signifies *the revealed will of God.* The word *Kitāb,* Book, conveys, however, a wider significance and means sometimes the Old Testament and sometimes the Bible.

The word *Injīl* does not signify, as supposed by Muir and others, the New Testament. According to the Holy Qur'ān no prophet, to whom any book was revealed, appeared after Jesus Christ, who, being the last of the Israelite prophets, was granted a revelation called the *Injīl,* which stands for the Evangel or the Gospel, and signifies literally *good tidings.* The reason why Jesus's revelation was called *Gospel,* or *good tidings,* is that it gave the glad news of the advent of the last of the prophets, which is variously described in Jesus's metaphorical language as the advent of the kingdom of God (Mark. 1:15), the coming of the Lord (Matt. 21:40), the appearance of the Comforter (John 14:16), or the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17), etc. Not only are the Acts, the Epistles, and the Book of Revelation not recognized by the Qur'ān as parts of the *Injīl,* or the Gospel, but it does not even recognize the Gospels according to Matthew, etc., as the *Injīl* which was revealed to Jesus Christ, though the current Gospels might contain fragments of the original teaching. This view of the Gospel as taken by the Qur'ān is now admitted to be the correct one, as all criticism points to some original of the synoptics which is now entirely lost. The Qur'ān nowhere suggests that the original *Injīl,* the revelation to Jesus Christ, existed at the time of the Holy Prophet.

384 The Torah and the Gospel were undoubtedly a guidance before the Qur'ān; but even as they now exist, they afford guidance in many respects with a mixture of error, and contain numerous prophecies fulfilled in the advent of Prophet Muḥammad.

385 For an explanation of the word *Furqān,* see 85. The Holy Qur'ān is here mentioned by the name *Furqān,* or that which distinguishes between truth and falsehood, in reference to the fact that the Qur'ān was sent to separate the truth which was to be met with in previous revelation from the falsehood which had found its way in to it. As the *Furqān* or the Discrimination in the case of the Holy Prophet was also afforded by the battle of Badr, this event is referred to in verse 12 as a prelude to the actual controversy.

386 *Intiqām* is derived from *niqmah,* which means *the retribution of one who is guilty* (R, T). It conveys the idea of *avenging* but not of revenge; *intaqamtu minhu* signifies *I inflicted penal retribution on him for that which he had done,* or *I punished him* (LL). *Dhu-ntiqām,* as an attribute of the *Divine Being,* means the Inflicter of retribution or the Lord of retribution.

6 He it is Who has revealed the Book to thee; some of its verses are decisive — they are the basis of the Book — and others are allegorical.[387] Then those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part of it which is allegorical, seeking to mislead, and seeking to give it (their own) interpretation.[388] And none knows its interpretation save Allāh, and those firmly rooted in knowledge. They say: We believe in it, it is all from our Lord.[389] And none mind except men of understanding.

هُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ مِنْهُ
اٰيٰتٌ مُّحْكَمٰتٌ هُنَّ اُمُّ الْكِتٰبِ وَ اُخَرُ
مُتَشٰبِهٰتٌ ۭ فَاَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ
فَيَتَّبِعُوْنَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاۗءَ الْفِتْنَةِ
وَ ابْتِغَاۗءَ تَاْوِيْلِهٖ ڝ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَاْوِيْلَهٗٓ اِلَّا
اللّٰهُ ۘ وَ الرّٰسِخُوْنَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُوْلُوْنَ اٰمَنَّا
بِهٖ ۙ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا ۚ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ
اِلَّآ اُولُوا الْاَلْبَابِ ○

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387 The verses of the Holy Book are here stated to be partly *muḥkam* (decisive) and partly *mutashābih* (allegorical). In 11:1 the whole Qur'ān is spoken of as a **Book whose verses are made plain**, and in 39:23 it is called *kitāb-an mutashābih-an, a book, consistent in its injunctions.* A little consideration will show that there is no discrepancy in the three statements; they actually explain each other. Literally, *muḥkam* (from *ḥakama,* meaning *he prevented,* whence *aḥkama,* i.e., *he made a thing firm* or *stable*) is *that of which the meaning is secured from change and alteration. Mutashābih* (from *shibh,* meaning *likeness* or *resemblance*) is that *which is consimilar* or *conformable in its various parts,* and *mutashābihāt* are therefore *things like* or *resembling one another,* hence *susceptible to different interpretations* (LL). Therefore when it is stated that the whole of the Book is *muḥkam,* the meaning is that all its verses are decisive, and when the Qur'ān is called *mutashābih* (39:23), the meaning is that the whole of it is *conformable in its various parts.* In the verse under discussion is laid down the important principle how verses susceptible of different interpretations may be interpreted so that a decisive significance may be attached to them. The Qur'ān, we are here told, establishes certain principles in clear words which are to be taken as the basis, while there are statements made in allegorical words or susceptible to different meanings, the interpretation of which must be in consonance with the other parts and the spirit of the Book. In fact, this is true of every writing. When a certain law is laid down in a book in unmistakable words, any statement carrying a doubtful significance or one which is apparently opposed to the law so laid down must be interpreted subject to the principle enunciated. The subject is very appropriately dealt with here as a prelude to a controversy with the Christians, who attribute divinity to Jesus and uphold the doctrine of atonement by blood on the basis of certain ambiguous words or allegorical statements, without heeding the fundamental principles established by the earlier prophets.

388 The *fitnah* is the *misleading* of the people (T, LL), or *the sowing of dissension,* or *difference of opinion* (Q, LL), by giving to one part an interpretation which is falsified by another. *Ta'wīl* (from *aul, to return*) is *the final sequel* or *the end* of a thing, or *the interpretation* of what is ambiguous or allegorical, such as the interpretation of dreams, etc. Kf explains *ta'wīla-hū* here as meaning *the interpretation which they desire,* and this, according to AH, is the significance; hence the addition in the translation of the words *their own* within brackets. They do not care to seek the real interpretation, which can only be found by referring to the principles laid down elsewhere. But the words may also signify their giving an interpretation to an ambiguous verse *alone,* i.e. without con-

389, see next page.

7 Our Lord, make not our hearts to deviate after Thou hast guided us and grant us mercy from Thee; surely Thou art the most liberal Giver.

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ ○

8 Our Lord, surely Thou art the Gatherer of men on a day about which there is no doubt. Surely Allāh will not fail in (His) promise.[391]

رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ جَامِعُ النَّاسِ لِيَوْمٍ لَّا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ ○

SECTION 2: **Unity the Basis of all Religions**

9 Those who disbelieve, neither their wealth nor their children will avail them aught against Allāh. And they will be fuel for fire—[392]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ شَيْئًا ۖ وَأُولٰئِكَ هُمْ وَقُودُ النَّارِ ○

10 As was the case of the people of Pharoah, and those before them! They rejected Our messages, so Allāh destroyed them on account of their sins.[393] And Allāh is Severe in requiting (evil).

كَدَأْبِ اٰلِ فِرْعَوْنَ ۙ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَذَّبُوا بِاٰيٰتِنَا ۚ فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللّٰهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ○

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sidering it in conjunction with other consimilar verses or the principles laid down elsewhere.

389 These words afford a clue to the right mode of interpretation. The words *it is all from our Lord* signify that there is no disagreement between the various portions of the Holy Book. Hence the rule of interpretation which they follow is that they refer passages which are susceptible to various interpretations to those whose meaning is obvious or to consimilar passages, and subject particular statements to general principles. Thus reading various passages in the light of each other, they discover the true significance of ambiguous passages. Hence such people are spoken of as *knowing* the true interpretation of allegorical verses (B. 65: iii, 2).

391 There seems to be a reference here to the gathering of the hostile forces in the battles and to Allāh's promise to grant victory to the faithful. The verses that follow leave no doubt; see particularly v. 11.

392 Vv. 9-11 contain a clear prophecy of the vanquishment of the opponents of the Prophet. Though the Quraish had suffered a crushing defeat in the battle of Badr, they could yet muster heavy forces against the Muslims, who were few in numbers. The Muslims were still too weak and in danger of being annihilated by their opponents. They were actually attacked twice again, once in the battle of Uḥud and again in the battle of the Confederates, with heavy forces which would have crushed the Muslims if they had not received Divine help.

393 *Dhanb* is originally *the taking the tail of a thing, and it is applied to every act of which the consequence is disagreeable* or *unwholesome* (R). According to LL, *dhanb* means *a sin, a crime, a fault, a transgression,* or *an act of disobedience*. It is said to differ from *ithm* in being either intentional or committed through inadvertence, whereas *ithm* is particularly intentional (LL). It will thus be seen that *dhanb* is a word which carries a wide significance, and is applicable

11 Say to those who disbelieve: You shall be vanquished, and driven together to hell; and evil is the resting-place.[394]

قُلْ لِّلَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا سَتُغْلَبُوْنَ وَتُحْشَرُوْنَ
اِلٰى جَهَنَّمَ ۭ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ ○

12 Indeed there was a sign for you in the two hosts (which) met together in encounter — one party fighting in the way of Allāh and the other disbelieving, whom they saw twice as many as themselves with the sight of the eye.[395] And Allāh strengthens with His aid whom He pleases. There is a lesson in this for those who have eyes.

قَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ اٰيَةٌ فِىْ فِئَتَيْنِ الْتَقَتَا ۭ
فِئَةٌ تُقَاتِلُ فِىْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَاُخْرٰى
كَافِرَةٌ يَّرَوْنَهُمْ مِّثْلَيْهِمْ رَاْيَ الْعَيْنِ ۭ
وَاللّٰهُ يُؤَيِّدُ بِنَصْرِهٖ مَنْ يَّشَاۗءُ ۭ اِنَّ
فِىْ ذٰلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّاُولِى الْاَبْصَارِ ○

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to *all shortcomings resulting from inattention, incapacity,* or *perversity,* and even to *defects* or *imperfections of which the result may be disagreeable.* It covers all shades of shortcomings, from the grossest transgressions of the wicked to those defects and imperfections of which even the righteous cannot be free.

394 This is one of the passages in which the punishment of this life, which is *vanquishment,* is spoken of in the same breath with the punishment of the Hereafter, which is *hell.*

395 The reference here is to the battle of Badr. The meaning is that the Muslims saw the disbelievers to be twice as many as themselves. The statement does not contradict that made in 8:44: "And when He showed them to you, when you met, as few in your eyes, and He made you to appear little in their eyes". The actual strength of the two parties was: Quraish about 1,000, Muslims 313. The statement made in this verse is that the Muslims saw the disbelievers to be twice as many as themselves. Therefore they were still fewer in the eyes of the Muslims as compared with their actual strength, and this is what is stated in 8:44. As to why they were shown to the Muslims to be twice as many as themselves, 8:66 helps us to understand: "If there are a hundred patient ones of you, they shall overcome two hundred, and if there are a thousand, they shall overcome two thousand". The part of the enemy not seen by the Muslims was behind a hillock.

The battle of Badr is here stated to be a sign of the truth of the Prophet, not only because of the prophecies of victory contained in the Qur'ān, but also because of the clear prophecy in Isaiah, where, after speaking of a future scene in the land of Arabia (Isa. 21:13), the Prophet goes on to say: "The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him that fled. For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword and from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war. For thus hath the Lord said unto me, Within a year, according to the years of an hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail. And the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished" (Isa. 21:14-17). Kedar was the son of Ishmael (Gen. 25:13), and the word is used freely in the Bible for the Arab tribe that sprang from him (Ps. 120:5; Isa. 42:11; 60:7, etc.). There is only one person in history whose flight has become a memorable fact as the beginning of an Era. It was Muḥammad (on whom be peace), who, attended by one faithful companion, fled from the drawn swords of the guard that surrounded his house, and it was after one year from his Flight that the glory of Kedar departed in the battle of Badr which took place in the second year of the Flight. The battle of Badr was thus a sign for the Jews and the Christians as well because of the fulfilment of prophecies in the Bible. The second year after the Flight had not yet come to a close when the power of Kedar was broken at Badr.

13 Fair-seeming to men is made the love of desires, of women and sons and hoarded treasures of gold and silver and well-bred horses and cattle and tilth. This is the provision of the life of this world. And Allāh — with Him is the good goal (of life).[396]

زُيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوٰتِ مِنَ النِّسَآءِ
وَالْبَنِيْنَ وَالْقَنَاطِيْرِ الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ مِنَ
الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ
وَالْاَنْعَامِ وَالْحَرْثِ ؕ ذٰلِكَ مَتَاعُ
الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَاللّٰهُ عِنْدَهٗ حُسْنُ الْمَاٰبِ ۝

14 Say: Shall I tell you of what is better than these? For those who guard against evil are Gardens with their Lord, in which rivers flow, to abide in them, and pure companions and Allāh's goodly pleasure.[397] And Allāh is Seer of the servants.

قُلْ اَؤُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْ ذٰلِكُمْ ؕ لِلَّذِيْنَ
اتَّقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنّٰتٌ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا
الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا وَاَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَّ
رِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ بَصِيْرٌۢ بِالْعِبَادِ ۝

15 Those who say: Our Lord, we believe, so forgive our sins and save us from the chastisement of the fire.

اَلَّذِيْنَ يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَآ اِنَّنَآ اٰمَنَّا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا
ذُنُوْبَنَا وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ۝

16 The patient and the truthful, and the obedient, and those who spend and those who ask Divine protection in the morning times.[397a]

اَلصّٰبِرِيْنَ وَالصّٰدِقِيْنَ وَالْقٰنِتِيْنَ وَ
الْمُنْفِقِيْنَ وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِيْنَ بِالْاَسْحَارِ ۝

17 Allāh bears witness that there is no god but He, and (so do) the angels and those possessed of knowledge,[398] maintaining justice.[399] There is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise.

شَهِدَ اللّٰهُ اَنَّهٗ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۙ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ
وَاُولُوا الْعِلْمِ قَآئِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ ؕ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا
هُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ؕ ۝

396 This verse contrasts the yearnings of the men of the world with those of the faithful. We are here told that, though the enjoyments of this life have their attractions, yet the desire to be with Allāh is the goal which the true believer sets before himself. It is by "hoarded treasures of gold and silver" that the Christian nations have been led away from God.

397 For the companions in paradise see 42. Of the blessings of paradise is Allāh's goodly pleasure, which is elsewhere said to be the greatest of all the blessings of paradise (9:72). The addition of this word here shows that the blessings of paradise are spiritual.

397a For the meaning of *istighfār*, see 380. As shown there *istighfār* is really a prayer to attain to sinlessness. That this is the real significance is shown by its use here. The righteous servants of God are here spoken of as possessing the great qualifications of steadfastness, truthfulness, obedience to God, spending in Allāh's way, and finally as *mustaghfirīn* or resorting to *istighfār*, which shows that it is one of the highest stages to which the spiritual pilgrim aspires.

398 Allāh bears witness to His Unity through nature, which is His handiwork, and also by His word made known through revelation. The angels bear witness by their working within man, whose nature bears testimony to Divine Unity

399, see next page.

18 Surely the (true) religion with Allāh is Islām.[400] And those who were given the Book differed only after knowledge had come to them, out of envy among themselves. And whoever disbelieves in the messages of Allāh — Allāh indeed is Quick at reckoning.

إِنَّ الدِّيْنَ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ الْإِسْلَامُ ۗ وَمَا
اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِيْنَ أُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ إِلَّا مِنْۢ بَعْدِ
مَا جَآءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يَّكْفُرْ
بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَرِيْعُ الْحِسَابِ ○

19 But if they dispute with thee say: I submit myself entirely to Allāh and (so does) he who follows me. And say to those who have been given the Book and the Unlearned (people): Do you submit yourselves?[401] If they submit, then indeed they follow the right way; and if they turn back, thy duty is only to deliver the message. And Allāh is Seer of the servants.

فَإِنْ حَآجُّوْكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلّٰهِ وَ
مَنِ اتَّبَعَنِ ۗ وَقُلْ لِّلَّذِيْنَ أُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ
وَالْأُمِّيّٖنَ ءَأَسْلَمْتُمْ ۗ فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوْا فَقَدِ
اهْتَدَوْا ۚ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلٰغُ ۗ
وَاللّٰهُ بَصِيْرٌۢ بِالْعِبَادِ ○

Those who have a true knowledge of the holy scriptures of any religion also bear testimony to the great truth of the Unity of Allāh. The Unity of Allāh is, in fact, the common principle which is recognized by all religions. Thus the whole creation, the nature of man, and the broad and common principles of all religions are all at one in declaring the Divine Unity, whereas the Trinity of the Christian faith is but a solitary doctrine which does not find any support either in physical nature or in the nature of man or in the religion of humanity.

399 The words *maintaining justice* may qualify Allāh as being the true Maintainer of justice. But considering what is said in the next verse as to the injustice of those to whom knowledge was given, it is more likely that the words qualify *those possessed of knowledge,* the meaning being that every possessor of knowledge, to whatever religion he may belong, bears witness to the grand truth of Divine Unity if he maintains justice in bearing witness.

400 An explanation of what Islām is has already been given in 156. According to the Holy Qur'ān, *Islām* was the religion of all the prophets. It is particularly mentioned as the religion of Abraham several times, and on one occasion the Israelite prophets who followed Moses are spoken of as *the prophets who were Muslims, alladhīna aslamū* (5:44). Not only is Islām the religion of every prophet, but, according to the Holy Qur'ān, it is also the natural religion of man, as in 30:30 it is described as being "the nature made by Allāh in which He has made men". This is corroborated by a saying of the Prophet: "Every child is born in Islām: it is his parents who make him a Jew or a Christian" (B. 23:79).

The word *Islām* does not only signify *submission,* it also signifies *entering into peace,* from *aslama,* meaning *he entered into peace.* In fact, the idea of *peace* is the dominant idea in Islām, and the goal to which Islām leads is called *the abode of peace* (10:25).

401 By the *Unlearned people* are meant *the Arabs*; see 117.

SECTION 3 : **The Kingdom is granted to another People**

20 Those who disbelieve in the messages of Allāh and would slay the prophets unjustly and slay those among men who enjoin justice, announce to them a painful chastisement.[402]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّينَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَيَقْتُلُونَ الَّذِينَ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْقِسْطِ مِنَ النَّاسِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ○

21 Those are they whose works will be of no avail in this world and the Hereafter, and they will have no helpers.[403]

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ ○

22 Hast thou not seen those who are given a portion of the Book?[404] They are invited to the Book of Allāh that it may decide between them, then a party of them turn back and they withdraw.[405]

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِنَ الْكِتَابِ يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَىٰ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّىٰ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ وَهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ ○

23 This is because they say: The Fire shall not touch us but for a few days; and that which they forge deceives them regarding their religion.

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَاتٍ وَغَرَّهُمْ فِي دِينِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ○

24 Then how will it be when We gather them together on a day about which there is no doubt. And every soul shall be fully paid what it has earned, and they shall not be wronged?

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جَمَعْنَاهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ○

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402 For *bashshir* see 636. The Jews are specially mentioned as a people who were guilty of trying to kill prophets (2:61), but this reference seems to point to their plans for killing the Holy Prophet, which were, however, all frustrated.

403 The meaning is that all their attempts against the Prophet will be fruitless, and they themselves will be reduced to a condition of helplessness.

404 The Jews are spoken of as being given only a portion of the Book, because much of it had already been lost. Moreover, the Torah was not a complete law.

405 Some commentators think that this decision was given in a case of adultery; but there is nothing in the Qur'ān warranting such a limitation. It is, of course, remarkable, as Sale has noticed, that while the law of Moses as now preserved in Lev. 20:10 mentions simply *putting to death* as the punishment for adultery, John 8:5 gives us to understand that *stoning to death* was the real punishment, and the Prophet is also said to have stated stoning to be the punishment prescribed for adultery by the Jewish law, though the rabbis refused to accept the judgement of their own law. It seems to be a clear instance of alteration.

The reference here, however, is to the broad principles of religion regarding which the Jews, or the Jews and the Christians, differed. The *Book of Allāh* is the Holy Qur'ān which gave a decision in the differences between the Jews and the Christians.

25 Say: O Allāh, Owner of the Kingdom, Thou givest the kingdom to whom Thou pleasest, and takest away the kingdom from whom Thou pleasest, and Thou exaltest whom Thou pleasest and abasest whom Thou pleasest. In Thine hand is the good. Surely, Thou art Possessor of power over all things.

قُلِ اللّٰهُمَّ مٰلِكَ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ
مَنْ تَشَآءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَآءُ وَ
تُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَآءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَآءُ بِيَدِكَ
الْخَيْرُ اِنَّكَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ○

26 Thou makest the night to pass into the day and Thou makest the day to pass into the night; and Thou bringest forth the living from the dead and Thou bringest forth the dead from the living; and Thou givest sustenance to whom Thou pleasest without measure.[406]

تُوْلِجُ الَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَتُوْلِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي
الَّيْلِ وَتُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَتُخْرِجُ
الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَتَرْزُقُ مَنْ تَشَآءُ
بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ○

27 Let not the believers take the disbelievers for friends rather than believers.[407] And whoever does this has no connection with Allāh — except that you guard yourselves against them,[408] guarding carefully. And Allāh cautions you against His retribution.[408a] And to Allāh is the eventual coming.

لَا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ اَوْلِيَآءَ مِنْ
دُوْنِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَمَنْ يَّفْعَلْ ذٰلِكَ فَلَيْسَ
مِنَ اللّٰهِ فِيْ شَيْءٍ اِلَّآ اَنْ تَتَّقُوْا مِنْهُمْ
تُقٰىةً وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسَهٗ وَ
اِلَى اللّٰهِ الْمَصِيْرُ ○

406 Vv. 25, 26 apparently refer to the fact that kingdom and honour shall be given now to another nation, whose night shall be made to pass into a day of triumph. It is on account of having failed to grasp their real significance that Rodwell thinks that these verses are misplaced here, "interrupting as they do the connection of the preceding and subsequent verses". The connection is clear. The Jews had already been warned by Jesus that "the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21:43). A living nation of Muslims was brought forth from among the dead Arabs, and the living nation of Israelites was represented now by a people who were spiritually dead. Compare 4:54: "But surely We have given to Abraham's children the Book and the wisdom, and We have given them a great kingdom".

407 The Muslims, being in a state of war with the disbelievers, were forbidden to look to their enemies to guard their interests or for help of any kind. The clear statement made in 60:8, 9 settles the point beyond all doubt: "Allāh forbids you not respecting those who fight you not for religion, nor drive you forth from your homes, that you show them kindness and deal with them justly. . . . Allāh forbids you only respecting those who fight you for religion and drive you forth from your homes and help (others) in your expulsion, that you make friends with them". *Auliyā'*, which I translate as *friends* here, is the plural of *walī*, which is derived from a root meaning *he held command* or *had charge of*

408, 408a, see next page.

28 Say: Whether you hide what is in your hearts or manifest it, Allāh knows it. And He knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. And Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.

قُلْ إِنْ تُخْفُوا مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ أَوْ تُبْدُوهُ يَعْلَمْهُ اللّٰهُ ۗ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

29 On the day when every soul will find present that which it has done of good; and that which it has done of evil — it will wish that between it and that (evil) there were a long distance. And Allāh cautions you against His retribution. And Allāh is Compassionate to the servants.

يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُّحْضَرًا ۚ وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ ۚ تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا ۗ وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسَهُ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ۝

SECTION 4: **Last Members of a Chosen Race**

30 Say: If you love Allāh, follow me: Allāh will love you,[409] and grant you protection from your sins. And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللّٰهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ۝

31 Say: Obey Allāh and the Messenger; but if they turn back, Allāh surely loves not the disbelievers.

قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللّٰهَ وَالرَّسُولَ ۚ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكٰفِرِينَ ۝

32 Truly Allāh chose Adam and Noah and the descendants of Abraham and the descendants of Amran above the nations,[410]

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ اصْطَفٰى آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرٰهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرٰنَ عَلَى الْعٰلَمِينَ ۝

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or *superintended a thing*, and it accordingly means *the manager of a thing* or *of the affairs of another*, and the *guardian* or *maintainer of an orphan*, and *the guardian of a woman* who gives her away in marriage. It also means *the executor* or *heir of a deceased person* (LL). According to R, it indicates *nearness in respect of place, relation*, and *religion*, and *in respect of friendship and help and belief*, etc. The word therefore includes all relations of nearness. A man may also be said to be *walī-Allāh*, as meaning one *near to Allāh* or a *friend of Allāh*.

408 This is a new sentence. It is as if it were said: *Do not look to them for guarding your interests, rather guard yourselves against them.*

408a T explains *nafs* here as meaning *uqūbah*, i.e. *retribution*. In fact, retribution of evil is a requirement of Divine nature. Or, the meaning is that Allāh warns you against disobedience to Himself.

409 The love of Allāh is the great goal of life to which Islām leads. Compare John 14:15, 16: "If ye love me keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever"; and John 15:10: "If you keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love". This Comforter appeared in the person of the Holy Prophet. Elsewhere the Jews and the Christians are mentioned as calling themselves "the children of Allāh and His beloved ones" (5:18). They are told that they could become the beloved ones of Allāh by following the Prophet.

410 With this section begins the story of Jesus Christ, the central figure

33 Offspring, one of the other. And Allāh is Hearing, Knowing.[411]

ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

34 When a woman of Amran[412] said: My Lord, I vow to Thee what is in my womb, to be devoted (to Thy service), so accept (it) from me; surely Thou, only Thou, art the Hearing, the Knowing.

إِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَاَتُ عِمْرٰنَ رَبِّ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ۝

35 So when she brought it forth, she said: My Lord, I have brought it forth a female — and Allah knew best what she brought forth[413] — and the male is not like the female, and I have named it Mary, and I commend her and her offspring into Thy protection from the accursed devil.[414]

فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثٰى ۗ وَاللّٰهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعَتْ ۗ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثٰى ۚ وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيمِ ۝

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of the Christian religion, and as a preliminary we are told that if Jesus was chosen by God so were his great ancestors, Adam and Noah. The descendants of Abraham and Amran are then spoken of as having been chosen above the nations. For the choice of the descendants of Abraham, see **168**. They are divided into two branches, the Israelites and the Ishmaelites. The former are here spoken of as the descendants of 'Imrān. *'Imrān* of the Holy Qur'ān is the same as Amran of the Bible. The descendants of Amran are Moses and Aaron, Moses became the founder of the Israelite law and Aaron the head of the Israelite priesthood. The last of this race were John and Jesus. Their parents are first spoken of here, viz. Zacharias and Mary.

411 Noah was a descendant of Adam, Abraham a descendant of Noah, and Amran and his descendants were the offspring of Abraham, not a separate race. The reason for mentioning them separately is twofold: (1) the immediate descendants of Amran became the founders of a great law in Israel, and the Israelite nation had, in fact, received a new birth with them, and (2) it was with the descendants of Amran that the Mosaic dispensation came to an end.

412 *Imra'at* means *a woman* and also *a wife*. I take *imra'at 'Imrān* as meaning *a woman of the family of Amran,* because the name of a great ancestor is frequently used to indicate the nation which has sprung from him. Thus Kedar stands for the Ishmaelites and Israel for the Israelites. This interpretation is in perfect accord with what is said in the previous verse as to the election of the descendants of Amran. The general statement is followed by a particular instance. The second instance also relates to one of the descendants of Amran, viz. John the Baptist, who was also of "priestly descent through both parents" (Bib. Dic., Cambridge University Press). Though we know very little regarding the parentage of Mary, yet the fact that she was, according to the only tradition that we have about her, devoted to the Temple from three to twelve years of age, shows clearly that she belonged to the priestly class. She is elsewhere called *the sister of Aaron* (19:28) and not a sister of Moses, for priesthood was an exclusive prerogative of the descendants of Aaron. In the Semitic languages the

413, 414, see next page.

36 So her Lord accepted her with a goodly acceptance and made her grow up a goodly growing, and gave her into the charge of Zacharias. Whenever Zacharias entered the sanctuary to (see) her, he found food with her. He said: O Mary, whence comes this to thee? She said: It is from Allāh. Surely Allāh gives to whom He pleases without measure.[415]

فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَّأَنْبَتَهَا
نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا ۙ وَّكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا ۖ كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ
عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ ۙ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا ۚ
قَالَ يٰمَرْيَمُ أَنّٰى لَكِ هٰذَا ۖ قَالَتْ هُوَ
مِنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ ۖ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ
يَّشَآءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ○

37 There did Zacharias pray to his Lord. He said: My Lord, grant me from Thee goodly offspring; surely Thou art the Hearer of prayer.[416]

هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ ۚ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ
لِيْ مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً ۚ إِنَّكَ
سَمِيعُ الدُّعَآءِ ○

38 So the angels called to him as he stood praying in the sanctuary: Allāh gives thee the good news of John,[417] verifying a word from Allāh,[418] and honourable and chaste and a prophet from among the good ones.

فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَآئِمٌ يُّصَلِّيْ فِي
الْمِحْرَابِ ۙ أَنَّ اللّٰهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيٰى مُصَدِّقًا
بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَّحَصُوْرًا وَّنَبِيًّا
مِّنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ○

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words *ab* (father), *umm* (mother), *akh* (brother), and *ukht* (sister) are used in a broad sense, and do not necessarily imply the very close relations of real mother, father, brother, and sister. Thus we have a saying of the Prophet in which he speaks of himself as *the prayer of my father Abraham.* Jesus was also addressed as "son of David". According to tradition, however, 'Imrān was the name of Mary's father, and therefore the words *imra't 'Imrān* may mean *the wife of 'Imrān.*

413 The words *and Allāh knew best what she brought forth* are parenthetical. She had vowed the child to be devoted to the service of the Temple, but a female could not do the priestly work.

414 *Rajīm* is derived from the root *rajm,* meaning the *throwing* or *casting of stones,* and also *reviling, cursing, driving away, expelling, cutting off from friendly intercourse* (LL). It therefore signifies *accursed* or *driven away from the Divine presence.* This is what is implied here, and this is apparent from 38:78, where Satan is thus accosted: "And surely My curse is on thee till the day of Judgement". The other significance of *rajīm,* i.e. *one pelted with stones,* is not applicable here. It is noteworthy that Mary's mother while praying for Mary prays also for her *offspring,* which shows that when she dedicated her daughter to the Temple she had never an idea that she would remain a *virgin* all her life. On the other hand, she entertained the hope that Mary would become a wife and a mother.

415 There is nothing extraordinary in Mary's reply to Zacharias' question. The reply that she got sustenance *from Allāh* is the reply of every devout person who believes that Allāh is the sustainer of all, and that therefore all provision

416, 417, 418, see next page.

39 He said: My Lord, how can I have a son when old age has already come upon me, and my wife is barren? He said: Even thus does Allāh do what He pleases.[419]

قَالَ رَبِّ اَنّٰى يَكُوْنُ لِىْ غُلٰمٌ وَّقَدْ بَلَغَنِىَ الْكِبَرُ وَامْرَاَتِىْ عَاقِرٌ ؕ قَالَ كَذٰلِكَ اللّٰهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَآءُ ○

40 He said: My Lord, appoint a sign for me. Said He: Thy sign is that thou speak not to men for three days except by signs.[420] And remember thy Lord much and glorify (Him) in the evening and early morning.

قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِّىْٓ اٰيَةً ؕ قَالَ اٰيَتُكَ اَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلٰثَةَ اَيَّامٍ اِلَّا رَمْزًا ؕ وَاذْكُرْ رَّبَّكَ كَثِيْرًا وَّسَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِىِّ وَالْاِبْكَارِ ○

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or sustenance comes from Him. As elsewhere: "And there is not a thing but with Us are the treasures of it, and We send it down only in a known measure" (15:21). Mary being attached to the Temple, the worshippers would naturally bring gifts to her, and as it was through Divine grace that she received these gifts, she said that it was Allāh who gave her these things.

416 The devoutness of Mary raised in Zacharias a yearning for such virtuous offspring. Elsewhere he is described as praying for a son who should inherit the great qualities of Jacob, and in whom God might be well-pleased (19:6).

417 The Arabic word is *Yaḥyā* (being from the root *ḥayāt*, i.e. *life*), meaning *he shall live*. The Qur'ān elsewhere states that Zacharias prayed to God, saying, *I fear my cousins after me*, the fear being no doubt due to their leading unrighteous lives. Hence the significance underlying the name *Yaḥyā* was that *he would not die in sin* like his other relations. R gives the same explanation: *He gave him this name (Yaḥyā), because sin was not to bring about his death.*

418 The promise given to Zacharias was a word from Allāh, and John was the verifier of that word, because his birth brought about the fulfilment of the prophecy. *A word from Allāh*, therefore, stands for *a Divine prophecy*; see also 6:34; 10:64. Somewhat similar to this explanation is the one given by Abū 'Ubaidah who interprets *kalimat-in min-Allāh* as meaning *a book from Allāh* (Rz). In 66:12, speaking of Mary, it is said: "And she accepted the truth of (*saddaqat*) the words of her Lord and His books, and she was of the obedient ones". Just as John is the verifier of *a word from Allāh*, Mary is the verifier of *the words of her Lord*, meaning clearly *the prophetic words of her Lord*.

One other significance of the word *kalimah* as used in the Holy Qur'ān is *the creation* of God. Thus in 18:109 we have: "If the sea were ink for the words of my Lord, the sea would surely be exhausted before the words of my Lord are exhausted, though We were to bring the like of it to add thereto". A similar statement is made in 31:27, and in both places it is clear that the *words* of the Lord signify His *creation*.

419 There is no disbelief on the part of Zacharias. It is simply an expression of wonder as to how a son can be born to him, for he had already reached a very old age.

420 The Qur'ān does not say that Zacharias became dumb. He was only commanded not to talk to men for three days, remembering Allāh much during the time.

SECTION 5 : **Birth of Jesus and His Ministry.**

41 And when the angels said: O Mary, surely Allāh has chosen thee and purified thee and chosen thee above the women of the world.

وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ يٰمَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ اصْطَفٰكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفٰكِ عَلٰى نِسَآءِ الْعٰلَمِينَ ○

42 O Mary, be obedient to thy Lord and humble thyself and bow down with those who bow.[421]

يٰمَرْيَمُ اقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرّٰكِعِينَ ○

43 This is of the tidings of things unseen which We reveal to thee. And thou wast not with them when they cast their pens (to decide) which of them should have Mary in his charge, and thou wast not with them when they contended one with another.[422]

ذٰلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَآءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ ۚ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يُلْقُونَ أَقْلَامَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْيَمَ ۖ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ ○

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421 After speaking of Mary's birth (v. 35) and her growing up in righteousness in the temple under the care of Zacharias (v. 36), the Holy Qur'ān now speaks of her election just as the righteous before her were elected. Evidently this refers to a time when she had grown up to the age of puberty and left the temple.

422 The commentators think that the reference is to v. 36 when Mary as a child was dedicated to the temple and that lots were then cast as a result of which Mary was given into the charge of Zacharias. But this is quite out of place. The Holy Qur'ān has described her history in the natural order. Her mother conceives her (v. 34); she is born and named (v. 35); she is dedicated to and resides in the temple under the charge of Zacharias (v. 36). Here follows the narration of Zacharias praying for a righteous son when he sees the devoutness of Mary and vv. 37-40 are as it were parenthetical. The story of Mary is again taken up in v. 41 where her election is spoken of which is undoubtedly the time when she attained to the age of discretion (vv. 41, 42). V. 43 cannot therefore refer back to her history as a child in the temple. In the natural order it refers to a much later period. It will be noted that when Mary's mother prayed for her at her birth (v. 35), she also prayed for her offspring and therefore she had evidently in mind the time when Mary would be married and become a mother. V. 44 clearly gives Mary news of the birth of a child and therefore the particular incident referred to in v. 43 is the incident of her espousal. The casting of lots and the contention as to who should have her in his charge could not mean anything but her charge as a wife. Luke 1:26, 27 makes it clear that Mary received the news of the birth of Jesus after her espousal with Joseph. In view of all these considerations, v. 43 cannot be taken but as referring to the espousal of Mary. Lots were evidently cast because as a child she had been dedicated to the temple, and it was now by a lot only that she could be given away in marriage. Mary's history as narrated in the Gospels casts no light on these circumstances and hence the verse starts with the statement that this was an announcement relating to the unseen. In fact, the whole history of Mary and Jesus was enveloped in darkness until the Holy Qur'ān announced their right position as two righteous servants of God and rejected both extreme views, the

44 When the angels said : O Mary, surely Allāh gives thee good news with a word from Him[423] (of one) whose name is the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, [424] worthy of regard in this world and the Hereafter, and of those who are drawn night (to Allāh),[425]

إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ يٰمَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِّنْهُ ۖ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ ۝

Jewish view that Jesus was conceived in sin and was illegitimate and the Christian view that he was God or Son of God Who had entered Mary's womb. He was only what the Prophet described him to be in his controversy with the Najrān deputation when he said to them: "Do you not know that Jesus was conceived by a woman in the manner in which all women conceive? Then she was delivered of him as women are delivered of their children? Then he was fed as children are fed. Then he ate food and drank water and answered the call of nature (as all mortals do)?" The deputation replied to all these questions in the affirmative, on which the Prophet said: "Then how can your claim (that he was God or Son of God) be true?" (IJ). The Prophet's clear argument which even the Christian deputation could not question settles the matter that Jesus was conceived in the ordinary manner and that Mary became a wife and mother in the ordinary way.

423 The words *bi-kalimat-in min-hu* might mean either *with a word from Him* or *of a word from Him*, but as *kalimah* means *word* or *prophecy*, and as the personal pronoun in *ismu-hū* stands for the masculine gender, while *kalimah* is in the feminine gender and requires the personal pronoun *hā*, the first meaning is adopted. The good news was given *by means* of a prophetic word from the Divine Being. Compare 15:54, 55, where Abraham's question is answered thus: "They said, We give thee good news with truth," where the object is understood, as in the words under discussion, the significance being *we give thee good news* (of a son) *with truth*. For further explanation of what is meant by *kalimah*, see 418 and 2525.

Commenting on v. 38, Rz observes: "The announcement (of Jesus' advent) had been made in the books of the prophets before him, so when he came it was said, *This is that prophetic word*, and so he was called *a word*". In support of this he cites instances of such phrases as *jā'a qaulī* and *jā'a kalāmī*, i.e. "my word came" or "my speech came", when an event foretold by a person happens, the real significance of the phrases being *that which I said* or *that of which I spoke has come about*. This explanation shows that *kalimah* really applies to the prophecy.

One of the explanations given by R is that Jesus is here called a *kalimah* in the same sense as the Prophet is called *dhikr* (lit., a Reminder) in 65:10.

424 Three names are given for the child — *Al-Masīḥ*, *'Īsā*, and *Ibn Maryam*. The first of these is more a title than a name, being preceded by *al*. The literal significance of *Masīḥ* is either *one who travels much* or *one wiped over with some such thing as oil* (LL). It is the same word as the Aramaic *Messiah*, which is said to mean *the anointed*. Jesus Christ is said to have been so called because *he used to travel much* (Rz, R), or because *he was anointed with a pure blessed ointment with which the prophets are anointed* (Rz). It is, however, the first significance, viz., that *Masīḥ* means *one who travels much* that finds the foremost acceptance with the commentators as well as the lexicologists, and this lends support to the evidence recently discovered which shows that Jesus travelled in the East after his unfortunate experience at the hands of the Syrian Jews, and preached to the lost ten tribes of the Israelites who had settled in the East, in Afghanistan and Kashmir.

'Īsā is the Arabic form of the Hebrew *Yoshua*, Jesus being the Greek form of the same name; and *Ibn Maryam*, or son of Mary, is a surname. It is remarkable

425, see next page.

45 And he will speak to the people when in the cradle and when of old age, and (he will be) one of the good ones.[426]

وَ يُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِى الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَّ مِنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ○

46 She said: My Lord, how can I have a son and man has not yet touched me?[427] He said: Even so; Allāh creates what He pleases. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, Be, and it is.

قَالَتْ رَبِّ اَنّٰى يَكُوْنُ لِىْ وَلَدٌ وَّلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِىْ بَشَرٌ ؕ قَالَ كَذٰلِكِ اللّٰهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ ؕ اِذَا قَضٰٓى اَمْرًا فَاِنَّمَا يَقُوْلُ لَهٗ كُنْ فَيَكُوْنُ ○

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that the Qur'ān makes no mention at all of Mary's husband, and in this respect, these circumstances bear a strong resemblance to those connected with Moses' birth, for there, too, no mention at all is made of Moses' father. The mere fact, therefore, that there is no mention of Jesus' father is not sufficient to show that Jesus had no father. Moreover, of his two parents Joseph and Mary, Mary was undoubtedly much more well-known than Joseph.

425 Those drawn nigh to Allāh are not necessarily the angels, as some have thought. Compare 56:7-11, where men are divided into three classes, one of these being *those drawn nigh,* the same word *muqarrabīn* being used in both cases. Hence Jesus is here placed only in the foremost line of the righteous servants of God.

426 Jesus throughout the Holy Qur'ān is spoken of as "one of those drawn nigh," "one of the righteous," thus showing that he is regarded only as one of the prophets. As to speaking in the cradle and when of old age, neither of them can be considered a miracle. Every healthy child which is not dumb begins to talk when in the cradle, and *speaking when of old age* also shows that this speaking is the ordinary experience of every human being who is healthy, and lives to an old age. The good news consists in the fact that the child announced will be a healthy child and shall not die in childhood. According to Rz, the reason for mentioning Jesus speaking in childhood and old age is *to show the change of condition of Jesus from childhood to old age, while change in the Divine Being is impossible.*

Kahl is, according to R, *he in whose hair hoariness* or *greyness has become intermixed.* LL has, on the authority of Mṣb, T, and Mgh, that a man is *kahl* after he has attained the limit of being a *shābb,* which is variously fixed at 32, 40 and 51 years. The same authority gives the meaning of *kahl* as of *middle age,* or *between that age and the period when his hair has become intermixed with hoariness.* It would thus appear that, according to the Holy Qur'ān, Jesus did not die at thirty-three years of age, but lived to a sufficiently old age.

427 Only her espousal had yet been decided, and perhaps she had not been informed of this when she was given the good news of a son being born to her. Hence she says that man had not touched her yet. And she was told in reply, "Even so"; i.e., the child will be born by God bringing about the circumstances which result in the birth of a child. The words do not show that she would conceive out of the ordinary course of nature, for there is no doubt that Mary had other children, which no one supposes to have been conceived out of the ordinary course of nature. Nor do the words that follow prove anything beyond the simple fact that Mary must give birth to a son in accordance with the prophecy. The whole of creation is brought about, we are told again and again, by the Divine word *Kun,* yet no one supposes that creation is not brought about according to the laws of nature.

47 And He will teach him the Book and the Wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel :

وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرٰىةَ وَالْإِنْجِيْلَ ۚ

48 And (make him) a messenger to the Children of Israel (saying) : I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I determine for you out of dust the form of a bird, then I breathe into it and it becomes a bird with Allāh's permission,[428] and I heal

وَرَسُوْلًا إِلٰى بَنِيْٓ إِسْرَآءِيْلَ ۙ أَنِّيْ قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِاٰيَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ ۙ أَنِّيْٓ أَخْلُقُ لَكُمْ مِّنَ الطِّيْنِ كَهَيْـَٔةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيْهِ فَيَكُوْنُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِ الْمَوْتٰى بِإِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَ

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428 To understand the significance of this passage it is necessary to bear in mind that the chief characteristic of Jesus' speeches is that he spoke in parables and preferred to clothe his ideas in allegorical language. If this is kept in mind, there is no difficulty in interpreting this passage. The first of the statements in this passage speaks of the making of birds and breathing into them. It is perfectly intelligible if taken as a parable, but quite incomprehensible as a statement of fact. If on the one hand a prophet's dignity is much above such actions as the making of toy birds, on the other the act of creation is not attributable to any but the Divine Being. To understand this parable, however, the several words used may be explained first. In the passage under discussion four words require to be explained: *khalq, ṭīn, nafkh,* and *ṭair*. The primary significance of *khalq* is *measuring, proportioning,* synonym *taqdīr* (LL); hence *khalq* comes to signify the mere act of *the determining of a thing*. The word was used in this sense in pre-Islāmic poetry. The act of *khalq* in the sense of creation cannot be attributed to any being except Allāh. The Qur'ān has laid the greatest stress upon this point. It again and again speaks of the Divine Being as *the Creator of everything*, so that there is nothing of which any one else may be said to be a creator. And of those who are taken as gods by any people, it says in particular that *they do not create anything, while they are themselves created* (16:20; 25:3).

Then there are the two words *ṭīn* and *nafkh*. Man is spoken of as being created from *ṭīn* or *dust*, which stands for his humble origin, but the *nafkh* or *breathing* into him makes him deserving of respect by the angels. This, while hinted at on various occasions, is clearly stated in 38:71, 72: "When thy Lord said to the angels, I am going to create a mortal from dust. So when I have made him complete and breathed into him of My spirit fall down, making obeisance to him". Thus it is by the breathing of the Divine Spirit into man that he is made perfect.

The word *ṭair* or *ṭā'ir* means *a bird*, but just as the word *asad* (lit., *a lion*) is metaphorically used for *a brave man*, in a parable it is quite unobjectionable to take the word *ṭair* as signifying *one who soars into the higher spiritual regions and is not bent low upon earth* or *earthly things*. In 6:38 it is said: "And there is no animal that walks upon the earth nor a bird that flies with its two wings but (they are) genera like yourselves", the meaning apparently being that among men there are those who only walk upon the earth and do not rise above their earthly concerns, while others soar into the higher spiritual regions. Elsewhere (7:179; 25:44), those who having hearts do not understand, and having ears do not hear, are likened to cattle. So what is meant here is that Jesus, by breathing a spirit into mortals, will make them rise above those who are bent low upon the earth, and the apostles of Jesus, who were all men of humble origin (which is referred to in the word *dust* in the parable), whose thoughts had never risen higher than their own humble cares, left everything for the master's sake and went into the world by the command of the master preaching the truth. Here was, no doubt, mere dust having the form of a bird, which the messenger of God converted into high-soaring birds by breathing the truth into them. The fact that a story of Jesus making birds is related in a Gospel of Infancy is in no way a bar to this

the blind[429] and the leprous, and bring the dead to life[430] with Allāh's permission ; and I inform you of what you should eat and what you should store in your houses.[431] Surely there is a sign in this for you, if you are believers.

وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِ الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَ
أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي
بُيُوتِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لَّكُمْ إِنْ
كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ۝

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explanation, for it is very likely that a parable was misunderstood by the writer of that Gospel, and the Qur'ān has only referred to it to cast light upon the truth.

429 The miracle of Jesus' healing the sick has been rationally explained in the *Enc. Bib.* by the Rev. T. K. Cheyne, who has shown that all the stories of healing of the sick have arisen from the spiritual healing of the sick, as in Matt. 9:12: "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick"; and as in Jesus' message to John the Baptist: "The blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them" (Matt. 11:5). The concluding words clearly show that the sick and the lame and the blind belong to the same category as the poor to whom the Gospel is preached, being the poor in heart. Compare also Matt. 13:15: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Here the *healing* cannot refer but to healing of the spiritual diseases. The Holy Qur'ān gives a similar explanation of the healing of the sick when, speaking of itself, it says that it is "a healing for what is in the hearts" (10:57), i.e. for the spiritual diseases. The prophet's healing is spiritual, not healing of the physical diseases. The Qur'ān speaks of the blind and the deaf frequently, but it never means those who have lost the senses of seeing and hearing.

430 Last come those who are dead. The Qur'ān says plainly that those who die are not sent back to this world: "Allāh takes the souls at the time of their death, and those that die not, during their sleep; then He withholds those on whom He has passed the decree of death and sends others back till an appointed term" (39:42). And again speaking of the dead: "And before them is a barrier until the day they are raised" (23:100). But the use of the word *mautā*, i.e. *the dead*, and of their *being raised to life*, is frequent in the Holy Qur'ān in a spiritual sense: "Is he who was dead, then We raised him to life ... like him whose likeness is that of one in utter darkness" (6:123). And again: "O you who believe, answer the call of Allāh and His Messenger when he calls you to that which gives you life" (8:24). Similarly we have: "Neither are the living and the dead alike; surely Allāh makes whom He pleases hear, and you cannot make those hear who are in the graves" (35:22). The prophets are raised only for quickening to life those who are spiritually dead, and it is to this quickening through Jesus Christ that the Holy Qur'ān refers here.

It should be noted that three classes of men are spoken of as being regenerated, viz.: (1) those who were found in the natural state of dust, and who, like dust humbly submitted themselves to the prophets' handling, and who were made to soar high into the spiritual regions, not caring for their worldly concerns, (2) those who were spiritually diseased, and they were healed and made whole and (3) those who were quite dead and were spiritually quickened. Hence the three different descriptions.

431 Jesus' preaching laid special stress upon not having any care "for the morrow", and his advice to rich men when they came to him was to sell all that they had. He would have them lay up treasures in heaven. It is to this aspect of his teaching that the verse refers. They were not to devote their lives to the amassing of riches.

49 And (I am) a verifier of that which is before me of the Torah, and I allow you part of that which was forbidden to you ;[432] and I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, so keep your duty to Allāh and obey me.

وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرٰىةِ وَلِاُحِلَّ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِيْ حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَجِئْتُكُمْ بِاٰيَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَاَطِيْعُوْنِ ○

50 Surely Allāh is my Lord and your Lord, so serve Him. This is the right path.

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ رَبِّيْ وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوْهُ هٰذَا صِرَاطٌ مُّسْتَقِيْمٌ ○

51 But when Jesus perceived disbelief on their part, he said : Who will be my helpers in Allāh's way ? The disciples[433] said : We are Allāh's helpers : we believe in Allāh, and bear thou witness that we are submitting ones.

فَلَمَّآ اَحَسَّ عِيْسٰى مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ اَنْصَارِيْٓ اِلَى اللّٰهِ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّوْنَ نَحْنُ اَنْصَارُ اللّٰهِ اٰمَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ وَاشْهَدْ بِاَنَّا مُسْلِمُوْنَ ○

52 Our Lord, we believe in that which Thou hast revealed and we follow the messenger, so write us down with those who bear witness.

رَبَّنَآ اٰمَنَّا بِمَآ اَنْزَلْتَ وَاتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُوْلَ فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشّٰهِدِيْنَ ○

53 And (the Jews) planned and Allāh (also) planned.[434] And Allāh is the best of planners.[435]

وَمَكَرُوْا وَمَكَرَ اللّٰهُ وَاللّٰهُ خَيْرُ الْمٰكِرِيْنَ ○

432 The law given by Moses was upheld by all the Israelite prophets, but its deficiencies were removed and other changes introduced from time to time to make it suit the needs of new times. These changes are particularly marked out in Jesus' teaching, as anyone who reads any of the Gospels, and especially the Sermon on the Mount, can easily see.

433 The Arabic word *ḥawāriyyūn* is plural of *ḥawārī*, which is thus explained by LL: "*One who whitens clothes by washing and beating them*. Hence its plural, *ḥawāriyyūn*, is applied *to the companions of Jesus*, because their trade was to do washing (M, Mṣb)." Some commentators, however, suggest that they may have been so called because of the purity of their hearts.

434 *Makr* is explained by R as *the turning of another with ingenuity* or *skill from that which he aims at*, and he considers *makr* as of two sorts, *a good one* and *an evil one*. Therefore the best interpretation of the word *makara* (including both sorts) is that adopted by T, viz. *he exercised craft, cunning, art*, or *skill in the management* or *ordering of affairs with excellent consideration* or *deliberation, and ability to manage according to his own free will* (LL). The idea of the plan being contrived for an evil purpose or clandestinely, which is included in the significance of the word, has led many to take that idea as its exclusive significance, which is not the case. *Makara-llāhu* may also signify that *Allāh recompensed* or *requited them for their makr* (T-LL). According to some, *its original significance is the gathering of an affair and its strengthening* (Rz). All these explanations show that it is the equivalent of the word *plan*, the good or evil nature of the plan being dependent on the object or dôer's intention. Allāh

435, see next page.

SECTION 6 : **Jesus cleared of False Charges**

54 When Allāh said: O Jesus, I will cause thee to die[436] and exalt thee in My presence[437] and clear thee of those who disbelieve[438] and make those who follow thee above those who disbelieve to the day of Resurrection.[439] Then to Me is your return,

إِذْ قَالَ اللّٰهُ يٰعِيْسٰٓى إِنِّىْ مُتَوَفِّيْكَ وَ
رَافِعُكَ إِلَىَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا
وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّبَعُوْكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِيْنَ
كَفَرُوْٓا إِلٰى يَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَىَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ

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is called here *Khair al-mākirīn* or the *Best of planners,* the qualifying word *khair* being inapplicable to an evil object.

435 The Jews planned to put Jesus to death by crucifixion, and Allāh made a plan to frustrate their plans; and Allāh's plan was successful, i.e. he was saved from death on the cross, for which see 436 and 645.

436 IAb says that the significance of *mutawaffī-ka* is *mumītu-ka,* i.e. *I will cause thee to die* (B. 65:12). According to LA, "You say *tawaffā-hu-llāhu* when you mean *Allāh took his soul or caused him to die*". And according to LL, it signifies "God took his soul (S, Q) (either at death or in sleep, see the Qur'ān, 6:60); or *caused him to die* (Mṣb)". No other significance can be attached to the words when thus used. Some commentators say that Jesus remained dead for three hours; others say for seven hours, and so on (Rz). But the word is used here really to show that the Jewish plans to cause Jesus' death on the cross would be frustrated and that he would afterwards die a natural death; see 645. Pickthall's translation is, O Jesus, *I am gathering thee,* and this is the Biblical idiom for causing to die. Yūsuf ʿAlī, in his first edition, translated the words as meaning *I will cause thee to die,* but in the second edition he changed it to *I will take thee.*

437 *Rafʿ* signifies *raising* or *elevating,* and also *exalting or making honourable* (T, LL). But where the *rafʿ* of a man to Allāh is spoken of in the Holy Qur'ān, or in the religious literature of Islām, it is always in the latter sense, for raising a man in his body to Himself implies that the Divine Being is limited to a place. This is made plain by the prayer which every Muslim repeats several times daily in his prayers in the sitting position between the two prostrations: *wa-rfaʿ-nī,* meaning *and exalt me.* Of course no one supposes this prayer to be for the raising of the body to the heavens. Hence even those commentators who are predisposed, having, no doubt, been misled by Christian tradition, to accept Jesus Christ as having been raised alive to heaven, have been compelled to admit that the word *rafʿ* is here used not for raising aloft but for *exalting and honouring.* And commenting on the words which follow this statement, Rz says: *This shows that rafʿ here is the exalting in degree and in praise, not in place and direction. The exaltation* of Jesus is mentioned here as a reply to the Jews, whose object was to make him die an accursed and ignominious death on the cross.

438 *Clear thee of those who disbelieve* signifies clearing Jesus of the false charges relating to the alleged illegitimacy of his birth, and so on, charges of which Jesus was cleared by the Holy Qur'ān; see 644.

439 This verse contains four promises relating to Jesus' triumph over his enemies as against their plans, three of which have already been noticed, viz.: (1) his being saved from death on the cross and being made to die a natural death; (2) his being made honourable in the Divine presence, whereas the object of the Jews was to show that he was an accursed person; (3) his being cleared of all false charges. And the fourth promise is that those who follow Jesus shall be

so I shall decide between you concerning that wherein you differ.[440]

فَأَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ○

55 Then as to those who disbelieve, I shall chastise them with severe chastisement in this world and the Hereafter, and they will have no helpers.[441]

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَأُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ ○

56 And as to those who believe and do good deeds, He will pay them fully their rewards. And Allāh loves not the unjust.[442]

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ○

57 This We recite to thee of the messages and the Reminder full of wisdom.

ذَٰلِكَ نَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ ○

58 The likeness of Jesus with Allāh is truly as the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, then said to him, Be, and he was.[443]

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ ۖ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ○

59 (This is) the truth from thy Lord, so be not of the disputers.

الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ ۝٦

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made dominant over his rejectors till the day of Judgement. The truth of this fourth prophecy is witnessed to this day in the dominance of the Christians over the Jews.

440 Differences of belief are dealt with in the life after death while transgressions in deeds when they are on a very large scale are punished even in this life.

441 The whole Jewish history, especially after the seventh century, is a standing testimony to the truth of these words.

442 By the *unjust* are meant the Christians because they have exceeded the limits of justice and deified Jesus.

443 Adam stands for man generally, because *all men are created from dust*. Thus in 18:37 the believer says to his non-believing companion: "Disbelievest thou in Him Who created thee from dust?" And in 22:5 and 30:20, and elsewhere, all men are spoken of as having been created from dust. All that is meant, therefore, is that Jesus is no more than a mortal, and that it is an error to take him for God, as the Christians do. The words *kun fa-yakūnu* lend support to this meaning for in these words is spoken of throughout the Holy Qur'ān the general and recurring law of creation.

If Adam be taken as a proper name, the meaning would be that just as Adam was created from dust and then chosen or purified by Allāh, so was Jesus created from dust, and his election was similar to the election of Adam, the command contained in *kun* in this case referring to the election of a righteous servant of Allāh. In either case there is no reference to Jesus being brought into existence without the agency of a male parent. The controversy is here carried on with the Christians, and it is their false belief in the divinity of Jesus that is here condemned. As for the parentage of Jesus see 422 and 427.

60 Whoever then disputes with thee in this matter after the knowledge that has come to thee, say: Come! Let us call our sons and your sons and our women and your women and our people and your people, then let us be earnest in prayer,[444] and invoke the curse of Allāh on the liars.[445]

فَمَنْ حَآجَّكَ فِيْهِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ اَبْنَآءَنَا وَاَبْنَآءَكُمْ وَنِسَآءَنَا وَنِسَآءَكُمْ وَاَنْفُسَنَا وَاَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلْ لَّعْنَتَ اللّٰهِ عَلَى الْكٰذِبِيْنَ ۝

61 Surely this is the true account, and there is no god but Allāh. And Allāh! He surely is the Mighty, the Wise.

اِنَّ هٰذَا لَهُوَ الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ ۚ وَمَا مِنْ اِلٰهٍ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ ؕ وَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ۝

62 But if they turn away, then surely Allāh knows the mischief-makers.

فَاِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِالْمُفْسِدِيْنَ ۝

SECTION 7: **Controversy with Jews and Christians**

63 Say: O People of the Book, come to an equitable word between us and you, that we shall serve none but Allāh and that we shall not associate aught with Him, and that some of us shall not take others for lords besides Allāh. But if they turn away, then say: Bear witness, we are Muslims.[446]

قُلْ يٰۤاَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ تَعَالَوْا اِلٰى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَآءٍۢ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ اَلَّا نَعْبُدَ اِلَّا اللّٰهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهٖ شَيْـًٔا وَّلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا اَرْبَابًا مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ فَاِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُوْلُوا اشْهَدُوْا بِاَنَّا مُسْلِمُوْنَ ۝

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444 *Ibtahala* means *he humbled* or *abased himself* or *addressed himself with earnest* or *energetic supplication* (LL). Some explain *nabtahil* as meaning *natabāhil*, in which case the meaning would be *let us call down a curse upon which of us is the liar.*

445 This chapter starts with a discussion of the Christian doctrines in particular. The persons addressed in particular in this verse are the members of the Christian deputation from Najrān that came in 10 A.H. This deputation, consisting of sixty men, was headed by 'Abd al-Masīḥ, the chief of the Najrān Christians (AH), and the members of the deputation were lodged in the Prophet's mosque. Thus did the Prophet set an example of freedom of religious thought which remains without parallel to this day. The Prophet related to them arguments showing that Jesus Christ was not God, but a man and a prophet (see concluding para of 422). After having argued the question fully, and finding them still insisting in their false belief in the deity of Jesus, they were invited as a last resort to pray earnestly that the curse of Allāh might overtake the party that insisted on falsehood. At first they showed readiness to enter this contest, but after some deliberation they decided against it and told the Prophet that they had decided not to pray against him as suggested (B. 64:74). Thereupon they were given a pledge by which they were free to practise their religion: "Their authority and

446, see next page.

64 O People of the Book, why do you dispute about Abraham, when the Torah and the Gospel were not revealed till after him? Do you not understand?

يَاَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ لِمَ تُحَآجُّوْنَ فِيْٓ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ
وَمَآ اُنْزِلَتِ التَّوْرٰىةُ وَالْاِنْجِيْلُ اِلَّا مِنْۢ
بَعْدِهٖ ؕ اَفَلَا تَعْقِلُوْنَ ۝

65 Behold! You are they who disputed about that of which you had knowledge; why then do you dispute about that of which you have no knowledge? And Allāh knows while you know not.[447]

هٰٓاَنْتُمْ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ حَاجَجْتُمْ فِيْمَا لَكُمْ بِهٖ عِلْمٌ
فَلِمَ تُحَآجُّوْنَ فِيْمَا لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهٖ عِلْمٌ ؕ
وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ وَاَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝

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rights shall not be interfered with, nor anything that is customary amongst them, so long as they conduct themselves peaceably and uprightly" (Muir).

It is strange to find Christian writers referring to this as "a strange mode of settling the dispute" But evidently their Arabian co-religionists did not think so 1300 years ago. They believed in the efficacy of prayer, for such was the teaching of Jesus. They saw the righteousness of the Prophet, and they were convinced of their own false beliefs and dared not invoke curses upon themselves with their own tongues, while they knew that the Prophet was too generous to curse them. Therefore they adopted the wise course of not calling for destruction to overtake them. Had they considered the Prophet as an imposter and Antichrist, as their descendants do to-day, they would not have had the least fear in accepting the challenge.

446 These are the very words occurring in a letter which the Prophet wrote to Heracleus in the year 6 A.H. (B. 1:1). Similar letters were written to several other potentates among whom was Muqauqis, the king of Egypt, and the discovery of the letter written to him furnishes proof of the reliability of the reports relating to the Prophet in general, for the manuscript letter contains the very words given in the Ḥadīth. In this verse the Jews and the Christians are called upon to accept the broad principles of the faith of Abraham, which were also the basic principles of the faith of Islām. The reference in the sentence *some of us shall not take others for lords* is to the practice prevailing then both among Jews and Christians, and at present among Muslims too, to take religious leaders as invested with Divine powers, which is more clearly enunciated in 9:31: "They have taken their doctors of law and their monks for lords besides Allāh" (9:31). The verse under discussion lays down the basis of the study of comparative religion. Anyone who studies religious literature on a wide scale will find that the basic doctrines of Islām are the greatest common measure of the truth contained in different religions of the world. The doctrine of Unity as taught by Islām affords an illustration. All higher religions start on the basis of Divine Unity which is thus common to all, but then each religious system has its peculiarities unknown to all others. Islām alone is free from all these additions to the basic doctrine, and it preaches Unity in its simplest form and rejects all additions which are here classified as three: 1. Worshipping others than God and addressing prayers to them. 2. Associating anything with Him which consists in ascribing Divine attributes to others. 3. Taking others as Lords besides God which consists in rendering to others the perfect obedience which is due to God alone. There are no idols, no gods, no incarnations of the Divine Being, no sons of God, and finally no *pīrs* and priests to be followed blindly.

447 The Christians held a controversy with the Prophet regarding Jesus Christ, of whom they had some knowledge, but about Abraham they had no detailed knowledge. The Jews invited people to a belief in the Torah and the Christians to a belief in the Gospel, but both these had lost the purity of the faith of Abraham which was pure monotheism, unmixed with either Jewish priesthood or Christian doctrine of sonship. This is made clear in the next verse.

66 Abraham was not a Jew nor a Christian, but he was (an) upright (man), a Muslim; and he was not one of the polytheists.

مَا كَانَ اِبْرٰهِيْمُ يَهُوْدِيًّا وَّلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَّلٰكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيْفًا مُّسْلِمًا ۭ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ۝

67 The nearest of people to Abraham are surely those who follow him and this Prophet and those who believe. And Allāh is the Friend of the believers.

اِنَّ اَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِاِبْرٰهِيْمَ لَلَّذِيْنَ اتَّبَعُوْهُ وَھٰذَا النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ۭ وَاللّٰهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۝

68 A party of the People of the Book desire that they should lead you astray; and they lead not astray but themselves, and they perceive not.[447a]

وَدَّتْ طَّاۗىِٕفَةٌ مِّنْ اَھْلِ الْكِتٰبِ لَوْ يُضِلُّوْنَكُمْ ۭ وَمَا يُضِلُّوْنَ اِلَّآ اَنْفُسَھُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُوْنَ ۝

69 O People of the Book, why do you disbelieve in the messages of Allāh while you witness (their truth)?

يٰٓاَھْلَ الْكِتٰبِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُوْنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَاَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُوْنَ ۝

70 O People of the Book, why do you confound the truth with falsehood, and hide the truth while you know?

يٰٓاَھْلَ الْكِتٰبِ لِمَ تَلْبِسُوْنَ الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُوْنَ الْحَقَّ وَاَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝

SECTION 8: **Machinations to discredit Islām**

71 And a party of the People of the Book say: Avow belief in that which has been revealed to those who believe, in the first part of the day, and disbelieve in the latter part of it, perhaps they may turn back.[448]

وَقَالَتْ طَّاۗىِٕفَةٌ مِّنْ اَھْلِ الْكِتٰبِ اٰمِنُوْا بِالَّذِيْٓ اُنْزِلَ عَلَي الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَجْهَ النَّهَارِ وَاكْفُرُوْٓا اٰخِرَهٗ لَعَلَّھُمْ يَرْجِعُوْنَ ۝

447a Their machinations are described in the last verse of this section and the opening verses of the next section.

448 The words would bear two different significances according to what the personal pronoun in *ākhira-hū* refers to, for it may either refer to *that which has been revealed* or to *the day*. The meaning in the first case is that a belief may be avowed in the earlier part of the revelation, while denying the latter portion, with the object of creating doubts as to the sincerity of the Prophet. They would say, for instance, that the earlier revelation was no doubt true, but that the Prophet aimed at personal aggrandizement in later revelation, a position which is to this day adopted by some of the Christian writers. If we adopt the other significance, the meaning would be that they should avow a belief in the truth of Islām in the morning and deny it in the evening, and thus perturb the minds of those who had accepted Islām, creating the impression that the religion of Islām was a false religion. It was a distinguishing characteristic of Islām that people who once accepted it did not yield to any temptation under the severest trials. When Heraclius asked Abū Sufyān, the Quraish leader, if those who accepted Islām

72 And believe not but in him who follows your religion.[449] Say: True guidance — Allāh's guidance — is that one may be given the like of what you were given; or they would prevail on you in argument before your Lord.[450] Say: Grace is surely in Allāh's hand. He gives it to whom He pleases. And Allāh is Ample-giving, Knowing.[451]

وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوٓا إِلَّا لِمَنْ تَبِعَ دِينَكُمْ قُلْ إِنَّ
الْهُدٰى هُدَى اللّٰهِ أَنْ يُؤْتٰٓى أَحَدٌ مِّثْلَ
مَآ أُوتِيتُمْ أَوْ يُحَآجُّوكُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ قُلْ
إِنَّ الْفَضْلَ بِيَدِ اللّٰهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ
وَاللّٰهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ۝

73 He specially chooses for His mercy whom He pleases. And Allāh is the Lord of mighty grace.[452]

يَّخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهٖ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَاللّٰهُ
ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ۝

74 And among the People of the Book there is he who, if thou entrust him with a heap of wealth, would pay it back to thee; and among them is he who, if thou entrust him with a dīnār[453] would not pay it back to thee, unless thou kept on demanding it.

وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنْهُ
بِقِنْطَارٍ يُّؤَدِّهٖٓ إِلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ إِنْ
تَأْمَنْهُ بِدِينَارٍ لَّا يُؤَدِّهٖٓ إِلَيْكَ إِلَّا مَا
دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ قَآئِمًا ذٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا

recanted it, the reply was, No (B. 1:1). The Jews therefore wanted to shake this strong position of the truth of Islām by making hypocritical avowal and then apostatizing in large numbers. The adoption of this plan is a clear proof that apostates were not put to death.

449 The meaning is that the Jews should not believe in any prophet who did not follow their law, i.e., the Mosaic law.

450 The contention of the Jews not to believe in any prophet who did not follow the Mosaic law is met with the reply that a revelation must be given to another prophet like the revelation that had been given to Moses, for the Divine promise to Moses was: "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put My words in his mouth" (Deut. 18:18). This promise must be fulfilled, and the Prophet who was thus raised, being "like unto" Moses, would be the real guide. But if prophethood was to be confined to the line of Israel and no prophet was to be raised among the children of Ishmael, who were also the "seed" of Abraham, the Muslim argument, as to the non-fulfilment of the promise given to Abraham and of the prophecy of Moses as contained in Deut. 18:18 would be unanswerable. *Yuḥājjū-kum,* as the context shows, signifies here the Muslims' prevailing in argument over their opponents. Hence it was that both the Jews and the Christians embraced Islām in large numbers notwithstanding the severe opposition of their temporal and spiritual leaders.

451 *Grace* here indicates *prophethood.* Compare the use of *good* in 2:105.

452 Allāh's choosing for His mercy stands here for His choice of a prophet, as in 2:105.

453 *Dīnār* is an Arab gold coin of the value of about 10s.

This is because they say there is no blame on us in the matter of the unlearned people and they forge a lie against Allāh while they know.[454]

لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ سَبِيلٌ وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ○

75 Yea, whoever fulfils his promise and keeps his duty — then Allāh surely loves the dutiful.

بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِ وَاتَّقَىٰ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ○

76 Those who take a small price for the covenant of Allāh and their own oaths — they have no portion in the Hereafter, and Allāh will not speak to them, nor will He look upon them on the day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them, and for them is a painful chastisement.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَأَيْمَانِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا أُولَٰئِكَ لَا خَلَاقَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ○

77 And there is certainly a party of them who lie about the Book[455] that you may consider it to be (a part) of the Book while it is not (a part) of the Book; and they say, It is from Allāh, while it is not from Allāh; and they forge a lie against Allāh whilst they know.

وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ لَفَرِيقًا يَلْوُونَ أَلْسِنَتَهُمْ بِالْكِتَابِ لِتَحْسَبُوهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ○

78 It is not meet for a mortal that Allāh should give him the Book and the judgement and the prophethood, then he should say to men: Be my servants besides Allāh's; but (he

مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُؤْتِيَهُ اللَّهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ ثُمَّ يَقُولَ لِلنَّاسِ كُونُوا عِبَادًا لِي مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَٰكِنْ

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454 They considered themselves free from all responsibility towards the Gentiles, notwithstanding any engagement they might have made with them. Hence they considered it lawful to play all sorts of tricks with the Muslims. They are however told that God never allowed dishonesty against any people.

455 *Lawwā lisāna-hū bi-kadhā*, lit., *he twisted the tongue with a thing* implies *he lied about and forged a narration* (R). And *alwā bi-l-kalām* means *he turned it* (i.e. *a speech or saying*) *away from its drift* or *altered* or *changed it altogether* (LA, T). Rz quotes the following comment on the words of this verse from IAb: *What is implied is the reading of the false book.* And he says that in Arabic you use different words for an action according as the good or evil of it is to be expressed, and then cites 2 : 79, which shows that the book which they read was not the book revealed by Allāh, but one which they had written with

would say): Be worshippers of the Lord because you teach the Book and because you study (it);[456]

كُونُوا رَبَّانِيِّينَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكِتٰبَ وَبِمَا كُنتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ ۝

79 Nor would he enjoin you to take the angels and the prophets for lords. Would he enjoin you to disbelieve after you submit?[457]

وَلَا يَأْمُرَكُمْ أَن تَتَّخِذُوا الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ أَرْبَابًا ۗ أَيَأْمُرُكُم بِالْكُفْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ۝

SECTION 9 : **Covenant of the Prophets**

80 And when Allāh made a covenant through the prophets: Certainly what I have given you of Book and Wisdom — then a Messenger comes to you verifying that which is with you, you shall believe in him, and you shall aid him. He said: Do you affirm and accept My compact in this (matter)? They said: We do affirm. He said: Then bear witness, and I (too) am of the bearers of witness with you.[458]

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللّٰهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ لَمَآ اٰتَيْتُكُم مِّن كِتٰبٍ وَّحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُّصَدِّقٌ لِّمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهٖ وَلَتَنصُرُنَّهٗ ۗ قَالَ ءَأَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَخَذْتُمْ عَلٰى ذٰلِكُمْ إِصْرِي ۗ قَالُوٓا أَقْرَرْنَا ۗ قَالَ فَاشْهَدُوا وَأَنَا مَعَكُم مِّنَ الشّٰهِدِينَ ۝

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their own hands. The concluding words of this verse also point to the same conclusion: "They forge a lie against Allāh".

456 *Rabbānī*, which is the same as *ribbī* (from *Rabb*, or *Lord*), means *one who possesses a knowledge of the Lord*, or *one who is a worshipper of the Lord*. According to a saying of the Prophet, a *ribbī is a learned man, a teacher of others, who nourishes people with the small matters of knowledge before the great* (LL).

457 Thus according to the Holy Qur'ān no prophet — Jesus included — ever taught his followers to take him as God; in other words, anyone who actually taught so could not be a prophet of Allāh. Even the current Gospels do not attribute any such teaching to Jesus. The angels are mentioned because the pagan Arabs worshipped the angels.

458 *Mīthāq al-nabīyyīn* means literally *the covenant of the prophets*, and may therefore signify either the covenant of the prophets *with Allāh* or the covenant of the prophets *with their people*. As the words that follow are plainly addressed to the people, the Jews and the Christians being particularly addressed in the last two verses, I adopt the latter interpretation, and therefore translate the words as meaning *a covenant through the prophets* According to Kf: *When Allāh made the covenant which the prophets* ***confirmed*** *with their peoples*. Both Moses and Jesus specially laid an obligation on their people to accept the prophet about whom they prophesied. Thus, through Moses, Almighty God had warned the Israelites, after promising them "a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee", that "Whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him" (Deut. 18:19). And Jesus was equally emphatic when, prophesying the advent of the Comforter, he added: "He will

81 Whoever then turns back after this, these are the transgressors.

فَمَنْ تَوَلّٰى بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
الْفٰسِقُوْنَ ○

82 Seek they then other than Allāh's religion? And to Him submits whoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and to Him they will be returned.[459]

اَفَغَيْرَ دِيْنِ اللّٰهِ يَبْغُوْنَ وَلَهٗٓ اَسْلَمَ
مَنْ فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَّ
كَرْهًا وَّاِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُوْنَ ○

83 Say: We believe in Allāh and that which is revealed to us, and that which was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and that which was given to Moses and Jesus and to the prophets from their Lord; we make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we submit.

قُلْ اٰمَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ وَمَآ اُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَ
مَآ اُنْزِلَ عَلٰٓى اِبْرٰهِيْمَ وَاِسْمٰعِيْلَ وَ
اِسْحٰقَ وَيَعْقُوْبَ وَالْاَسْبَاطِ وَمَآ اُوْتِىَ
مُوْسٰى وَعِيْسٰى وَالنَّبِيُّوْنَ مِنْ رَّبِّهِمْ
لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ
لَهٗ مُسْلِمُوْنَ ○

84 And whoever seeks a religion other than Islām, it will not be accepted from him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.[460]

وَمَنْ يَّبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْاِسْلَامِ دِيْنًا فَلَنْ
يُّقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِى الْاٰخِرَةِ
مِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ ○

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guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak" (John 16:13). As a matter of fact the Prophet had his advent foretold by all the prophets of the world. The New Testament bears testimony to this: "Whom the heaven must receive until the time of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of *all His holy prophets since the world began*. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me: him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you" (Acts 3:21, 22). The covenant referred to was made through each prophet separately as he appeared in the world. And just as all the prophets foretold the advent of the Prophet Muḥammad and laid an obligation upon their people to accept him, so the Prophet Muḥammad also taught his followers to believe in all the prophets that had appeared among different people in different ages, and this is stated in what follows. The truth of the first statement that all prophets foretold the advent of the Prophet Muḥammad is borne out by the second statement that that Prophet would bear testimony to the truth of all the prophets of the world.

459 Compare 13:15, 22:18, etc., where it is said that all those who are in the heavens and the earth make submission to Allāh. The verse, in fact, shows that Islām, or the rule of submission to Divine law, is a law which is seen working throughout nature, and this is an argument of the truth of the religion of Islām.

460 The cosmopolitan nature of the religion of Islām having been clearly set forth in the previous verse, it is now stated that anyone who refused to accept such a religion would unfailingly lose in the end. A Muslim accepts the whole truth; the truth as revealed to any prophet anywhere in the world; the followers of other religions accept only partial truth, the truth as revealed to them only, not truth as revealed to all mankind.

85 How shall Allāh guide a people who disbelieved after their believing, and (after) they had borne witness that the Messenger was true, and clear arguments had come to them? And Allāh guides not the unjust people.[461]

كَيْفَ يَهْدِي اللّٰهُ قَوْمًا كَفَرُوْا بَعْدَ إِيْمَانِهِمْ وَشَهِدُوْٓا أَنَّ الرَّسُوْلَ حَقٌّ وَّجَآءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنٰتُ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٨٦﴾

86 As for these, their reward is that on them is the curse of Allāh and the angels and of men, all together —

أُولٰٓئِكَ جَزَآؤُهُمْ أَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةَ اللّٰهِ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِيْنَ ۝

87 Abiding therein. Their chastisement shall not be lightened, nor shall they be respited —[462]

خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ۚ لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنْظَرُوْنَ ۝

88 Except those who repent after that and amend, for surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

إِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ تَابُوْا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذٰلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوْا ۟ فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ۝

89. Those who disbelieve after their believing, then increase in disbelief, their repentance is not accepted, and these are they that go astray.[463]

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بَعْدَ إِيْمَانِهِمْ ثُمَّ ازْدَادُوْا كُفْرًا لَّنْ تُقْبَلَ تَوْبَتُهُمْ ۚ وَأُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الضَّآلُّوْنَ ۝

90 Those who disbelieve and die while they are disbelievers, the earth full of gold will not be accepted from one of them, though he should offer it as ransom. These it is for whom is a painful chastisement, and they shall have no helpers.

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَمَاتُوْا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَنْ يُّقْبَلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمْ مِّلْءُ الْأَرْضِ ذَهَبًا وَّلَوِ افْتَدٰى بِهٖ ۗ أُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيْمٌ وَّمَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ نّٰصِرِيْنَ ۝

PART IV

SECTION 10: **Ever-living Testimony to the Truth of Islām**

91 You cannot attain to righteousness unless you spend out of what you love. And what you spend, Allāh surely knows it.[464]

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتّٰى تُنْفِقُوْا مِمَّا تُحِبُّوْنَ ۚ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوْا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِهٖ عَلِيْمٌ ۝

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461 The persons meant are those who believed in the former prophets and disbelieved in the Holy Prophet Muḥammad. Having clear signs of the Prophet's truth with them, and professing a belief in the prophets who had foretold the advent of the last of the prophets, they still disbelieved in him. How should Allāh guide a people who thus rejected guidance?

462, 463, 464, see next page.

92 All food was lawful to the Children of Israel,[465] before the Torah was revealed, except that which Israel forbade himself. Say: Bring the Torah and read it, if you are truthful.[466]

كُلُّ الطَّعَامِ كَانَ حِلًّا لِّبَنِيٓ إِسْرَآءِيلَ إِلَّا
مَا حَرَّمَ إِسْرَآءِيلُ عَلٰى نَفْسِهٖ مِنْ قَبْلِ
أَنْ تُنَزَّلَ التَّوْرٰىةُ ۗ قُلْ فَأْتُوْا بِالتَّوْرٰىةِ
فَاتْلُوْهَآ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ○

93 So whoever forges a lie against Allāh after this, these are the wrongdoers.

فَمَنِ افْتَرٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ مِنْ بَعْدِ
ذٰلِكَ فَأُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ○

94 Say: Allāh speaks the truth; so follow the religion of Abraham, the upright one. And he was not one of the polytheists.

قُلْ صَدَقَ اللّٰهُ ۗ فَاتَّبِعُوْا مِلَّةَ إِبْرٰهِيْمَ
حَنِيْفًا ۗ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ○

95 Certainly the first house appointed for men is the one at Bakkah,[467] blessed and a guidance for the nations.[468]

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُّضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِيْ بِبَكَّةَ
مُبٰرَكًا وَّهُدًى لِّلْعٰلَمِيْنَ ○

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462 Instead of hell here it is the curse — remoteness from God — in which the guilty shall abide, and thus a light is thrown upon the nature of hell.

463 The persons spoken of here are the same as those spoken of in v. 85. They believed in the previous prophets but rejected the Prophet Muḥammad. Their repentance is not accepted, because they show no signs of real repentance. They continued to oppose, and tried to annihilate, the Truth.

464 The connection with the last verse is clear. No wealth will buy redemption for a man if he has wasted his opportunity here, and to make the best of that opportunity a man must spend here what he loves most. Attention is thus called to the sacrifices which it was necessary for the Muslims to make.

465 The Jews objected to the Muslims making use of certain foods which the law of Moses did not allow. An answer is given here that such foods were lawful for Abraham and his descendants, and Islām agreed in principle with the religion of Abraham. By *all food* is meant *all food made lawful for Muslims*.

466 What was that which Israel forbade himself? The commentators say it was camel's flesh. Camel's flesh was, no doubt, forbidden to the Israelites (Lev. 11:4) as were several other things which were lawful for Muslims. Elsewhere, after mentioning the foods prohibited to the Israelites in particular, it is added: "This was a punishment We gave them on account of their rebellion". So that which Israel forbade himself was, in fact, that which was made unlawful for the Israelites on account of their rebellious attitude towards Moses. Israel thus stands here for the Israelite nation. As regards their rebellious attitude, see 5:21-26, where it is explained that when they refused to follow Moses into the Holy Land they were made to wander about in the wilderness for forty years. The camel here was a necessity of life for them to carry them and their burdens from place to place.

467 Bakkah is the same as Makkah (R) from *tabākk* meaning *the crowding together* of men (Rz). Others say it is from a root meaning *the breaking of the neck*, and the name is given to it because whenever a tyrant forced his way to it, his neck was broken (Rz). Some think that Bakkah is the name of the mosque or the House itself that is in Makkah. The Jews and the Christians are told that the Temple at Jerusalem was erected long after Abraham, while the Holy House at Makkah was there even before Abraham, and was, in fact, the first House on earth for the worship of the Divine Being. The subject has been fully discussed in 168a.

468 If, on the one hand, Makkah is declared to be the *first House* raised on earth for the worship of the Divine Being, it is, on the other, announced to be

96 In it are clear signs: (It is) the Place of Abraham; and whoever enters it is safe; and pilgrimage to the House is a duty which men owe to Allāh — whoever can find a way to it.[469] And whoever disbelieves, surely Allāh is above need of the worlds.

فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ۚ وَمَنْ
دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا ۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ
الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ۚ وَمَنْ
كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ ○

97 Say: O People of the Book, why do you disbelieve in the messages of Allāh? And Allāh is a witness of what you do.

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ
اللَّهِ ۖ وَاللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَىٰ مَا تَعْمَلُونَ ○

98 Say: O People of the Book, why do you hinder those who believe from the way of Allāh, seeking (to make) it crooked, while you are witnesses? And Allāh is not heedless of what you do.[469a]

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ مَنْ آمَنَ تَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا وَأَنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءُ ۗ
وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ○

99 O you who believe, if you obey a party from among those who have been given the Book, they will turn you back as disbelievers after your belief.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنْ تُطِيعُوا فَرِيقًا مِنَ
الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ يَرُدُّوكُمْ بَعْدَ
إِيمَانِكُمْ كَافِرِينَ ○

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mubārak, which word, though ordinarily rendered as *blessed,* signifies the *continuance for ever* of the blessings which a thing possesses or that from which extensive good flows (LA).

Thus Makkah is the first spiritual centre that was appointed for men, and it is the ultimate spiritual centre for the whole of humanity.

469 The clear signs in Makkah as enumerated here, are three, and these, in fact, are three prophecies with regard to the future of Makkah. The first sign is that it is the Place of Abraham which has already been declared to be the Muslim centre (168b). Hence the first prophecy is that the doctrine of the Unity of the Divine Being will be proclaimed to the whole world from this centre. The second sign is that Makkah will always be secure, i.e., it shall not fall into the hands of an enemy who should destroy it. There is a saying of the Prophet to the effect that the Antichrist and the plague will not enter Makkah and Madīnah (B. 29:9). Thus its security is assured both physically and spiritually. The third prophecy is that a pilgrimage to the Sacred House shall continue to be made for ever, and no power in the world shall ever be able to put a stop to it. The most striking fact about these prophecies is that they were all announced at a time when the Prophet and his followers had apparently been driven away for ever from the Sacred Place, when that place was in the exclusive possession of an enemy who did not allow the Muslims to visit the place even during the sacred months, and when the small Muslim community was in danger of being utterly destroyed by that powerful enemy at any moment. It may be added here that the pilgrimage to the Sacred House is not an unconditional obligation; it is incumbent only on those who are able to undertake a journey to it.

469a The Jews and the Christians had secretly joined hands with the idolaters of Arabia to crush Islām.

100 And how can you disbelieve while to you are recited the messages of Allāh, and among you is His Messenger? And whoever holds fast to Allāh, he indeed is guided to a right path.

وَكَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ وَأَنْتُمْ تُتْلٰى عَلَيْكُمْ
اٰيٰتُ اللّٰهِ وَفِيْكُمْ رَسُوْلُهٗ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّعْتَصِمْ
بِاللّٰهِ فَقَدْ هُدِيَ اِلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ۝

SECTION 11 : **Muslims exhorted to remain united**

101 O you who believe, keep your duty to Allāh, as it ought to be kept, and die not unless you are Muslims.[470]

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ تُقٰتِهٖ
وَلَا تَمُوْتُنَّ اِلَّا وَاَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ ۝

102 And hold fast by the covenant of Allāh[471] all together and be not disunited. And remember Allāh's favour to you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts so by His favour you became brethren. And you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it.[472] Thus Allāh makes clear to you His messages that you may be guided.

وَاعْتَصِمُوْا بِحَبْلِ اللّٰهِ جَمِيْعًا وَّلَا تَفَرَّقُوْا ۪
وَاذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ اِذْ كُنْتُمْ اَعْدَآءً
فَاَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوْبِكُمْ فَاَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهٖۤ
اِخْوَانًا ۚ وَكُنْتُمْ عَلٰى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ
النَّارِ فَاَنْقَذَكُمْ مِّنْهَا ؕ كَذٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ
لَكُمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُوْنَ ۝

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470 The controversy with the People of the Book having come to an end, and the truth of Islām having been established, the Muslims are now exhorted, first to be individually conscious of the duty they owe to God (v. 101), and then to remain united in carrying the message of Islām to the whole world (v. 102). Every Muslim must live a life of true submission to God, so that when death comes to him it should find him a Muslim. As v. 103 shows, the Muslim's great duty to which attention is called here is the carrying of the message of Islām to others.

471 The Arabic word for covenant is *ḥabl,* which means primarily *a rope* or *a cord,* and hence *a bond, a cause of union, a bond of love* or *friendship, a covenant* or *a compact by which one becomes responsible for the safety of a person or a thing* (LL). By *ḥabl-Allāh* or *the covenant of Allāh,* is meant *the Qur'ān,* a significance supported by two sayings of the Prophet, according to one of which *the Book of Allāh is the covenant* (or *rope*) *of Allāh,* and according to the other *the Qur'ān is the firm covenant* (or *rope*) *of Allāh* (AH). All Muslims, we are here told, should be united in holding fast to the Qur'ān and carrying its message to other people.

472 Before the advent of the Holy Prophet, the Arabs were in a state of continual internecine warfare which threatened to devastate the whole country. As a modern writer says: "A more disunited people it would be hard to find, till suddenly, the miracle took place! A man arose who by his personality and by his claim to direct Divine guidance, actually brought about the impossible — namely, the union of all these warring factions" (Ins and Outs of Mespot, p. 99).

103 And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful.[473]

وَلْتَكُنْ مِّنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَّدْعُوْنَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۭ وَأُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ ○

104 And be not like those who became divided and disagreed after clear arguments had come to them. And for them is a grievous chastisement.

وَلَا تَكُوْنُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ تَفَرَّقُوْا وَاخْتَلَفُوْا مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنٰتُ ۭ وَأُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيْمٌ ○

105 On the day when (some) faces turn white and (some) faces turn black. Then as to those whose faces are black: Did you disbelieve after your belief? So taste the chastisement because you disbelieved.[474]

يَّوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوْهٌ وَّتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوْهٌ ۚ فَأَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ اسْوَدَّتْ وُجُوْهُهُمْ ۣ أَكَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيْمَانِكُمْ فَذُوْقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُوْنَ ○

106 And as to those whose faces are white, they shall be in Allāh's mercy. Therein they shall abide.

وَأَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ ابْيَضَّتْ وُجُوْهُهُمْ فَفِيْ رَحْمَةِ اللّٰهِ ۭ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ○

107 These are the messages of Allāh which We recite to thee with truth. And Allāh desires no injustice to (His) creatures.

تِلْكَ اٰيٰتُ اللّٰهِ نَتْلُوْهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ ۭ وَمَا اللّٰهُ يُرِيْدُ ظُلْمًا لِّلْعٰلَمِيْنَ ○

108 And to Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. And to Allāh are all affairs returned.

وَلِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۭ وَإِلَى اللّٰهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُوْرُ ○

It should be noted that in Arabic literature and in the Qur'ān, *nār*, or *fire*, is often a symbol of *war*. The Arabs used to kindle a *fire* as a sign that war was contemplated, so that the tribes should assemble. Hence the use of the word as implying war. In the Qur'ān itself we read, "whenever they kindle a fire for war, Allāh puts it out" (5:64).

473 The heated imagination of a Christian annotator sees a flash of "the sword" in these words. Compare 9:122: "And the believers should not go forth all together; why should not a company from every party from among them go forth, to obtain understanding in religion and to warn their people when they come back to them that they may be cautious?" Both verses, in fact, direct the Muslims to have always among them a missionary party, whose only object should be the propagation of Islām and rightly directing their own people. This is the most neglected injunction of the Qur'ān in our day. Muslims have arrangements for all things but have no arrangements for inviting people to the great truth revealed in the Holy Qur'ān. The word *khair* means *good*, and the Qur'ān is called *khair* in 2:105.

474 By *faces turning white* is meant *their being expressive of joy*, and by *their turning black, their being expressive of sorrow* (R, LL). Az says you say a man is *abyaḍ* (white) when you mean that he is free from dross and defects (T).

SECTION 12 : **Relations of Jews with Muslims**

109 You are the best nation raised up for men: you enjoin good and forbid evil and you believe in Allāh.[475] And if the People of the Book had believed, it would have been better for them. Some of them are believers but most of them are transgressors.

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُوْنَ
بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُوْنَ
بِاللّٰهِ ۗ وَلَوْ اٰمَنَ اَهْلُ الْكِتٰبِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ۚ
مِنْهُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ وَاَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفٰسِقُوْنَ ۝

110 They will not harm you save a slight hurt. And if they fight you, they will turn (their) backs to you. Then they will not be helped.[476]

لَنْ يَّضُرُّوْكُمْ اِلَّآ اَذًى ۗ وَاِنْ يُّقَاتِلُوْكُمْ
يُوَلُّوْكُمُ الْاَدْبَارَ ۗ ثُمَّ لَا يُنْصَرُوْنَ ۝

111 Abasement will be their lot wherever they are found, except under a covenant with Allāh and a covenant with men, and they shall incur the wrath of Allāh, and humiliation will be made to cling to them. This is because they disbelieved in the messages of Allāh and killed the prophets unjustly. This is because they disobeyed and exceeded the limits.[477]

ضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ اَيْنَ مَا ثُقِفُوْٓا اِلَّا
بِحَبْلٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَحَبْلٍ مِّنَ النَّاسِ وَبَآءُوْ
بِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَسْكَنَةُ ۗ
ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا يَكْفُرُوْنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ
وَيَقْتُلُوْنَ الْاَنْۢبِيَآءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ ۗ ذٰلِكَ
بِمَا عَصَوْا وَّكَانُوْا يَعْتَدُوْنَ ۝

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475 Not only are the Muslims the chosen people of God, who are now called upon to be the standard-bearers of Truth in the world, but they are at the same time declared to be the best of the people that had ever been chosen for this purpose. This was no doubt due to the excellence of that Great Teacher who thoroughly purified them of the worst vices and made perfect the light within them. No prophet ever found a people in a worse condition, and none ever raised his people to such eminence. Note that the excellence of the Muslim people lies in their enjoining good and forbidding evil and in their great faith in Allāh. If they lose these characteristics, they lose their excellence as well.

476 The Jews in Arabia sided with the enemies of Islām in their endeavour to extirpate the new religion, and this notwithstanding their pact with the Muslims, but they were not successful in inflicting any serious harm upon the Muslims, and whenever they openly faced the Muslims they fled. As the concluding words show, the idolaters, who gave them secret promises of help, never came to their aid when they were in distress.

477 Almost the same words, excluding the exception, occur in 2:61. The Jews had already been subjected to the greatest humiliation and disgrace before the appearance of the Prophet. But with the advent of Islām they could better their condition either by accepting the covenant of Allāh, by which is meant the acceptance of Islām, or by making a compact of security with such men as could give them protection. This remains true to this day

112 They are not all alike. Of the People of the Book there is an upright party who recite Allāh's messages in the night-time and they adore (Him).

لَيْسُوْا سَوَآءً ۭ مِنْ اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ اُمَّةٌ قَآئِمَةٌ يَّتْلُوْنَ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ اٰنَآءَ الَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُوْنَ ○

113 They believe in Allāh and the Last Day, and they enjoin good and forbid evil and vie one with another in good deeds. And those are among the righteous.

يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَيَاْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُسَارِعُوْنَ فِي الْخَيْرٰتِ ۭ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ مِنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ○

114 And whatever good they do, they will not be denied it. And Allāh knows those who keep their duty.[478]

وَمَا يَفْعَلُوْا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَنْ يُّكْفَرُوْهُ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِالْمُتَّقِيْنَ ○

115 Those who disbelieve, neither their wealth nor their children will avail them aught against Allāh. And these are the companions of the Fire ; therein they abide.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ اَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَآ اَوْلَادُهُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ شَيْئًا ۭ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ اَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ ۚ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ○

116 The likeness of that which they spend in the life of this world is as the likeness of wind in which is intense cold ; it smites the harvest of a people who are unjust to themselves and destroys it. And Allāh wronged them not but they wronged themselves.[479]

مَثَلُ مَا يُنْفِقُوْنَ فِيْ هٰذِهِ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ رِيْحٍ فِيْهَا صِرٌّ اَصَابَتْ حَرْثَ قَوْمٍ ظَلَمُوْٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ فَاَهْلَكَتْهُ ۭ وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ اللّٰهُ وَلٰكِنْ اَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُوْنَ ○

117 O you who believe, take not for intimate friends others than your own people :[480] they spare no pains to

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوْا بِطَانَةً مِّنْ دُوْنِكُمْ لَا يَاْلُوْنَكُمْ خَبَالًا ۭ وَدُّوْا مَا

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478 The opinion has been held, very plausibly indeed, that vv. 112-114 speak of the good among the Jews and the Christians, and not of those who became converts to Islām, because the Muslims could not be said to be *a party of the People of the Book*. It is a fact that the Qur'ān does not deny that there is good in others, its own eminence over others lying in the fact that it makes man attain the highest degree of perfection in goodness. It is for this reason that the description of the upright party among the followers of the Book concludes with the words, *whatever good they do, they will not be denied it.* Generally, however, the commentators are of opinion that the description given here refers to those Jews and Christians who became converts to Islām.

479 The failure which is throughout the Holy Qur'ān prophesied for the enemies of Islām is referred to here. The parable is similar to the one given in 68 : 17-33.

480 As the context shows, the Jews assisted the enemies of Islām to make war upon the Muslims, so the Muslims were warned against close and intimate relations with them ; see 60 : 8, 9.

cause you loss. They love that which distresses you. Vehement hatred has already appeared from out of their mouths, and that which their hearts conceal is greater still. Indeed We have made the messages clear to you, if you understand.

عَنِتُّمْ ۚ قَدْ بَدَتِ الْبَغْضَاءُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ ۖ
وَمَا تُخْفِي صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ ۚ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا
لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ ۖ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ○

118 Lo! you are they who will love them while they love you not,[481] and you believe in the Book, (in) the whole of it. And when they meet you they say, We believe, and when they are alone, they bite (their) finger tips in rage against you. Say: Die in your rage. Surely Allāh is Knower of what is in the hearts.

هَا أَنْتُمْ أُولَاءِ تُحِبُّونَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِبُّونَكُمْ
وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْكِتَابِ كُلِّهِ وَإِذَا لَقُوكُمْ
قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا عَضُّوا عَلَيْكُمُ
الْأَنَامِلَ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ ۚ قُلْ مُوتُوا بِغَيْظِكُمْ ۗ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ○

119 If good befalls you, it grieves them, and if an evil afflicts you, they rejoice at it. And if you are patient and keep your duty, their struggle will not injure you in any way. Surely Allāh encompasses what they do.

إِنْ تَمْسَسْكُمْ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ وَإِنْ
تُصِبْكُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَفْرَحُوا بِهَا ۖ وَإِنْ
تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ
شَيْئًا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ ○

SECTION 13 : **The Battle of Uhud**

120 And when thou didst go forth early in the morning from thy family, to assign to the believers their positions for the battle. And Allāh is Hearing, Knowing.[482]

وَإِذْ غَدَوْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ تُبَوِّئُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
مَقَاعِدَ لِلْقِتَالِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ○

481 This verse clearly indicates the difficulties which the Muslims had in establishing friendly and loving relations with non-Muslims. The Muslims would fain proffer friendship, but the other party was always on the look-out for some opportunity to inflict loss on them, and the candour of the Muslims was repaid with insincerity and treachery.

482 It is to the events of the battle of Uḥud that this and the following sections are devoted. In the third year of the Hijrah Abū Sufyan marched against Madīnah. The Prophet at first intended to stay within the town, but afterwards marched into the open field with a thousand men, one-third of whom, under the leadership of 'Abd Allāh ibn Ubayy, the great hypocrite leader, left him and returned to Madīnah. The enemy were first completely routed, but fifty Muslim archers, who were placed in a strong position to cut off the retreat of the enemy, made a mistake, and in order to join in the pursuit left their position. The enemy fell back upon the Muslims who were now in disorder and had lost their naturally fortified position, and after inflicting some loss upon them, left the field secure

121 When two parties[483] from among you thought of showing cowardice, and Allāh was the Guardian of them both. And in Allāh should the believers trust.[484]

إِذْ هَمَّتْ طَّآئِفَتٰنِ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ تَفْشَلَا وَاللّٰهُ وَلِيُّهُمَا ۖ وَعَلَى اللّٰهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ۝

122 And Allāh certainly helped you at Badr when you were weak. So keep your duty to Allāh that you may give thanks.

وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللّٰهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَّأَنْتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ ۚ فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ ۝

123 When thou didst say to the believers: Does it not suffice you that your Lord should help you with three thousand angels sent down ?[485]

إِذْ تَقُوْلُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ أَلَنْ يَّكْفِيَكُمْ أَنْ يُّمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِثَلٰثَةِ اٰلٰفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ مُنْزَلِيْنَ ۝

124 Yea, if you are steadfast and keep your duty, and they come upon you in a headlong manner, your Lord will assist you with five thousand of havoc-making angels.[486]

بَلٰٓى ۙ إِنْ تَصْبِرُوْا وَتَتَّقُوْا وَيَأْتُوْكُمْ مِّنْ فَوْرِهِمْ هٰذَا يُمْدِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ اٰلٰفٍ مِّنَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِيْنَ ۝

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from the pursuit of the Muslim force. It was not a victory for the Quraish, who thought it safe to go back when they found the Muslims involved in their own troubles. They could not take a single prisoner of war, nor had they the courage to attack Madīnah, which they did two years later with a very strong force.

483 The two tribes of the *Banū Salimah* and the *Banū Ḥārithah* are meant (B. 64:18).

484 This shows that they did not actually show cowardice. The desertion of the Muslim force by 'Abd Allāh ibn Ubayy with his three hundred men made some of the Muslims also entertain the idea of deserting the army on account of superior enemy forces, but they did not actually desert it.

485 The enemy numbered only one thousand where one thousand angels are stated to have been sent (8:9). Now when the enemy was three thousand strong, the Muslims were promised the help of three thousand angels. The fulfilment of this promise is referred to in v. 151. What was the object of the coming of the angels? The matter is fully explained in the 8th chapter in connection with the promise of the coming of angels in the battle of Badr. As here, it is first stated there that the promise was given only "as good news, and that your hearts might be at ease thereby, and victory is only from Allāh" (8:10). The verse that follows makes the object clearer: "When He caused calm to fall on you as a security from Him, and sent down upon you water from the clouds that He might thereby purify you and take away from you the uncleanness of the devil, and that He might fortify your hearts and steady your footsteps thereby". Hence the object was to strengthen the Muslims by improving their position in the field of battle and by strengthening their hearts, and this is expressed still more clearly further on: "When thy Lord revealed to the angels: I am with you, so make firm those who believe; I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve" (8:12). The believers being thus strengthened while terror was cast into the enemy's heart, the object of sending the angels was achieved, and the small Muslim force was able to defeat a powerful enemy that outnumbered them by three to one.

486 The word used in the original is ***musawwim*** and not ***musawwam***, ***and*** it is from ***sawwama 'ala al-qaum*** meaning ***he urged his horse against the people***

125 And Allāh made it only as good news for you, and that your hearts might be at ease thereby. And help comes only from Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise.

وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللّٰهُ اِلَّا بُشْرٰی لَکُمْ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوْبُکُمْ بِهٖ ؕ وَمَا النَّصْرُ اِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ الْعَزِیْزِ الْحَکِیْمِ ۙ

126 That He may cut off a part of those who disbelieve or abase them so that they should return in failure.[487]

لِیَقْطَعَ طَرَفًا مِّنَ الَّذِیْنَ کَفَرُوْۤا اَوْ یَکْبِتَهُمْ فَیَنْقَلِبُوْا خَآئِبِیْنَ

127 Thou hast no concern in the matter whether He turns to them (mercifully) or chastises them ; surely they are wrongdoers.[488]

لَیْسَ لَکَ مِنَ الْاَمْرِ شَیْءٌ اَوْ یَتُوْبَ عَلَیْهِمْ اَوْ یُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَاِنَّهُمْ ظٰلِمُوْنَ

128 And to Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. He forgives whom He pleases and chastises whom He pleases. And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

وَلِلّٰهِ مَا فِی السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِی الْاَرْضِ ؕ یَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ یَّشَآءُ وَیُعَذِّبُ مَنْ یَّشَآءُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِیْمٌ ؑ

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and made havoc among them. Hence *musawwim* is *one who makes havoc.* The assistance of the angels stated in this verse refers to a third occasion, when the enemy came "in a headlong manner", all the tribes uniting with the Quraish to crush the Muslims. This happened in the battle of *Aḥzāb*, or the Confederates, when the *Quraish*, whose number was very likely about five thousand, with the help of strong allied forces — the total strength being near twenty thousand — suddenly attacked Madīnah. The dispersal of such a large army when the Muslims were only about fourteen hundred was no doubt due to Divine help, sent through angelic hosts.

487 Notwithstanding that the object of the disbelievers in their war on the Muslims was their extirpation, the latter are told that the Divine object in punishing the disbelievers by war was not to extirpate them, but to cut off their ringleaders and chiefs. The word *ṭaraf* signifies *a part* or *a portion* of a thing (R), and hence it is applied to *a company of men,* and also to *leading men.* LL translates *aṭrāf al-arḍ* as meaning *the exalted* or *the noble and the learned men of the earth.* When the leaders of mischief were cut off, the rest would be disappointed of attaining the object of extirpating Islām, and persecution would cease. The verses that follow corroborate this conclusion. The enemy's description as having returned in failure in this battle shows clearly that they were not successful or victorious in the battle. Their great general *Khālid* became a convert to Islām on his way to Makkah.

488 "Ibn 'Umar said that he heard the Messenger of Allāh saying, when he raised his head after *rukū'* in the last *rak'ah* of the morning prayer: 'O Allāh, curse such and such people . . .' So Allāh revealed to him, Thou hast no concern in the matter . . . Surely they are wrongdoers" (B. 64:22). As a mortal the Prophet might have sometimes desired a severe punishment for his enemies; but he is told that it was not his concern, for Allāh might as well forgive them, even though they deserved punishment. The all-comprehensiveness of the Divine mercy expressed in this verse is unapproached in sacred literature.

SECTION 14 : **What Success meant for the Muslims**

129 O you who believe, devour not usury, doubling and redoubling, and keep your duty to Allāh, that you may be successful.[489]

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَاْكُلُوا الرِّبٰوٓا اَضْعَافًا مُّضٰعَفَةً ۪ وَّاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ ۚ

130 And guard yourselves against the fire which has been prepared for the disbelievers.[490]

وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِيْۤ اُعِدَّتْ لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ ۚ

131 And obey Allāh and the Messenger, that you may be shown mercy.[491]

وَاَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَالرَّسُوْلَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُوْنَ ۚ

132 And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden, as wide as the heavens and the earth; it is prepared for those who keep their duty:

وَسَارِعُوْۤا اِلٰى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمٰوٰتُ وَالْاَرْضُ ۙ اُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ۙ

133 Those who spend in ease as well as in adversity and those who restrain (their) anger and pardon men. And Allāh loves the doers of good (to others).[492]

الَّذِيْنَ يُنْفِقُوْنَ فِي السَّرَّآءِ وَالضَّرَّآءِ وَالْكٰظِمِيْنَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِيْنَ عَنِ النَّاسِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ۚ

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489 It is not in temporal greatness and the accumulation of wealth that the Muslims' real success lies; hence usury which engenders love of wealth is forbidden. See 364, where it is shown how the subject of usury is connected with war. It may be added that borrowing money on interest is also forbidden (Msh. 12:4). Not only individuals, but even Muslim kingdoms, have been ruined by borrowing large sums of money on interest, leading to foreign interference in their affairs.

490 The fire in this case is excessive love of wealth, as plainly stated elsewhere: "Woe to every slanderer, defamer, who amasses wealth; he thinks that his wealth will make him abide . . . It is the fire kindled by Allāh which rises above the hearts" (104:1-7).

491 The loss suffered at Uḥud was due to disobedience in relation to a certain position which was forsaken against the orders of the Prophet. The retreating Makkan army turned upon the pursuers, among whom disorder had ensued, and several Muslims were slain, the Prophet himself being wounded. So they are told that they must obey God and His Messenger if they would have Divine mercy.

492 Restraining of anger, pardoning, and doing good to each other besides being great moral qualities, strengthen the bond of union which is so necessary for success. The verse has on many occasions inspired the noblest thoughts of toleration and charitableness. Ḥasan's servant having on one occasion upset a boiling hot dish on his master, obtained his liberty along with monetary help by reciting this verse. Thinking that he would be punished for his fault, he repeated the words: "Those who restrain their anger." Ḥasan said he was not angry. "And pardon men," added the servant. Ḥasan said: "I pardon you." "And Allāh loves the doers of good," concluded the offending slave. "I give you liberty and four hundred pieces of silver," was the response. "A noble instance of moderation and generosity," is Sale's comment upon this incident.

134 *And those who, when they commit an indecency or wrong their souls, remember Allāh and ask forgiveness for their sins. And who forgives sins but Allāh ? And they persist not knowingly in what they do.*

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَن يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ○

135 Their reward is protection from their Lord, and Gardens wherein flow rivers, to abide in them. And excellent is the reward of the workers !

أُولَٰئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَٰمِلِينَ ○

136 Indeed there have been examples[493] before you ; so travel in the earth and see what was the end of the deniers.

قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَٰقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ○

137 This is a clear statement for men, and a guidance and an admonition to those who would keep their duty.

هَٰذَا بَيَانٌ لِّلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ○

138 And be not weak-hearted, nor grieve, and you will have the upper hand if you are believers.

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنتُمُ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ○

139 If a wound has afflicted you, a wound like it has also afflicted the (disbelieving) people. And We bring these days to men by turns, that Allāh may know[494] those who believe and take witnesses from among you. And Allāh loves not the wrongdoers,

إِن يَمْسَسْكُمْ قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ قَرْحٌ مِّثْلُهُ ۚ وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّٰلِمِينَ ○

140 And that He may purge those who believe and deprive the disbelievers of blessings.

وَلِيُمَحِّصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَيَمْحَقَ الْكَٰفِرِينَ ○

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493 *Sunan* is plural of *sunnah,* meaning *a way* or *rule* or *manner of acting* or *conduct* or *life* or *the like* (LL). Hence the significance here is *ways* or *examples of Allāh's dealing with the righteous and the wicked.*

494 That Allāh knows all that is seen or unseen and all that is manifest or concealed is asserted in numerous places in the Holy Qur'ān. The *knowing* here and the *not knowing* in v. 141 refer to the knowledge of the event. Allāh knew who *would prove* themselves true believers, who would strive hard in His way, and who would be steadfast under trials; but who *did* prove themselves true believers, who *did* strive hard, and who *were* steadfast in suffering could only be

141 Do you think that you will enter the Garden while Allāh has not yet known those from among you who strive hard (nor) known the steadfast?

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جٰهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ الصّٰبِرِينَ ۝

142 And certainly you desired death before you met it. So indeed you have seen it now while you look (at it).[495]

وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَلْقَوْهُ فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ ۝

SECTION 15 : **Sufferings to be met with Perseverance**

143 And Muhammad is but a messenger — messengers have already passed away before him.[496] If then he dies or is killed, will you turn back upon your heels? And he who turns back upon his heels will do no harm at all to Allāh. And Allāh will reward the grateful.[497]

وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِنْ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلٰى أَعْقَابِكُمْ وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلٰى عَقِبَيْهِ فَلَنْ يَضُرَّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا وَسَيَجْزِي اللَّهُ الشّٰكِرِينَ ۝

144 And no soul can die but with Allāh's permission — the term is fixed.[498] And whoever desires the reward of this world, We give him of it, and whoever desires the reward of the Hereafter, We give him of it. And We shall reward the grateful.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ كِتٰبًا مُؤَجَّلًا وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الْآخِرَةِ نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَسَنَجْزِي الشّٰكِرِينَ ۝

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said to be known when these things had happened.

495 This refers to the desire of those who insisted that they should meet the enemy in the open field, while the Prophet's own desire was that the Muslims should defend themselves within Madīnah. Their desire for fighting the enemy or for being slain in the cause of truth is called a desire for death.

496 The Prophet received severe wounds in the battle of Uḥud; there was even a rumour that he was killed. It is to this that the verse refers. Even if the Prophet were killed, Islām was so far superior to all forms of faith that the Muslims could not give up Islām. Truth was truth, though its advocate might be killed in a battle; nor could falsehood and superstition be accepted, though their advocates might prevail for a time.

While this verse lays stress on the essential truth of Islām, it served another important purpose at the death of the Prophet. Some of the companions thought that the Prophet was not dead. Abū Bakr went in, and seeing that life had departed, ascended the pulpit and read this verse, which had a magical effect upon his hearers, all of them being convinced that the Prophet had passed away, as all

497, 498, see next page.

145 *And* how many a prophet has fought, with whom were many worshippers of the Lord.[499] So they did not lose heart on account of that which befell them in Allāh's way, nor did they weaken, nor did they abase themselves. And Allāh loves the steadfast.

وَكَاَيِّنْ مِّنْ نَّبِيٍّ قٰتَلَ ۙ مَعَهٗ رِبِّيُّوْنَ كَثِيْرٌ ۚ فَمَا وَهَنُوْا لِمَآ اَصَابَهُمْ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَمَا ضَعُفُوْا وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوْا ۗ وَاللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ○

146 And their cry was only that they said: Our Lord, grant us protection from our sins and our extravagance in our affair, and make firm our feet and grant us victory over the disbelieving people.

وَمَا كَانَ قَوْلَهُمْ اِلَّآ اَنْ قَالُوْا رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوْبَنَا وَاِسْرَافَنَا فِيْٓ اَمْرِنَا وَثَبِّتْ اَقْدَامَنَا وَانْصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿۱۴۷﴾

147 So Allāh gave them the reward of the world and a good reward of the Hereafter. And Allāh loves the doers of good (to others).

فَاٰتٰىهُمُ اللّٰهُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا وَحُسْنَ ثَوَابِ الْاٰخِرَةِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿۱۴۸﴾

SECTION 16 : **Causes of Misfortune in Uhud Battle**

148 O you who believe, if you obey those who disbelieve, they will make you turn back upon your heels, so you will turn back losers.[500]

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِنْ تُطِيْعُوا الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا يَرُدُّوْكُمْ عَلٰٓى اَعْقَابِكُمْ فَتَنْقَلِبُوْا خٰسِرِيْنَ ○

149 Nay, Allāh is your Patron, and He is the Best of the helpers.

بَلِ اللّٰهُ مَوْلٰىكُمْ ۚ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ النّٰصِرِيْنَ ○

prophets had passed away before him. The prophets were but mortals, and their span of mortal life must no doubt terminate like that of other mortals. This verse affords a conclusive proof that Jesus Christ was also dead; otherwise Abū Bakr's argument could not have silenced the doubters of the Prophet's death.

497 The doing of harm to Allāh stands for the doing of harm to the Divine cause, i.e. the Truth, which was now represented by Islām.

498 While the statement conveys a general truth which makes Muslims face death with complacence, the words seem to refer also to the death of the Prophet, giving an assurance to the Muslims that the time of his death had not yet come.

499 For the meaning of *ribbī*, see 456. It is a curious coincidence that Sale, Rodwell, and Palmer have all given a wrong translation of this verse: "How many prophets have encountered those who had many myriads of troops." This is Sale's rendering and the others are similar. I find no commentator lending any support to this significance, nor can the words bear this interpretation.

500 The war was carried on only with the object of making the Muslims renounce their religion, and hence they could not think of accepting the disbelievers as their rulers.

150 We will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve[501] because they set up with Allāh that for which He has sent down no authority, and their abode is the Fire. And evil is the abode of the wrong-doers.

سَنُلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ بِمَا أَشْرَكُوا بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا ۚ وَمَأْوَاهُمُ النَّارُ ۚ وَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى الظَّالِمِينَ ○

151 And Allāh certainly made good His promise to you[502] when you slew them by His permission, until you became weak-hearted and disputed about the affair and disobeyed after He had shown you that which you loved.[503] Of you were some who desired this world, and of you were some who desired the Hereafter.[504] Then He turned you away from them that He might try you; and He has indeed pardoned you.[505] And Allāh is Gracious to the believers.

وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ إِذْ تَحُسُّونَهُمْ بِإِذْنِهِ ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ وَتَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَرَاكُمْ مَا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ مِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ ۚ ثُمَّ صَرَفَكُمْ عَنْهُمْ لِيَبْتَلِيَكُمْ ۖ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنْكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ○

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501 Notwithstanding the great disproportion in numbers, the Muslims being less than one-fourth of their opponents, being at the same time not so well equipped as their foes, and in spite of the disorder into which the Muslim forces had fallen, the enemy had to flee, leaving the Muslims in the field, not even making a show of attacking Madīnah, which was quite defenceless. This clearly shows that they were terror-stricken even after they had inflicted some loss upon the Muslims, considering it safer to go back to Makkah while the Muslims were yet occupied with their own troubles and were unable to pursue them.

502 The promise is contained in v. 123: "When thou didst say to the believers, Does it not suffice you that your Lord should help you with three thousand angels?"

503 It clearly shows that the Muslims had obtained a victory at Uḥud, later incidents depriving them of the fruits of that victory. Though apparently all the fighters are spoken of here as becoming weak-hearted, the reference is only to that group of archers who disobeyed the Prophet's orders, as the words that follow show: *Of you were some who desired this world.* Nor did any of the Muslims show any weak-heartedness in fighting against the enemy. The weak-heartedness of a part of the archers who were placed in an important position to cut off the enemy's retreat consisted in their disobeying the clear orders of the Prophet: "If you see us overcoming the enemy leave not your position, and if you see the enemy overcoming us, leave not your position", the Prophet had told the archers. But they fell a prey to the love of the world and left their position to get a share in the booty when they saw the enemy fleeing before the Muslim onrush.

504 These were the two parties of the body of archers. When the enemy was apparently routed, some of these archers were led by the love of plunder to leave their position, while their chief, 'Abd Allāh ibn Jubair, with only some ten men, stuck to their post. Muslims were required to fight in Allāh's way, and if any Muslim fought for plunder, he fought for the love of this world and not in Allāh's way.

505 The enemy, who was being pursued, turned against the pursuers on seeing the important position of the archers vacated, and the result was that the

152 When you went away far, and paid no heed to anyone, and the Messenger was calling you in your rear.[506] So He gave you (another) grief for (your) first grief that you might not grieve at what escaped you, nor (at) what befell you. And Allāh is Aware of what you do.

إِذْ تُصْعِدُونَ وَلَا تَلْوُنَ عَلَىٰٓ أَحَدٍ وَّالرَّسُولُ
يَدْعُوكُمْ فِيٓ أُخْرٰىكُمْ فَأَثَابَكُمْ غَمًّۢا بِغَمٍّ
لِّكَيْلَا تَحْزَنُوا عَلٰى مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا مَآ أَصَابَكُمْ
وَاللّٰهُ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥٢﴾

153 Then after grief He sent down security on you, slumber overcoming a party of you,[507] while (there was) another party whom their own souls had rendered anxious — they entertained about Allāh thoughts of ignorance quite unjustly.[508] They said: Have we any hand in the affair?[509] Say: The affair is wholly (in the hands) of Allāh. They hide within their souls that which they would not reveal to thee. They say: Had we any hand in the affair, we would not have

ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ الْغَمِّ أَمَنَةً
نُّعَاسًا يَّغْشٰى طَآئِفَةً مِّنْكُمْ وَطَآئِفَةٌ قَدْ
أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ يَظُنُّونَ بِاللّٰهِ غَيْرَ
الْحَقِّ ظَنَّ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَقُولُونَ هَلْ لَّنَا
مِنَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَمْرَ كُلَّهٗ
لِلّٰهِ يُخْفُونَ فِيٓ أَنْفُسِهِمْ مَّا لَا يُبْدُونَ
لَكَ يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ

Muslims who were now in disorder on account of the pursuit found themselves helpless against the enemy who turned back on them, and some of them who were cut off from the main body took to flight. We are, however, here told that God pardoned them as their flight was the result of circumstances which were beyond their control. 'Uthman is said to have been one of them.

506 It refers to the Prophet's call, at whom the Muslims now saw that the attack of the enemy was directed. So they did not grieve for losing an opportunity of pursuing the enemy, but for the dangerous position in which they saw the Prophet. This is, in fact, plainly stated in what follows: "So that you might not grieve at what had escaped you," i.e. the booty which they would have had by pursuing the fleeing enemy, "nor at what befell you," i.e., the loss which they themselves suffered. *Athāba* sometimes conveys the idea of *giving one thing instead of another, the giving of a substitute* (LL). They forgot their own grief when they saw that it was the Prophet at whom the attack was directed now.

507 *Nu'ās* means *slight sleep*; it is said that *nu'ās* here implies *calm and quiet* (R). It must have happened when the enemy departed. The slumber was a sign of security, for no army could have gone to rest while yet in the field of battle if it had the least anxiety as to its security.

508 The persons spoken of here are the disaffected who took no part in fighting. They now gave vent to their hidden rancour against the Muslims. The evil thoughts which the hypocrites entertained about Allāh were that Allāh had not helped the Muslims.

509 The hypocrites sided with the minority whose counsel was that the Muslims should not fight the enemy in the open field and should remain besieged

been slain here.[510] Say: Had you remained in your houses, those for whom slaughter was ordained would have gone forth to the places where they would be slain.[511] And (this happened) that Allāh might test what was in your breasts and that He might purge what was in your hearts. And Allāh is Knower of what is in the breasts.[512]

مَّا قُتِلْنَا هٰهُنَا ۗ قُل لَّوْ كُنتُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ إِلٰى مَضَاجِعِهِمْ ۚ وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللّٰهُ مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ۝

154 Those of you who turned back on the day when the two armies met, only the devil sought to cause them to make a slip on account of some deeds they had done, and certainly Allāh has pardoned them. Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Forbearing.[512a]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا مِنكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعٰنِ إِنَّمَا اسْتَزَلَّهُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا ۚ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللّٰهُ عَنْهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ۝

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in Madīnah. The majority was, however, in favour of going out and meeting the enemy where it had encamped. The Prophet decided that the majority vote must be accepted. Hence the hypocrites murmuring as to why their counsel was not accepted.

510 Their contention was that the disaster would not have befallen the Muslims if their advice as to remaining within the town had been accepted. They took no part in fighting but they spoke of the loss of the Muslims as their own loss.

511 Remaining in the houses here signifies meeting the enemy while remaining in Madīnah. By those for whom slaughter was ordained are meant the martyrs of Uḥud. The murmurings of the hypocrites are met with the reply that even if the Muslims had defended themselves by remaining in Madīnah, those who laid down their lives in the field of Uḥud would have laid them down in Madīnah as well. Death was moreover a thing ordained.

512 This explains Allāh's testing what is in the hearts. He knows it, and His testing it means making it manifest to others. The attitude of the hypocrites was made manifest by the fighting in Uhud. It would have remained hidden if the battle had been fought in Madīnah.

512a The persons spoken of here are those who were unable to join the main Muslim army and fled to Madīnah, or in some other direction. However pressed they may have been, it was not right on their part to leave the field of battle. Here it is spoken of as a slip on their part; it did not amount to intentional disobedience and God granted them a free pardon.

SECTION 17 : **Battle of Uḥud afforded a distinction**

155 O you who believe, be not like those who disbelieve and say of their brethren when they travel in the earth or engage in fighting : Had they been with us, they would not have died, or been slain ;[513] that Allāh may make it to be a regret in their hearts. And Allāh gives life and causes death. And Allāh is Seer of what you do.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَكُوْنُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ
كَفَرُوْا وَقَالُوْا لِاِخْوَانِهِمْ اِذَا ضَرَبُوْا فِي
الْاَرْضِ اَوْ كَانُوْا غُزًّى لَّوْ كَانُوْا عِنْدَنَا
مَا مَاتُوْا وَمَا قُتِلُوْا ۚ لِيَجْعَلَ اللّٰهُ ذٰلِكَ
حَسْرَةً فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ يُحْيٖ وَيُمِيْتُ ۗ
وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ○

156 And if you are slain in Allāh's way or you die, surely Allāh's protection and (His) mercy are better than what they amass.

وَلَئِنْ قُتِلْتُمْ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ اَوْ مُتُّمْ
لَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَرَحْمَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا
يَجْمَعُوْنَ ○

157 And if you die or you are slain, to Allāh you are gathered.

وَلَئِنْ مُّتُّمْ اَوْ قُتِلْتُمْ لَاِالَى اللّٰهِ تُحْشَرُوْنَ ○

158 Thus it is by Allāh's mercy that thou art gentle to them. And hadst thou been rough, hard-hearted, they would certainly have dispersed from around thee.[514] So pardon them and ask protection for them, and consult them in (important) matters.[515] But when thou hast determined, put thy trust in Allāh.[516] Surely Allāh loves those who trust (in Him).

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ
فَظًّا غَلِيْظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوْا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ ۠
فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ
فِي الْاَمْرِ ۚ فَاِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللّٰهِ ۗ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِيْنَ ○

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513 By "their brethren" are meant their relatives who were sincere in their profession of Islām, and who had to lay down their lives in defence of their faith.

514 It is remarkable that the Holy Qur'ān calls attention to the Prophet's gentle dealing with those around him when speaking of his experience in the field of battle as a general, leading his men against overwhelming forces, a capacity which required him to be very strict in punishing any delinquency. But he was not a mere general. His ability in leading his men, in occupying positions of advantage in the field of battle, and in directing a handful of men to face three, four, and sometimes ten times their own number, marks him out as the ablest general the world has ever seen, yet his gentle manners and his practical forbearance in dealing with his friends as well as foes stand in remarkable contrast

515, 516, see next page.

159 If Allāh helps you, there is none that can overcome you; and if He forsakes you, who is there that can help you after Him? And in Allāh should the believers put their trust.

إِنْ يَنْصُرْكُمُ اللّٰهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ ۚ وَإِنْ يَخْذُلْكُمْ فَمَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَنْصُرُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ ۗ وَعَلَى اللّٰهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ○

160 And it is not for a prophet to act dishonestly.[517] And whoever acts dishonestly will bring his dishonesty on the day of Resurrection. Then shall every soul be paid back fully what it has earned, and they will not be wronged.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغُلَّ ۗ وَمَنْ يَغْلُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۚ ثُمَّ تُوَفّٰى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ○

161 Is then he who follows the pleasure of Allāh like him who incurs Allāh's displeasure, and his abode is hell? And it is an evil destination.

أَفَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَ اللّٰهِ كَمَنْ بَاءَ بِسَخَطٍ مِنَ اللّٰهِ وَمَأْوٰىهُ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ○

162 There are grades with Allāh. And Allāh is Seer of what they do.

هُمْ دَرَجٰتٌ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ○

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with his capacity as a commander in the field of battle. It is related that after the Uḥud trouble the Prophet did not speak even a harsh word to those who were guilty of disobeying his orders (Rz).

The Qur'ān is full of references to the Holy Prophet's gentleness and kind dealing with his fellow-men. The following verse gives us an insight into this trait of his character: "Certainly a Messenger has come to you from among yourselves; grievous to him is your falling into distress, excessively solicitous respecting you, to the believers he is compassionate, merciful" (9:128).

515 The Prophet had gone out to meet the enemy as the result of a consultation and against his own inclination, for he sided with the minority in the opinion that they should not meet the enemy in the open field. Apparently that council had brought about the present trouble, yet so firm was he in adhering to sound principles that at such a critical time he did not waver for a minute from the course of taking counsel in important matters, and just at this juncture we find Divine revelation clearly laying down the principle of adhering to counsel.

516 It should be noted that trusting in Allāh does not imply inaction. Everything necessary is to be done, a course of action must be determined in the proper manner, and then in pursuing that course trust must be placed in Allāh, which clearly implies that a man should do his utmost and then leave the consequences to Allāh; that is, he must be resigned to what follows, taking the consequences with a cool mind.

517 The words may be taken in a general sense, the indication being that the disaster was not due to any wrongful act on the part of the Prophet, as a prophet cannot act wrongfully or dishonestly. Or, there may be a hint to some such idea lurking in the minds of the hypocrites or the disobeying archers. Prophets are raised to purify others as stated further on in v. 163, and they are therefore free from all impurities.

163 Certainly Allāh conferred a favour on the believers when He raised among them a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His messages and purifying them, and teaching them the Book and the Wisdom, although before that they were surely in manifest error.

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللّٰهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اِذْ بَعَثَ فِيْهِمْ رَسُوْلًا مِّنْ اَنْفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ وَيُزَكِّيْهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ ۚ وَاِنْ كَانُوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِيْ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ○

164 What! When a misfortune befell you, and you had inflicted twice as much, you say: Whence is this? Say: It is from yourselves. Surely Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.[518]

اَوَلَمَّآ اَصَابَتْكُمْ مُّصِيْبَةٌ قَدْ اَصَبْتُمْ مِّثْلَيْهَا ۙ قُلْتُمْ اَنّٰى هٰذَا ؕ قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اَنْفُسِكُمْ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ○

165 And that which befell you on the day when the two armies met was by Allāh's permission, that He might know the believers,

وَمَآ اَصَابَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعٰنِ فَبِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۙ○

166 And that He might know the hypocrites. And it was said to them: Come, fight in Allāh's way, or defend yourselves.[519] They said: If we knew fighting,[520] we would have followed you. They were on that day nearer to disbelief than to belief; they say with their mouths what is not in their hearts. And Allāh best knows what they conceal.

وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِيْنَ نَافَقُوْا ۚۖ وَقِيْلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا قَاتِلُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ اَوِ ادْفَعُوْا ؕ قَالُوْا لَوْ نَعْلَمُ قِتَالًا لَّاتَّبَعْنٰكُمْ ؕ هُمْ لِلْكُفْرِ يَوْمَئِذٍ اَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْاِيْمَانِ ۚ يَقُوْلُوْنَ بِاَفْوَاهِهِمْ مَّا لَيْسَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَكْتُمُوْنَ ۚ○

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518 The disbelievers had already suffered twice at the hands of the Muslims, once in the field of Badr and again in the early stages of the battle of Uhud. In Badr alone they had inflicted on the disbelievers double the loss which they suffered in Uhud. At the latter place they lost only seventy killed, while at Badr the disbelievers lost 140, seventy killed and seventy prisoners.

519 The words show clearly that in the language of the Qur'ān, *fighting in Allāh's way* carries the significance of *fighting in self-defence*.

520 They feigned they did not know how to fight. Or the meaning may be, *if we knew that it was a fight,* the implication being that the Muslims were going, not to fight but to sure destruction with such a disparity of numbers.

167 Those who said of their brethren whilst they (themselves) held back : Had they obeyed us, they would not have been killed. Say : Avert death from yourselves, if you are truthful.

الَّذِينَ قَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ وَقَعَدُوا لَوْ
أَطَاعُونَا مَا قُتِلُوا ۗ قُلْ فَادْرَءُوا عَنْ
أَنفُسِكُمُ الْمَوْتَ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ۝

168 And think not of those who are killed in Allāh's way as dead. Nay, they are alive being provided sustenance from their Lord.

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
أَمْوَاتًا ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ ۝

169 Rejoicing in what Allāh has given them out of His grace, and they rejoice for the sake of those who, (being left) behind them, have not yet joined them, that they have no fear, nor shall they grieve.

فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِن فَضْلِهِ
وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا
بِهِم مِّنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ۝

170 They rejoice for Allāh's favour and (His) grace, and that Allāh wastes not the reward of the believers.

يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

SECTION 18 : **Uhud no gain to the enemy**

171 Those who responded to the call of Allāh and the Messenger after the misfortune had befallen them — for such among them who do good and keep their duty is a great reward.[521]

الَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ مِن
بَعْدِ مَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْقَرْحُ ۚ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا
مِنْهُمْ وَاتَّقَوْا أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝

172 Those to whom men said : Surely people have gathered against you, so fear them ; but this increased their faith, and they said : Allāh is sufficient for us and He is an excellent Guardian.

الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ
قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ
إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ ۝

173 So they returned with favour from Allāh and (His) grace ; no evil touched them, and they followed the pleasure of Allāh. And Allāh is the Lord of mighty grace.[521a]

فَانقَلَبُوا بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ لَّمْ
يَمْسَسْهُمْ سُوءٌ وَاتَّبَعُوا رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ ۗ
وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَظِيمٍ ۝

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521 The Makkan army was pursued the next day to a place known as *Hamrā'*

521a, see next page.

174 It is the devil who only frightens his friends, but fear them not, and fear Me, if you are believers.[522]

إِنَّمَا ذَٰلِكُمُ الشَّيْطَٰنُ يُخَوِّفُ أَوْلِيَآءَهُۥ فَلَا
تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُونِ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ۝

175 And let not those grieve thee who run into disbelief precipitately; surely they can do no harm to Allāh. Allāh intends not to assign them any portion in the Hereafter; and for them is a grievous chastisement.

وَلَا يَحْزُنكَ الَّذِينَ يُسَٰرِعُونَ فِى الْكُفْرِ ۚ
إِنَّهُمْ لَن يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْـًٔا ۗ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ
أَلَّا يَجْعَلَ لَهُمْ حَظًّا فِى الْءَاخِرَةِ ۖ وَ
لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝

176 Those who buy disbelief at the price of faith can do no harm to Allāh, and for them is a painful chastisement.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرَوُا الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَٰنِ
لَن يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْـًٔا ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۝

177 And let not those who disbelieve think that our granting them respite is good for themselves. We grant them respite only that they may add to their sins; and for them is an humiliating chastisement.

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا أَنَّمَا نُمْلِى
لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لِّأَنفُسِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّمَا نُمْلِى لَهُمْ
لِيَزْدَادُوٓا إِثْمًا ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ۝

178 Allāh will not leave the believers in the condition in which you are until He separates the evil from the good. Nor is Allāh going to make you acquainted with the unseen, but Allāh chooses of His Messengers whom He pleases. So believe in Allāh and His Messengers. And if you believe and keep your duty, you will have a great reward.

مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَىٰ مَآ أَنتُمْ
عَلَيْهِ حَتَّىٰ يَمِيزَ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ ۗ وَمَا
كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُطْلِعَكُمْ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ
يَجْتَبِى مِن رُّسُلِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُ ۖ فَـَٔامِنُوا بِاللَّهِ
وَرُسُلِهِۦ ۚ وَإِن تُؤْمِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَلَكُمْ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝

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al-Asad, under which name the expedition is known. Such was the spirit of invincibility of the Muslim army even after the loss suffered at Uḥud.

521a Verses 172-174 refer to the expedition known as *Badr al-Ṣughrā,* the smaller Badr, undertaken next year, because Abū Sufyān, commander of the Makkan army, announced, when leaving the field of Uḥud, that he would meet the Muslims the following year at Badr, but notwithstanding its threats the Makkan army never marched forth. The Muslims on the other hand gained much benefit by trading in a fair held there, as indicated in v. 173.

522 An emissary, Nu'aim, was hired by the Makkans to spread terror among the Muslims, and he is the devil spoken of here (Rz). By the devil's friends are meant the hypocrites.

179 And let not those who are niggardly in spending that which Allāh has granted them out of His grace, think that it is good for them. Nay, it is evil for them. They shall have a collar of their niggardliness on their necks on the Resurrection day. And Allāh's is the heritage of the heavens and the earth. And Allāh is Aware of what you do.[523]

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَبْخَلُوْنَ بِمَآ اٰتٰهُمُ
اللّٰهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ هُوَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ؕ بَلْ
هُوَ شَرٌّ لَّهُمْ ؕ سَيُطَوَّقُوْنَ مَا بَخِلُوْا
بِهٖ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ؕ وَلِلّٰهِ مِيْرَاثُ السَّمٰوٰتِ
وَالْاَرْضِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرٌ ۝

SECTION 19 : **Carpings of People of the Book**

180 Allāh has certainly heard the saying of those who said : Allāh is poor and we are rich. We shall record what they say, and their killing the prophets unjustly, and We shall say : Taste the chastisement of burning.[524]

لَقَدْ سَمِعَ اللّٰهُ قَوْلَ الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّ
اللّٰهَ فَقِيْرٌ وَّنَحْنُ اَغْنِيَآءُ ۘ سَنَكْتُبُ
مَا قَالُوْا وَقَتْلَهُمُ الْاَنْۢبِيَآءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ ۙ
وَّنَقُوْلُ ذُوْقُوْا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيْقِ ۝

181 This is for that which your own hands have sent before, and because Allāh is not in the least unjust to the servants.

ذٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ اَيْدِيْكُمْ وَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ
لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيْدِ ۝

182 Those who say : Allāh has enjoined us that we should not believe in any messenger until he brings us an offering which is consumed by the fire.[525] Say : Indeed there came to you

اَلَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَهِدَ اِلَيْنَآ اَلَّا
نُؤْمِنَ لِرَسُوْلٍ حَتّٰى يَاْتِيَنَا بِقُرْبَانٍ
تَاْكُلُهُ النَّارُ ؕ قُلْ قَدْ جَآءَكُمْ رُسُلٌ

523 The same idea, though in more general terms, as to the effect of deeds being bound to the neck, is expressed in 17 : 13 : "And We have made every man's actions to cling to his neck ; and We shall bring forth to him on the Resurrection day a book which he will find wide open ". Thus every man carries the effect of his deeds with him in this life, but on the day of Resurrection that effect will become clearly visible. Thus is the effect of niggardliness made to cling to the necks of the niggardly.

524 The Jews ridiculed the poverty of the Muslims and their borrowings from the Jewish money-lenders. They also ridiculed the raising of funds for the defence of the faith by subscriptions. See 716 and 5 : 64.

525 The reference is to the burnt offerings of the Mosaic law, for which see Lev. 1 : 9 : " And the priest shall burn all on the altar, to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire ". And Deut. 33 : 10 where, blessing Israel, Moses says : " They shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar ". Compare also Lev. 8 : 18. The demand of the Jews that the Prophet should bring to them an offering which the fire should consume is only a demand for the burnt-offering of the Israelite law, so that what they persisted in was that the promised prophet should be an Israelite and should revive the Israelite law.

messengers before me with clear arguments and with that which you demand. Why then did you try to kill them, if you are truthful ?[526]

مِّنْ قَبْلِيْ بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ وَبِالَّذِيْ قُلْتُمْ فَلِمَ قَتَلْتُمُوْهُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ۝

183 But if they reject thee, so indeed were rejected before thee messengers who came with clear arguments and scriptures and the illuminating Book.[527]

فَاِنْ كَذَّبُوْكَ فَقَدْ كُذِّبَ رُسُلٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ جَآءُوْ بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ وَالزُّبُرِ وَالْكِتٰبِ الْمُنِيْرِ ۝

184 Every soul will taste of death. And you will be paid your reward fully only on the Resurrection day. Then whoever is removed far from the Fire and is made to enter the Garden, he indeed attains the object. And the life of this world is nothing but a provision of vanities.

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَآئِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ؕ وَاِنَّمَا تُوَفَّوْنَ اُجُوْرَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ؕ فَمَنْ زُحْزِحَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَاُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ ؕ وَمَا الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَآ اِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُوْرِ ۝

185 You will certainly be tried in your property and your persons. And you will certainly hear from those who have been given the Book before you and from the idolaters much abuse.[528]

لَتُبْلَوُنَّ فِيْٓ اَمْوَالِكُمْ وَاَنْفُسِكُمْ ۟ وَلَتَسْمَعُنَّ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اَشْرَكُوْٓا اَذًى كَثِيْرًا ؕ وَاِنْ تَصْبِرُوْا

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526 The carpers are here told that they even sought to kill those prophets who followed the Mosaic law, who came, "with that which you demand". Hence their rejection was due to the stubbornness of their hearts.

527 The prophets are said to have come with three things — with arguments and with the *zubur* and the illuminating Book. *Zubur* is the plural of *zubrah,* which means *a big piece of iron,* and of *zabūr,* which signifies *a written thing.* According to R, *every book which is hard in writing* is called *a zabūr.* According to LL, *zabūr* signifies *a Divine book which it is difficult to become acquainted with.* Zj says, *every book full of wisdom is a zabūr* (Rz). The commentators generally understand by the *zubur* the sacred scriptures of the prophets and by the *illuminating Book* the book containing the Mosaic law, though some would add in the latter category the Psalms of David and the Gospel of Jesus. Or, by the *zubur* are here meant the prophecies or the merely prophetic writings, and by the *illuminating Book* the book containing the guidance which every prophet brought to his people, so that they should follow those directions.

528 This verse speaks of the sufferings which were yet in store for the Muslims. They had certainly been tried respecting their property and their persons at Makkah. They had been deprived of their property and turned out of their homes; they had been severely persecuted and even put to death for professing Islām. But this verse, revealed undoubtedly after the battle of Uḥud in the year 3 A.H., speaks of sufferings which were yet to come. It plainly speaks of the future, rather of the distant future, because Islām was now being firmly established in Arabia. The rise of Islām was, however, to be followed by a set-back of which there are indications in the Qur'ān and the sayings of the

And if you are patient and keep your duty, surely this is an affair of great resolution.	وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ۝
186 And when Allāh took a covenant from those who were given the Book: You shall explain it to men and shall not hide it. But they cast it behind their backs and took a small price for it. So evil is that which they buy.	وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللّٰهُ مِيثَاقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتٰبَ لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْتُمُونَهُ فَنَبَذُوهُ وَرَآءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ وَاشْتَرَوْا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۖ فَبِئْسَ مَا يَشْتَرُونَ ۝
187 Think not that those who exult in what they have done, and love to be praised for what they have not done — think not them to be safe from the chastisement; and for them is a painful chastisement.	لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَآ أَتَوا وَّيُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يُّحْمَدُوا بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّهُمْ بِمَفَازَةٍ مِّنَ الْعَذَابِ ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۝
188 And Allāh's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. And Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.	وَلِلّٰهِ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

SECTION 20: **Ultimate Triumph of the Faithful**

189 In the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day, there are surely signs for men of understanding.	إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ الَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَأٰيٰتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ۝

Prophet. Thus we are told in a ḥadī<u>th</u> that Islām started its career as *<u>gh</u>arīb* (as *a stranger* in a land or as *a sufferer* at the hands of others) and that it will once more (i.e. after rising to power) return to the state in which it began" (IM. 35:15). The abuses which have been heaped on Islām in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries are indeed without a parallel, not only in the history of Islām but in the whole history of religion. The abusive language of the Christian, political, as well as missionary, press and the vituperations of their imitators in the Hindu press have outstepped all bounds. Thus both the People of the Book and the idolaters have joined hands in hurling the worst abuses at Islām and its Founder. But we are here told that the Muslims shall, in addition to the abuse of their religion, be made to suffer both respecting their property and their persons. If they have so often been turned out of their houses in the past century in Europe, and Muslim States have been wiped out of existence in many parts of the world, the twentieth century presents a yet ghastlier scene of their woes in India. In a country in which they have been living for over a thousand years, and where their population was no less than a hundred millions, they have been turned out of their homes mercilessly and the cruellest tortures known to human history have been inflicted on them in broad daylight and the civilized world has not yet raised a finger against this genocide and the perpetration of these brutalities. It is these calamities which are spoken of in this verse. The concluding words of the verse are the only hope of Islām in the present tribulations — to be steadfast and keep their duty to Islām.

190 Those who remember Allāh standing and sitting and (lying) on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: Our Lord, Thou has not created this in vain! Glory be to Thee! Save us from the chastisement of the Fire.[528a]

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَٰذَا بَاطِلًا ۚ سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ○

191 Our Lord, whomsoever Thou makest enter the Fire, him Thou indeed bringest to disgrace. And there will be no helpers for the wrongdoers.

رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ مَنْ تُدْخِلِ النَّارَ فَقَدْ أَخْزَيْتَهُ ۖ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ ○

192 Our Lord, surely we have heard a Crier calling to the faith, saying: Believe in your Lord. So we do believe. Our Lord, grant us protection from our sins and remove our evils and make us die with the righteous.

رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا ۚ رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الْأَبْرَارِ ○

193 Our Lord, grant us what Thou hast promised us by Thy messengers and disgrace us not on the day of Resurrection. Surely Thou never failest in (Thy) promise!

رَبَّنَا وَآتِنَا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا عَلَىٰ رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۗ إِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ ○

194 So their Lord accepted their prayer, (saying): I will not suffer the work of any worker among you to be lost whether male or female, the one of you being from the other. So those who fled and were driven forth from their homes and persecuted in My way and who fought and were slain, I shall truly remove their evil and make them enter Gardens wherein flow rivers — a reward from Allāh. And with Allāh is the best reward.[529]

فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لَا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِنْكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ ۖ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ ۖ فَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَأُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأُوذُوا فِي سَبِيلِي وَقَاتَلُوا وَقُتِلُوا لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ثَوَابًا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ ○

528a This chapter like the one before it ends with a prayer for the victory of Faith over disbelief and a prediction for its ultimate triumph. The first two verses of the section point out two distinguishing characteristics of the faithful. It is pointed out that they are neither recluses who retire to a corner of solitude for the remembrance of Allāh, nor yet do they pursue the conquest of nature without ever thinking of the Author and Lord of creation. On the one hand, they are described as remembering God in the midst of all worldly affairs and worldly

529, see next page.

195 Let not control in the land, of those who disbelieve, deceive thee.

لَا يَغُرَّنَّكَ تَقَلُّبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي الْبِلَادِ

196 A brief enjoyment! Then their abode is hell. And evil is the resting-place.

مَتَاعٌ قَلِيلٌ ثُمَّ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ

197 But those who keep their duty to their Lord, for them are Gardens wherein flow rivers, to abide therein; an entertainment from their Lord. And that which Allāh has in store for the righteous is best.

لَٰكِنِ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٌ تَجْرِي
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا نُزُلًا مِنْ
عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِلْأَبْرَارِ

198 And of the People of the Book there are those who believe in Allāh and (in) that which has been revealed to you and (in) that which has been revealed to them, humbling themselves before Allāh — they take not a small price for the messages of Allāh. These it is that have their reward with their Lord. Surely Allāh is Swift to take account!

وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ لَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ
وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ
خٰشِعِينَ لِلَّهِ لَا يَشْتَرُونَ بِآيٰتِ اللَّهِ
ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا أُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ
رَبِّهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

199 O you who believe, be steadfast and try to excel in steadfastness and guard (the frontiers). And keep your duty to Allāh that you may be successful.[530]

يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا
وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

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pursuits, *standing and sitting and lying on their sides,* being thus fully conscious of the Divine Presence everywhere and in all conditions; and, on the other, they set out for the conquest of nature with the full consciousness that *nothing has been created in vain* and that a purpose underlies the whole of creation. This is the grand object which Islām sets before its followers, to conquer self by remembrance of God and to conquer nature by pursuit of knowledge.

529 This is a promise which includes all those companions of the Holy Prophet who fled from their homes, and those who were persecuted, and those who fought in his company. The concluding words of the verse show that the promise *to make them enter Gardens* relates to this life as well, and its fulfilment was brought about in the worldly achievements of the Muslims. The reward of the Hereafter is separately spoken of in the words, *with Allāh is the best reward.*

530 The last section while predicting victory for the Muslims requires them to be humble in the hour of triumph, as in the last chapter. The concluding verse speaks of three things as the key to success. The first is *ṣabr,* which conveys the significance of endurance and perseverance in trials and perseve.ance in the doing of good. The second is *muṣābarah,* which means *vying in ṣabr* or *steadfastness* with each other, or trying to excel the enemy in endurance. The third is *ribāṭ* which means *guarding* or *stationing* the army *on the frontiers,* to guard

it against the enemy. All three words carry a temporal as well as a spiritual significance. What is inculcated here is, on the one hand, showing endurance in wars, excelling the enemy in endurance and to remain in readiness on the frontiers of the Muslim territory to meet the enemy, and, on the other, remaining steadfast in keeping away from evil and keeping to obedience to God, trying to excel each other in the quality of endurance and to remain on guard against the Evil one on the frontiers. What is meant by the last is explained in a ḥadīth of the Prophet: "What is lawful is manifest and what is unlawful is manifest and between these two are doubtful things which many people do not know. So whoever guards himself against the doubtful things, he keeps his religion and his honour unsullied, and whoever falls into doubtful things is like the herdsman who grazes his cattle on the borders of a reserve — he is likely to enter it. Know that every king has a reserve and know that the reserve of Allāh in His land is what He has forbidden" (B. 2:38). The Qur'ān thus, while not neglecting the temporal needs of man, aims at his spiritual perfection.

اٰيَاتُهَا ١٧٦ (٤) سُوْرَةُ النِّسَآءِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ رُكُوْعَاتُهَا ٢٤

CHAPTER 4

Al-Nisā' : THE WOMEN

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 24 *Sections*, 177 *verses*)

This chapter is named *The Women* because it deals chiefly with the rights of women.

The connection of the last chapter with this one lies in the fact that that chapter deals with the battle of Uḥud, while this one deals with the circumstances to which the battle had given rise. For the decimation of the Muslim force had left a large number of orphans and widows to be looked after, and it is with duties towards these two classes that the chapter opens. The two chief features of the battle of Uḥud were, the death of a large number of Muslims and the desertion of the hypocrites; while, following it, were circumstances which brought about a final rupture with the Jews, and it is with these three subjects that the chapter deals.

The opening section lays down injunctions relating to the duties of guardians towards their orphan wards. The second section brings woman to a status of equality with man, and lays down a new law of inheritance, for among the Arabs a woman had no right to inherit the property of a deceased relative. The third section deals with the treatment of women in general and denounces the practice of claiming women as a part of inheritance. The fourth section discusses what women may not be taken in marriage, and the fifth gives them the right of disposing of their earnings as they please; while the sixth first points out the remedy when there is a disagreement between the husband and the wife and then inculcates the principle of charity in general, introducing the subject of hypocrisy towards its close.

After having laid stress, in the seventh and the eighth sections, upon external as well as internal purity, showing how the Jews had neglected the latter of these and how, for no other reason than envy of the Muslims, they had sided with the polytheists, and after having enjoined upon the Muslims to be strictly firm in justice, we are led on in the ninth section to the dealings of the hypocrites who had refused to accept the Prophet's judgement in going out to meet the enemy. We are then told in the tenth section that the question of war was a question of life and death for the Muslims. The eleventh section deals with the attitude of the hypocrites, and the twelfth shows how waverers are to be dealt with. The thirteenth states when and to what extent the murderer of a Muslim is excusable, because it was very often by treachery or hypocrisy that the Muslims were killed. The fourteenth shows that those Muslims who were compelled to remain with the enemy against their own wishes were excusable. The fifteenth warns the Muslims against being surprised in battle when saying their prayers. The sixteenth and the seventeenth refer to the secret counsels of the hypocrites. The eighteenth condemns idolatry, because it is the idolatrous hypocrites that are spoken of throughout the previous sections, and the subject is thus brought to a close.

Previous to the introduction of the third chief subject of this chapter there is a reversion in the nineteenth section to equitable dealings with orphans and women, and the subject is generalized in the twentieth; while in the same section the hypocrites from among the Jews are dealt with. The next predicts their end, at the same time showing that belief in previous prophets could do them no good if they rejected the Holy Prophet. The twenty-second speaks of their transgressions

and of their false allegations regarding the death of Jesus on the cross. The twenty-third section tells them that the whole of the previous phophecy pointed to the appearance of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, while the last one, after referring briefly to the Christian error in deifying Jesus, closes with a reversion to the subject of inheritance.

As this chapter treats of many of the questions arising out of the battle of Uḥud, there seems to be little doubt that it was revealed immediately after that battle. And thus, as in arrangement so in the order of revelation, it follows the last chapter. The main portion of it thus belongs to the fourth year of the Hijrah, while there is no reason to deny that some portions may have been revealed towards the close of the third or the beginning of the fifth year. Noeldeke's suggestion, however, that vv. 115-125 and 130-132 belong to Makkan revelation, based as it is on the mere fact that the Jews are there " referred to in a friendly spirit ", is quite wrong, because, as shown in 478 and elsewhere, the Holy Prophet was fair to the Jews even when they were most inimical to him, and the verses referred to therefore belong to the fourth or the fifth year of the Hijrah.

SECTION 1 **Duties of Guardians to Orphan Wards**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 O people, keep your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same (kind),[531] and spread from these two many men and women.[532] And keep your duty to Allāh, by Whom you demand one of another (your rights), and (to) the ties of relationship.[533] Surely Allāh is ever a Watcher over you.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوْا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِىْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ نَّفْسٍ وَّاحِدَةٍ وَّخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيْرًا وَّنِسَآءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ الَّذِىْ تَسَآءَلُوْنَ بِهٖ وَالْاَرْحَامَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيْبًا ①

2 And give to the orphans their property, and substitute not worthless

وَاٰتُوا الْيَتٰمٰۤى اَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا تَتَبَدَّلُوا

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531 "The word *nafs* is used in the language of the Arabs in two ways, one of which is your saying *kharajat nafsu-hū* where by *nafs* is implied *the soul,* and according to the other use the significance of *nafs* is *the whole of a thing, and its essence*" (T). It is in this latter sense that the creation of mates is spoken of in the Holy Qur'ān, and hence the correct rendering of *nafs* on such occasions is *kind,* which implies *the essence.* This is made clear in 16:72: "And Allāh has made wives for you *from among yourselves*" (Ar. *min anfusi-kum*), i.e. of the same kind and essence as you are. Some commentators have taken this to be the significance here, i.e. *He created its mate of the same kind* (AH, Rz). Ḥasan also explains the words as meaning *of the same kind* (AH on 7:189).

How the first man was created is not stated either in the Qur'ān or in the Ḥadīth, nor is the Bible statement accepted that Eve was created from a rib of Adam. The Muslims do not accept that man was created six thousand years ago. The Imāmiyyah accept the tradition that Allāh created thirty Adams before our father Adam, and one Shī'ah Imām has gone so far as to say that hundreds of thousands of Adams were created before our Adam (RM). Nor do the Muslims accept that our world is the only world in this universe; one Imām is reported as saying that in God's universe there are twelve thousand systems each bigger than our solar system (RM).

The words occurring here — *Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same* — only declare the unity of the human race and the equality of the male and the female. Elsewhere we are told that for all of you wives are created from yourselves: "And Allāh has made for you wives from your own selves" (16:72).

532 "Many men and women' spring from married pairs. The verse does not necessarily refer to any parent pair of the whole of mankind. The underlying significance seems to be to remind men of the strength of the ties of relationship, an idea finding clear expression in what follows.

533 The original word is *arḥām,* plural of *riḥm,* which means *womb* or *the place of origin of the young*; hence relationship, by some restricted to *relationship by the female side only,* or *ties of relationship* (T, LL).

(things) for (their) good (ones), and devour not their property (adding) to your own property. This is surely a great sin.[534]

الْخَبِيثَ بِالطَّيِّبِ ۖ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَهُمْ
إِلَىٰ أَمْوَالِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حُوبًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٢﴾

3 And if you fear that you cannot do justice to orphans, marry such women as seem good to you, two, or three, or four;[535] but if you fear that you will not do justice, then (marry) only one or that which your right hands possess. This is more proper that you may not do injustice.[536]

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَانْكِحُوا
مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاثَ
وَرُبَاعَ ۖ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً
أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ
أَلَّا تَعُولُوا ﴿٣﴾

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534 The care of the orphan was one of the earliest injunctions that Islām gave, and the Prophet had always shown a deep anxiety for the welfare of the poor and the orphans. See 282, 283, and also 90:15, 16, where the care of "the orphan and the poor man lying in dust" is described as an up-hill task, but one which must be accomplished. The subject is here introduced in detail on account of the number of orphans having been greatly increased by the war.

535 This passage *permits polygamy under certain circumstances; it does not enjoin it, nor even permit it unconditionally.* It may be noted here that the explanation of this passage as generally understood is based on a report contained in the *Muslim*, according to which 'Ā'ishah understood this verse as meaning that if the guardians of orphan girls feared that by marrying them they would not be able to do justice to them, they should marry other women. This explanation, even if the report be taken to be authentic, requires the insertion into the passage of a number of words which the original does not contain, and as the meaning is much more clear, and more in consonance with the context, without the addition of these words, the interpretation given below is preferable. It is admitted that this chapter was revealed to guide the Muslims under the conditions which followed the battle of Uḥud, and the last chapter deals with that battle. Now in that battle 70 men out of 700 Muslims had been slain, and this decimation had largely decreased the number of males, who, being the breadwinners, were the natural guardians and supporters of the females. The number was likely to suffer a still greater diminution in the battles which had yet to be fought. Thus many orphans would be left in the charge of widows, who would find it difficult to procure the necessary means of support. Hence in the first verse of this chapter the Muslims are enjoined to respect the ties of relationship. As they all came from a single ancestor, a breadth is introduced into the idea of relationship, inasmuch as they are told that they are all in fact related to each other. In the second verse the care of orphans is particularly enjoined. In the third verse we are told that if they could not do justice to the orphans, they might marry the widows, whose children would thus become their own children; and as the number of women was now much greater than the number of men, they were permitted to marry even two or three or four women. It would thus be clear that the permission to have more wives than one was given under the peculiar circumstances of the Muslim society then existing, and the Prophet's action in marrying widows, as well as the example of many of his companions, corroborates this statement. Marriage with orphan girls is also sanctioned in this passage, for there were the same difficulties in the case of orphan girls as in the case of widows, and the words are general. See also 631.

It may be added here that polygamy in Islām is both in theory and in

536, see next page.

4 And give women their dowries as a free gift. But if they of themselves be pleased to give you a portion thereof, consume it with enjoyment and pleasure.[537]

وَ اٰتُوا النِّسَآءَ صَدُقٰتِهِنَّ نِحۡلَةً ؕ فَاِنۡ طِبۡنَ لَکُمۡ عَنۡ شَیۡءٍ مِّنۡهُ نَفۡسًا فَکُلُوۡهُ هَنِیۡٓـًٔا مَّرِیۡٓـًٔا ﴿۴﴾

5 And make not over your property, which Allāh has made a (means of) support for you,[538] to the weak of understanding, and maintain them out of it,[539] and clothe them and give them a good education.[540]

وَ لَا تُؤۡتُوا السُّفَهَآءَ اَمۡوَالَکُمُ الَّتِیۡ جَعَلَ اللّٰهُ لَکُمۡ قِیٰمًا وَّ ارۡزُقُوۡهُمۡ فِیۡهَا وَ اکۡسُوۡهُمۡ وَ قُوۡلُوۡا لَهُمۡ قَوۡلًا مَّعۡرُوۡفًا ﴿۵﴾

practice an exception, not a rule, and as an exception it is a remedy for many of the evils especially prevalent in European society. It is not only the preponderance of females over males that necessitates polygamy in certain cases, but there is a variety of other circumstances, not only for the moral but also for the physical welfare of society. Prostitution, the great evil of civilization, which is a real canker, with its concomitant increase of bastardy, is practically unknown to countries where polygamy is allowed as a remedial measure.

536 By *that which your right hands possess* are meant the females who were taken prisoners in war. The Qur'ān sanctions marriage with them in this verse. As for the conditions of that marriage, see 561, where it is clearly laid down that marriage with a prisoner of war is allowed only when one cannot afford to marry free believing women.

537 The word used here is *ṣaduqāt*, pl. of *ṣaduqah* (from *ṣidq*, meaning *truth*), which means *dowry* or *a nuptial gift*. *Ṣadaqah* meaning *charity* is a different word from the same root. Other words used for dowry are *mahr* and *ṣudāq*. It is necessary that a "dowry" should be given to every woman taken in marriage, whether she is a free woman, an orphan girl, or a prisoner of war. So every woman begins her married life as the owner of some property, and thus marriage is the means of raising her status, in many respects elevating her to a plane of equality with her husband. The dowry must be paid at the time of marriage, and it is the bride's property. To show that she is a full owner of it, it is laid down that she can give it to anyone she likes, and can give a portion of it even to her husband. The practice has, however, become more or less general to recognize dowry as a debt which the husband owes to the wife and which she can claim when she likes.

538 By *your property* is meant the property of the orphans which is under *your* control as guardians. The verse lays down the principle of the Court of Wards. It requires guardianship in the case of all who are weak of understanding, whether minors or not. *Qiyām* means *a sustenance* or *that which maintains* or *supports*. While on the one hand the Qur'ān lays stress on the transitoriness of this life, on the other it teaches that wealth is not a thing to be despised or wasted, because it is the means of support.

539 "Make it a means of sustaining them so that you trade with it and make it profitable, and so that you may be able to defray their expenses from the profit and not from the capital" (AH). Rz gives a similar explanation. There is also a saying of the Prophet in this connection: "Whoever is the guardian of an orphan who has property should trade with it and should not leave it undeveloped so that the zakāt should consume it" (Msh. 6).

540 The words are generally rendered as meaning *speak to them good words*, but see 124, where it is shown that the word *qaul* is used to express all kinds of deeds. After speaking of the maintenance and clothing of the orphans in a befitting manner, the Holy Qur'ān now calls attention to another great need of theirs which is education. From the first Islām laid stress on knowledge, *read* and *write* (96: 1-5) being its very first message, and the Prophet spoke of the

6 And test the orphans until they reach the age of marriage.[541] Then if you find in them maturity of intellect, make over to them their property, and consume it not extravagantly and hastily against their growing up.[542] And whoever is rich, let him abstain, and whoever is poor let him consume reasonably.[543] And when you make over to them their property, call witnesses in their presence. And Allāh is enough as a Reckoner.

وَابْتَلُوا الْيَتٰمٰى حَتّٰى إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ فَإِنْ
آنَسْتُمْ مِّنْهُمْ رُشْدًا فَادْفَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ
وَلَا تَأْكُلُوهَا إِسْرَافًا وَّبِدَارًا أَنْ يَّكْبَرُوا
وَمَنْ كَانَ غَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ وَمَنْ كَانَ
فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِذَا دَفَعْتُمْ
إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فَأَشْهِدُوا عَلَيْهِمْ وَكَفٰى
بِاللّٰهِ حَسِيبًا ﴿٦﴾

7 For men is a share of what the parents and the near relatives leave, and for women a share of what the parents and the near relatives leave, whether it be little or much — an appointed share.[544]

لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدٰنِ
وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ
الْوَالِدٰنِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ
أَوْ كَثُرَ نَصِيبًا مَّفْرُوضًا ﴿٧﴾

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acquisition of knowledge as being as great a need of humanity as the acquisition of wealth: "There shall be no envy but in two: the person whom Allāh has given wealth and the power to spend it in the service of truth and the person whom Allāh has granted Knowledge and he judges by it and teaches it" (B. 3:75). He laid stress even on the education of slave-girls. "The man shall have a double reward," he said, "who has a slave-girl and he trains her in the best manner and he gives her the best education, then he sets her free and marries her" (B. 3:31). It is thus of the education of the orphans that the Holy Qur'ān speaks here, and the next verse which enjoins the guardians to "test" their wards makes it clear.

541 These words show further, that the guardian is not only responsible for the education of the wards as pointed out at the end of the last verse, but he is also required to examine them and see what progress they have made. According to Abū Ḥanīfah, majority is attained at eighteen years, but if maturity of intellect is not attained at eighteen, the limit may be extended. These words, moreover, show that marriage should be performed at the age when a person has attained majority, for the age of marriage is spoken of as being the age of attaining majority.

542 The meaning is: *Do not hasten to spend the property of minors with a view to wasting it before they attain their majority.*

543 These words allow payment of reasonable wages to the manager of a ward's estate out of the ward's property if the manager is not a rich man. The amount charged must be reasonable, taking into consideration the value of the property and the work of management.

544 Among the Arabs women and children had no share in inheritance, for they used to say: "None shall inherit but he who smites with the spear" (Rz). The reason is to be found in the fact that the normal condition in Arabia before Islām was a continual state of war, and only those who could go out to fight were taken into account. This great reform, by which the status of women was raised from the lowest condition to that of equality with men, clearly indicated that the establishing of peace was one of the aims of Islām.

The principle laid down in this verse is the basis of the Muslim law of

8 And when relatives[545] and the orphans and the needy are present at the division, give them out of it and speak to them kind words.

وَإِذَا حَضَرَ الْقِسْمَةَ أُولُوا الْقُرْبٰى وَالْيَتٰمٰى وَالْمَسٰكِيْنُ فَارْزُقُوْهُمْ مِّنْهُ وَقُوْلُوْا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوْفًا ﴿٨﴾

9 And let those fear who, should they leave behind them weakly offspring would fear on their account; so let them observe their duty to Allāh and let them speak right words.

وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِيْنَ لَوْ تَرَكُوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعٰفًا خَافُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَلْيَقُوْلُوْا قَوْلًا سَدِيْدًا ﴿٩﴾

10 Those who swallow the property of the orphans unjustly, they swallow only fire into their bellies. And they will burn in blazing fire.

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَأْكُلُوْنَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتٰمٰى ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُوْنَ فِيْ بُطُوْنِهِمْ نَارًا ۖ وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ سَعِيْرًا ﴿١٠﴾

SECTION 2: **Law of Inheritance**

11 Allāh enjoins you concerning your children: for the male is the equal of the portion of two females; but if there be more than two females,[546] two-thirds of what the deceased leaves is theirs; and if there be one, for her is the half. And as for his parents, for each of them is the sixth of what he leaves, if he has a child; but if he has no child and (only) his two parents inherit him, for his mother is the third; but if he has brothers, for his mother is the sixth,

يُوْصِيْكُمُ اللّٰهُ فِيْ أَوْلَادِكُمْ ۖ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنْثَيَيْنِ ۚ فَإِنْ كُنَّ نِسَاءً فَوْقَ اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا مَا تَرَكَ ۚ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ وَاحِدَةً فَلَهَا النِّصْفُ ۗ وَلِأَبَوَيْهِ لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ مِمَّا تَرَكَ إِنْ كَانَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِنْ لَّمْ يَكُنْ لَّهُ وَلَدٌ وَّوَرِثَهُ أَبَوٰهُ فَلِأُمِّهِ الثُّلُثُ ۚ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُ إِخْوَةٌ فَلِأُمِّهِ السُّدُسُ مِنْ بَعْدِ

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inheritance. Children and near relatives, or failing these, distant relatives, whether males or females, are the lawful heirs, and the whole of the property does not go to the eldest son. Whatever objection there may be to this principle on the ground of division of property into parcels, there is not the least doubt that the rule is in accordance with the broad principles of democracy and the brotherhood of man which Islām seeks to establish.

545 By these are meant those distant relatives who for any reason are not entitled to inherit.

546 By females are here meant the female children. When the daughters are the sole heirs they are entitled to a share of two-thirds. The share of two-thirds to which "more than two" daughters are entitled remains the same even when the daughters are two only: a single daughter being entitled to one-half as made

after (payment of) a bequest he may have bequeathed or a debt.[547] Your parents and your children, you know not which of them is the nearer to you in benefit. This is an ordinance from Allāh. Allāh is surely ever Knowing, Wise.

وَصِيَّةٍ يُّوْصِيْ بِهَآ اَوْ دَيْنٍ ؕ اٰبَآؤُكُمْ
وَ اَبْنَآؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُوْنَ اَيُّهُمْ اَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ
نَفْعًا ؕ فَرِيْضَةً مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ
عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ﴿۱۱﴾

12 And yours is half of what your wives leave if they have no child ; but if they have a child, your share is a fourth of what they leave after (payment of) any bequest they may have bequeathed or a debt ; and theirs is the fourth of what you leave if you have no child, but if you have a child, their share is the eighth of what you leave after (payment of) a bequest you may have bequeathed or a debt.[548]

وَلَكُمْ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ اَزْوَاجُكُمْ اِنْ
لَّمْ يَكُنْ لَّهُنَّ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَاِنْ كَانَ لَهُنَّ
وَلَدٌ فَلَكُمُ الرُّبُعُ مِمَّا تَرَكْنَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ
وَصِيَّةٍ يُّوْصِيْنَ بِهَآ اَوْ دَيْنٍ ؕ وَلَهُنَّ
الرُّبُعُ مِمَّا تَرَكْتُمْ اِنْ لَّمْ يَكُنْ لَّكُمْ
وَلَدٌ ۚ فَاِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ الثُّمُنُ
مِمَّا تَرَكْتُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ تُوْصُوْنَ

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clear further on. Compare v. 177, where two sisters are mentioned but they include more than two.

547 This is the second case, and it deals with the question of inheritance when the deceased is survived by parents. In this case the parents first take their respective shares, and the residue goes to the children, if there are any, failing which, the share of the parents is increased. But in case the deceased has brothers, the mother receives the same share as she would have received if the deceased had children.

It may be noted that in all cases the payment of bequests and debts takes precedence of the shares of the heirs.

548 This is the third case, and it deals with the question when the deceased leaves a husband or a wife with or without children. The husband or the wife takes his or her share first, as in the case of parents, and the residue goes to the children.

If there are parents as well as husband or wife and children, the first two would take their shares first, and the residue would go to the children, whether males alone or females alone or males and females mixed. The two-thirds share for two or more daughters can only be given when there are neither parents, nor husband or wife ; otherwise they take the residue, as in the case of sons or sons and daughters.

Practice is against this, and brings in *'aul* to solve the difficulty. The *'aul* was first legalized by 'Alī, the fourth Caliph, who, being questioned about the share of a wife, the other heirs being the two parents and two daughters, gave the answer " without premeditation " that the wife's one-eighth had become one-ninth, for the two parents should take one-third, the two daughters two-thirds, and the wife one-eighth, which make up nine-eighths, and hence 'Alī decided that each of the heirs should take less than was due, so that the proportion might remain the same (T). The difficulty would not have arisen if there had been sons instead of daughters or sons along with daughters. If 'Alī had decided to give the residue to the two daughters after taking away the wife's one-eighth and the parents'

And if a man or a woman, having no children leaves property to be inherited and he (or she) has a brother or a sister,[549] then for each of them is the sixth ; but if they are more than that, they shall be sharers in the third after (payment of) a bequest that may have been bequeathed or a debt not injuring (others).[550] This is an ordinance from Allāh : and Allāh is Knowing, Forbearing.

بِهَآ أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۗ وَإِن كَانَ رَجُلٌ يُورَثُ
كَلَٰلَةً أَوِ امْرَأَةٌ وَلَهُۥٓ أَخٌ أَوْ أُخْتٌ
فَلِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ ۚ فَإِن
كَانُوٓا أَكْثَرَ مِن ذَٰلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَآءُ فِى
الثُّلُثِ مِنۢ بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَىٰ بِهَآ أَوْ
دَيْنٍ غَيْرَ مُضَآرٍّ ۚ وَصِيَّةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۗ
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

13 These are Allāh's limits. And whoever obeys Allāh and His Messenger, He will admit him to Gardens wherein flow rivers, to abide in them. And this is the great achievement.

تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ ۚ وَمَن يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ
يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَٰرُ
خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١٣﴾

14 And whoever disobeys Allāh and His Messenger and goes beyond His limits, He will make him enter fire to abide in it, and for him is an abasing chastisement.

وَمَن يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ وَيَتَعَدَّ
حُدُودَهُۥ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا خَٰلِدًا فِيهَا
وَلَهُۥ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴿١٤﴾

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one-third as he should have done in the case of two sons or a son and a daughter, the question of *'aul* would not have arisen.

549 Commentators are of opinion that by *a brother* or *a sister* here is meant *a brother* or *a sister on the mother's side* and that the case of real brothers and sisters, or brothers and sisters on the father's side, is dealt with in v. 177 of this chapter. The reason for this is that here as well as in v. 177, the property to be inherited is that of a *kalālah,* and it is generally supposed that a *kalālah* is one who has neither parents nor children. But as a matter of fact *kalālah* bears two meanings. It means *the person who has no children* whether he has parents or not, and it also means *the person who has neither children nor parents.* It is derived from *kalla* which means *he became tired* or *fatigued,* and therefore *its* primary significance would be *the person who has no children.* I'Ab is reported to have explained this word as meaning *one who does not leave offspring whether he leaves parents or not.* 'Umar also is reported to have said that *kalālah* is *one who has no children, that is all* ; see *Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān.* Hence it is more reasonable to take the *kalālah* spoken of here as being different from the *kalālah* spoken of in v. 177. The *kalālah* in the present case is one who has no children but has parents, and therefore the brothers and sisters are not the only heirs and their share is only one-sixth, while the *kalālah* spoken of in v. 177 is one who leaves neither children nor parents, and therefore the brothers and the sisters take the whole of the inheritance.

550 As in the case of those who have no children there is much likelihood of their burdening the estate with unnecessary debts, or even admitting debts that have not really been contracted, and of making bequests that would leave nothing for legal heirs, the words *not injuring others* are added, to make it clear that debts and bequests in such a case shall not prejudice the rights of the legal heirs.

SECTION 3 : **Treatment of Women**

15 And as for those of your women who are guilty of an indecency, call to witness against them four (witnesses) from among you ; so if they bear witness, confine them to the houses until death takes them away or Allāh opens a way for them.[551]

وَالّٰتِيْ يَاْتِيْنَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مِنْ نِّسَآئِكُمْ
فَاسْتَشْهِدُوْا عَلَيْهِنَّ اَرْبَعَةً مِّنْكُمْ ۚ فَاِنْ
شَهِدُوْا فَاَمْسِكُوْهُنَّ فِي الْبُيُوْتِ حَتّٰى
يَتَوَفّٰهُنَّ الْمَوْتُ اَوْ يَجْعَلَ اللّٰهُ
لَهُنَّ سَبِيْلًا ﴿١٥﴾

16 And as for the two of you who are guilty of it, give them both a slight punishment ; then if they repent and amend, turn aside from them.[552] Surely Allāh is ever Oft-returning (to mercy), the Merciful.

وَالَّذٰنِ يَاْتِيٰنِهَا مِنْكُمْ فَاٰذُوْهُمَا ۚ
فَاِنْ تَابَا وَاَصْلَحَا فَاَعْرِضُوْا عَنْهُمَا ۗ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ تَوَّابًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿١٦﴾

17 Repentance with Allāh is only for those who do evil in ignorance, then turn (to Allāh) soon, so these it is to whom Allāh turns (mercifully). And Allāh is ever Knowing, Wise.

اِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللّٰهِ لِلَّذِيْنَ يَعْمَلُوْنَ
السُّوْٓءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوْبُوْنَ مِنْ قَرِيْبٍ
فَاُولٰٓئِكَ يَتُوْبُ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ وَكَانَ
اللّٰهُ عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ﴿١٧﴾

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551 *Al-fāḥishah* signifies *anything exceeding the bounds of rectitude* (*gross, immodest, lewd, obscene*) (Mgh, LL). See further 556, where it is shown that *fāḥishah* includes *hatred and desertion, refractoriness,* etc. Though the word is used sometimes as meaning *fornication,* the context shows that here it is used to signify immoral conduct short of fornication, for the punishment of fornication is given in 24:2. The words of the verse that follows, referring to a similar immoral act with the indefinite nature of punishment, support this conclusion, for punishment in the case of an act short of fornication would vary with the nature of the crime. Thus women guilty of immoral conduct are curtailed of their liberty. If they mend their ways, or being unmarried they get married, a way is opened for them by Allāh, and they regain their liberty ; if they do not, the curtailment should be extended till they die. There is no proof for Palmer's assertion that " women taken in adultery or fornication were, at the beginning of Islām, literally immured ".

552 The crime spoken of in this verse is the same as that in the previous verse. The committers are two, and though the masculine gender is used, it does not imply that they are both necessarily males. *Slight punishment* is explained by *Qatādah* as meaning *reproving with the tongue* (AH). Islām requires the utmost modesty in sexual relations.

The reference to repentance in connection with the mention of *fāḥishah* is further proof that *fāḥishah* does not here mean *fornication,* but some immorality short of that, for fornication is punishable criminally, and penitence on the part of those guilty of it cannot avert the punishment.

18 And repentance is not for those who go on doing evil deeds, until when death comes to one of them, he says: Now I repent; nor (for) those who die while they are disbelievers. For such We have prepared a painful chastisement.[553]

وَلَيْسَتِ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّاٰتِ
حَتّٰۤى اِذَا حَضَرَ اَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ
اِنِّىْ تُبْتُ الْـٰٔنَ وَلَا الَّذِيْنَ يَمُوْتُوْنَ
وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ اَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ
عَذَابًا اَلِيْمًا ﴿١٨﴾

19 O you who believe, it is not lawful for you to take women as heritage against (their) will.[554] Nor should you straiten them by taking part of what you have given them,[555] unless they are guilty of manifest indecency.[556] And treat them kindly. Then if you hate them, it may be that you dislike a thing while Allāh has placed abundant good in it.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ اَنْ
تَرِثُوا النِّسَآءَ كَرْهًا ؕ وَلَا تَعْضُلُوْهُنَّ
لِتَذْهَبُوْا بِبَعْضِ مَاۤ اٰتَيْتُمُوْهُنَّ اِلَّاۤ اَنْ
يَّاْتِيْنَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ ۚ وَعَاشِرُوْهُنَّ
بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ ۚ فَاِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوْهُنَّ فَعَسٰۤى اَنْ
تَكْرَهُوْا شَيْـًٔا وَّيَجْعَلَ اللّٰهُ فِيْهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيْرًا ﴿١٩﴾

20 And if you wish to have (one) wife in the place of another and you have given one of them a heap of gold, take nothing from it. Would you take it by slandering (her) and (doing her) manifest wrong?[557]

وَاِنْ اَرَدْتُّمُ اسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَّكَانَ
زَوْجٍ ۙ وَّاٰتَيْتُمْ اِحْدٰىهُنَّ قِنْطَارًا فَلَا
تَاْخُذُوْا مِنْهُ شَيْـًٔا ؕ اَتَاْخُذُوْنَهٗ بُهْتَانًا
وَّاِثْمًا مُّبِيْنًا ﴿٢٠﴾

553 Verses 17 and 18 show that repentance, according to the Holy Qur'ān, implies an actual change in the course of one's life, not the mere utterance of words. In fact, the law stated here shows how repentance does away with sins. When the very course of a man's life is changed in respect of a particular sin, the tendency to that sin is uprooted. But those who continue their evil courses until death overtakes them cannot obtain the benefit of repentance, because there is no time left for them to improve themselves.

554 Among the pre-Islamic Arabs, when a man died his elder son or other relations had a right to possess his widow or widows, marrying them themselves if they pleased, without settling a dowry on them, or marrying them to others, or prohibiting them from marriage altogether (B. 65: iv. 6).

555 This passage remedies another evil. Those husbands who were dissatisfied with their wives were wont to give them trouble in order that they should be forced to claim a divorce and remit the dowry (Rz). This is disallowed. If the judge finds that the fault lies actually with the husband, he will not allow the dowry to be remitted in his favour.

556 The exception is in reference to *taking part of the dowry*, the meaning being that part of the dowry can only be taken back if the woman is guilty of immoral conduct. The *manifest indecency* spoken of here is *hatred and desertion of the husband, refractoriness, and doing harm to the husband and his family* (Rz). In such cases, when the fault is with the woman, she may be required to return her dowry wholly or in part.

557 "It is narrated that when a (married) man among them wanted to

21 And how can you take it when one of you has already gone in to the other and they have taken from you a strong covenant?[557a]

وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُوْنَهٗ وَقَدْ اَفْضٰى بَعْضُكُمْ اِلٰى بَعْضٍ وَّاَخَذْنَ مِنْكُمْ مِّيْثَاقًا غَلِيْظًا ﴿۲۱﴾

22 And marry not women whom your fathers married, except what has already passed. This surely is indecent and hateful; and it is an evil way.[558]

وَلَا تَنْكِحُوْا مَا نَكَحَ اٰبَآؤُكُمْ مِّنَ النِّسَآءِ اِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ ؕ اِنَّهٗ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَّمَقْتًا ؕ وَسَآءَ سَبِيْلًا ﴿۲۲﴾

SECTION 4: **What Women may be taken in Marriage**

23 Forbidden to you are your mothers, and your daughters, and your sisters, and your paternal aunts, and your maternal aunts, and brother's daughters and sister's daughters, and your mothers that have suckled you, and your foster-sisters, and mothers of your wives, and your stepdaughters who are in your guardianship (born) of your wives to whom you have gone in — but if you have not gone in to them, there is no blame on you — and the wives of your sons who are of your own loins; and that you should have two sisters together, except what has already passed. Surely Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful,[559]

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ اُمَّهٰتُكُمْ وَبَنٰتُكُمْ وَاَخَوٰتُكُمْ وَعَمّٰتُكُمْ وَخٰلٰتُكُمْ وَبَنٰتُ الْاَخِ وَبَنٰتُ الْاُخْتِ وَاُمَّهٰتُكُمُ الّٰتِيْۤ اَرْضَعْنَكُمْ وَاَخَوٰتُكُمْ مِّنَ الرَّضَاعَةِ وَاُمَّهٰتُ نِسَآئِكُمْ وَرَبَآئِبُكُمُ الّٰتِيْ فِيْ حُجُوْرِكُمْ مِّنْ نِّسَآئِكُمُ الّٰتِيْ دَخَلْتُمْ بِهِنَّ ۫ فَاِنْ لَّمْ تَكُوْنُوْا دَخَلْتُمْ بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۫ وَحَلَآئِلُ اَبْنَآئِكُمُ الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ اَصْلَابِكُمْ ۙ وَاَنْ تَجْمَعُوْا بَيْنَ الْاُخْتَيْنِ اِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿۲۳﴾

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marry another wife in place of the first, he used to accuse the latter of adultery or other gross immorality, thus compelling her to obtain a divorce by paying a large sum of money" (Rz)., *Having one wife in place of another* signifies *the divorcing of the first and marrying another.* This verse further shows that there is no limit to the dowry which may be settled on a wife; even a heap of gold may be given to her as dowry if the husband has got the means. When 'Umar desired to ban big dowries, it was with the recitation of this verse that a woman in the audience silenced him, and he had to take back his orders saying that "the women of Madīnah had more understanding than 'Umar".

557a Marriage is here called a *mīthāq* or a covenant or agreement between the husband and the wife. As there can be no agreement unless both parties give their consent to it, marriage in Islām can only be contracted with the free consent of the two parties.

558 As already pointed out, when a man died his widows were the property of the eldest son, and he could marry any of them that he liked. This immoral practice was abolished by this verse.

559 For prohibited marriage relations in the Mosaic law see Lev. 18:16-18.

PART V

24 And all married women except those whom your right hands possess (are forbidden);[560] (this is) Allāh's ordinance to you. And lawful for you are (all women) besides those, provided that you seek (them) with your property, taking (them) in marriage, not committing fornication. Then as to those whom you profit by (by marrying), give them their dowries as appointed. And there is no blame on you about what you mutually agree after what is appointed (of dowry).[560a] Surely Allāh is ever Knowing, Wise.

وَّالْمُحْصَنٰتُ مِنَ النِّسَآءِ اِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ
اَيْمَانُكُمْ ۚ كِتٰبَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ وَاُحِلَّ لَكُمْ
مَّا وَرَآءَ ذٰلِكُمْ اَنْ تَبْتَغُوْا بِاَمْوَالِكُمْ
مُّحْصِنِيْنَ غَيْرَ مُسٰفِحِيْنَ ۗ فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ
بِهٖ مِنْهُنَّ فَاٰتُوْهُنَّ اُجُوْرَهُنَّ فَرِيْضَةً ۗ وَلَا
جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيْمَا تَرٰضَيْتُمْ بِهٖ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ
الْفَرِيْضَةِ ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And whoever among you cannot afford to marry free believing women, (let him marry) such of your believing maidens as your right hands possess. And Allāh knows best your faith — you are (sprung) the one from the other. So marry them with the permission of their masters, and give them their dowries justly, they being chaste, not fornicating, nor receiving paramours; then if they are guilty of adultery when they are taken in marriage, they shall suffer half the punishment for free married women. This is for him among you who fears falling into evil. And that you abstain is better for you. And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.[561]

وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنْكُمْ طَوْلًا اَنْ يَّنْكِحَ
الْمُحْصَنٰتِ الْمُؤْمِنٰتِ فَمِنْ مَّا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُكُمْ
مِّنْ فَتَيٰتِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنٰتِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ بِاِيْمَانِكُمْ ۗ
بَعْضُكُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْضٍ ۚ فَانْكِحُوْهُنَّ بِاِذْنِ اَهْلِهِنَّ
وَاٰتُوْهُنَّ اُجُوْرَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ مُحْصَنٰتٍ
غَيْرَ مُسٰفِحٰتٍ وَّلَا مُتَّخِذٰتِ اَخْدَانٍ ۚ
فَاِذَآ اُحْصِنَّ فَاِنْ اَتَيْنَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ فَعَلَيْهِنَّ
نِصْفُ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنٰتِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ ۗ ذٰلِكَ
لِمَنْ خَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ مِنْكُمْ ۗ وَاَنْ تَصْبِرُوْا
خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

560 It is thus forbidden to a man that he should marry a woman who is already married. An exception is made, however, regarding *those whom your right hand possess*, by which expression are generally meant in the Holy Qur'ān *those who are taken prisoners in war*. It sometimes happened that such prisoners became converts to Islām, and therefore they could not be sent back. Such women it was lawful to take in marriage, even though they might not have been divorced

560a, 561, see next page.

SECTION 5 : **Women's Rights over their Earnings**

26 Allāh desires to explain to you, and to guide you into the ways of those before you, and to turn to you (mercifully). And Allāh is Knowing, Wise.

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنَنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And Allāh desires to turn to you (mercifully). And those who follow (their) lusts desire that you should deviate (with) a great deviation.

وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الشَّهَوَاتِ أَنْ تَمِيلُوا مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٧﴾

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formally by their former husbands. The words *mā malakat aimānu-kum* may, however, also mean *those whom you have lawfully taken in marriage,* because lawful possession is clearly implied in the word *aimān,* which signifies *covenant,* marriage also being a covenant. The meaning of the passage may therefore be that *all free women are prohibited to you except those whom you have lawfully married.*

560a The husband and the wife are free to increase or decrease the amount of dowry fixed at the time of marriage by agreement among themselves. It should also be noted that Islām does not allow temporary marriage. It recognizes only *iḥṣān,* taking a woman in permanent marriage, from the root *ḥaṣuna, it* (a place) *was inaccessible,* or (a woman) *was* chaste or married (LL), *iḥṣān* thus meaning *fortifying a place* or *marrying.* Whatever sexual relations are outside *iḥṣān* are denounced as *musāfiḥat* or *giving oneself up to debauchery,* from the root *safḥ,* meaning *spilling. Iḥṣān* gives rise to certain rights and obligations, which are established for life, but such rights and obligations do not arise in *musāfiḥat* or fornication and *mut'ah* which was a temporary marriage recognized in Arabia before the advent of Islām. It seems that resort was had to *mut'ah* in one or two battles by some Muslims but it was expressly prohibited by the Prophet in the battle of Khaibar (B. 64:40).

561 This verse lays down the conditions under which those taken prisoners in war may be taken in marriage. I do not find any verse in the Holy Qur'ān or any instance in the Prophet's life, sanctioning what is called *concubinage.* On more occasions than one, when the establishment of conjugal relations with slave-girls is mentioned, their taking in marriage is clearly laid down as a condition as in v. 3, v. 24, and this verse. Here marriage with those taken prisoners in war is allowed under certain circumstances, the first of these being that they should be believing women or Muslims. There are two more conditions: (1) that a man has not the means to marry a free woman as the opening words show, and (2) that he fears to fall into evil as stated in the concluding words. If, then, even marriage with her is allowed under exceptional circumstances, it is quite unreasonable to suppose that her master is allowed to have conjugal relations with her without taking her for a wife. She was no doubt placed on a lower level in Arab society than a free woman, but that is all. Perhaps the strictness of the rules regarding marriage with a female slave is due to the consideration that he who seeks her in marriage may first have her freed from slavery.

It may be said that this verse speaks of others than the masters of the slave-girls, because it requires the permission of the masters. The only right the master could reasonably claim is that he does not require the permission of anybody else, yet he must still take her as a wife, not as a paramour. But see the Prophet's ḥadīth quoted in 540, according to which the master is required to educate the slave girl, giving her the best education, then set her free and then marry her. One more point arising out of this verse may be noted. It is plainly laid down here that if a married slave-girl commits adultery, her punishment is half of the punishment prescribed for the free married woman who commits adultery. This shows that the Holy Qur'ān never contemplated *stoning* as the punishment for adultery because it could not be halved, and as a matter of fact the Holy Book

28 Allāh desires to make light your burdens,[562] and man is created weak.[563]

يُرِيدُ اللّٰهُ أَنْ يُّخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ ۚ وَخُلِقَ الْإِنْسَانُ ضَعِيفًا ﴿۲۸﴾

29 O you who believe, devour not your property among yourselves by illegal methods except that it be trading by your mutual consent.[564] And kill not your people. Surely Allāh is ever Merciful to you.

يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوٓا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ إِلَّآ أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنْكُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوٓا أَنْفُسَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا ﴿۲۹﴾

30 And whoso does this aggressively and unjustly, We shall soon cast him into fire. And this is ever easy for Allāh.

وَمَنْ يَّفْعَلْ ذٰلِكَ عُدْوَانًا وَّظُلْمًا فَسَوْفَ نُصْلِيهِ نَارًا ۚ وَكَانَ ذٰلِكَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ يَسِيرًا ﴿۳۰﴾

31 If you shun the great things which you are forbidden, We shall do away with your evil (inclinations)[565] and cause you to enter an honourable place of entering.

إِنْ تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَآئِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّاٰتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُمْ مُّدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿۳۱﴾

32 And covet not that by which Allāh has made some of you excel others. For men is the benefit of what they earn. And for women is the benefit of what they earn. And ask Allāh of His grace. Surely Allāh is ever Knower of all things.

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللّٰهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ ۚ لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا اكْتَسَبُوا ۚ وَلِلنِّسَآءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا اكْتَسَبْنَ ۚ وَسْئَلُوا اللّٰهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿۳۲﴾

nowhere speaks of stoning; the only punishment for adultery that it speaks of is a hundred stripes (24:2).

562 Not only is the rigour of the Jewish and other previous laws greatly modified in Islām, but all principles of right action are stated with such completeness, devoid of unnecessary details, that the real burden of man is actually much more lightened in Islām than in any other religion. It, moreover, points out the right way for man's freedom from the bondage of sin, and thus reduces his burden, not by false assurance, but by actually saving him from falling into evil ways.

563 These verses speak of Allāh's great mercy in having shown man the way to truth and guidance, for man, being created weak, could not chalk out a way for himself which was free from error. That is all that man's weakness here signifies.

564 In the first part of this verse all illegal methods of acquiring property are forbidden, but the seeking of gain one from another by trading, which implies mutual consent, is allowed, being a legal method. Though the words are general, the passage is particularly directed to guard women's right to property, because it was women's and orphans' property that was generally devoured aggressively and unjustly.

The second part forbids the killing of *anfusa-kum*, which means *your people* or *yourselves*. In the first case, the significance is that life must also be protected; in the second case, it is an injunction against suicide which according to the law of Islām is a grave sin.

565 *Sayyi'ah* or *sū'* signifies *an evil deed* as well as *an evil affection* (LL). The context requires the latter significance to be adopted here. All that is meant

33 And to every one We have appointed heirs[566] of that which parents and near relatives leave. And as to those with whom your right hands have ratified agreements, give them their due.[567] Surely Allāh is ever Witness over all things.

وَلِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِيَ مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدٰنِ
وَالْأَقْرَبُوْنَ ۚ وَالَّذِيْنَ عَقَدَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ
فَآتُوْهُمْ نَصِيْبَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلٰى
كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيْدًا ﴿٣٣﴾

SECTION 6 : **Disagreement between Husband and Wife**

34 Men are the maintainers[568] of women, with what Allāh has made some of them to excel others and with what they spend out of their wealth. So the good women are obedient,[569] guarding the unseen[570] as Allāh has guarded.[571] And (as to) those on whose part you fear desertion, admonish them, and leave them alone in the beds and chastise them. So if they obey you, seek not a way against

اَلرِّجَالُ قَوّٰمُوْنَ عَلَى النِّسَآءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ
اللّٰهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ وَّبِمَآ أَنْفَقُوْا مِنْ
أَمْوَالِهِمْ ۚ فَالصّٰلِحٰتُ قٰنِتٰتٌ حٰفِظٰتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ
بِمَا حَفِظَ اللّٰهُ ۚ وَالّٰتِيْ تَخَافُوْنَ نُشُوْزَهُنَّ
فَعِظُوْهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوْهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ
وَاضْرِبُوْهُنَّ ۚ فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوْا
عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيْلًا ۗ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ

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is that if a man avoids the commission of sins, the evil inclinations within him die also. Division of sin into *Kabirah* and *ṣaghīrah* is unwarranted.

566 *Mawālī* is plural of *maulā*, which conveys a number of significances, such as *lord* or *chief, a cousin, a freed man, a slave, an heir*. The last of these significances is adopted here by the best authorities (B. 65 : iv, 7), and only this suits the context.

567 In the pre-Islamic days, people were accustomed to enter into covenants one with another, by which they undertook to defend and inherit one another; and when one of them died, the other was considered entitled to one-sixth of the property of the deceased (AH). When the Muslims fled to Madīnah, the Prophet made every Makkan emigrant enter into a close relationship of brotherhood with one of the Madīnah citizens, so that under the old custom one of them would have become an heir to the other on his decease. Inheritance was abolished by this verse, and the words *give them their due* mean *the rendering of assistance* in general, *doing acts of kindness and the giving of good advice*, while something may be settled by testament (B. 39 : 2).

568 *Qāma-l-rajulu 'ala-l-mar'ati* means *he maintained her and managed her affair, having charge of her affair*; hence he is said to be her *qawwām*, i.e. *maintainer* (T). Similarly, *qāma bi-l-yatīmi* means *he maintained the orphan* (LL). Hence by the men being *qawwāmūn* is only meant that they are the maintainers of women with that which Allāh has made some to excel others.

569 Obedience here signifies obedience to Allāh. This significance of the word is made clear by a comparison with 33 : 31, 33 : 35, and 66 : 5.

570 *Guarding the unseen* is a euphemism for *guarding the husband's rights*.

571, see next page.

them. Surely Allāh is ever Exalted, Great.[572]

عَلِيًّا كَبِيرًا ﴿٣٤﴾

35 And if you fear a breach between the two, appoint an arbiter from his people and an arbiter from her people. If they both desire agreement, Allāh will effect harmony between them. Surely Allāh is ever Knowing, Aware.[573]

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا ۚ إِن يُرِيدَا إِصْلَاحًا يُوَفِّقِ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا ﴿٣٥﴾

The two qualifications of a good wife as given here are her piety or obedience to God and chastity.

571 The meaning is that their guarding the husband's rights is really a favour from Allāh as it is Allāh that guards them. Or the meaning may be, *Allāh has guarded their rights.*

572 The word *nushūz,* which I have translated as *desertion,* primarily means *rising,* and as spoken of a woman in connection with her husband it means *her rising against her husband.* This is explained in a number of ways; according to one of these explanations it means *her leaving the husband's place and taking up an abode which he does not like* (AH). LL quotes various authorities showing that *nushūz* on the part of the woman means that *the wife resisted her husband and hated him* (S, Q) and *deserted him* (T).

The remedy pointed out in the case of the wife's desertion is threefold. At first she is only to be admonished. If she desists, the evil is mended, but if she persists in the wrong course, her bed is to be separated. If she still persists, chastisement is permitted as a last resort (Rz). Regarding this last remedy two things must, however, be borne in mind. Firstly it is a mere permission, and sayings of the Prophet make it clear that, though allowed, it was discouraged in practice. Thus the Prophet is reported to have said, on the complaint of certain women as to the ill-treatment of their husbands: "You will not find these men as the best among you" (AD. 12:42). According to *Shāfi'ī,* it is preferable not to resort to chastisement of the wife (Rz). In fact, as the injunctions of the Qur'ān are wide in their scope, the example of the Holy Prophet and his constant exhortations for kind treatment towards women, so much so that he made a man's good treatment of his wife the gauge of his goodness in general — *the best of you is he who is best to his wife* — show clearly that this permission is meant only for that type of men and women who belong to a low grade of society. Secondly, even this permission cannot be adopted indiscriminately, for sayings of the Holy Prophet make it quite evident that chastisement, when resorted to in extreme cases, must be very slight. IAb says it may be with a tooth-brush or something like it (AH). The Prophet is reported to have said: "You have a right in the matter of your wives that they do not allow anyone whom you do not like to come into your houses; if they do this, chastise them in such a manner that it should not leave an impression" (Tr. 10:11). Thus very slight chastisement was allowed only in extreme cases.

573 This verse lays down the procedure to be adopted when a case for divorce arises. It is not for the husband to put away his wife; it is the business of the judge to decide the case. Nor should divorce cases be made too public. The judge is required to appoint two arbiters, one belonging to the wife's family and the other to the husband's. These two arbiters will find out the facts, but their objective must be to effect a reconciliation between the parties. If all hopes of reconciliation fail, a divorce is allowed, but the final decision for divorce rests with the judge who is legally entitled to pronounce a divorce. Cases were decided in accordance with the directions contained in this verse in the early days of Islām. See an instance quoted by Rz regarding 'Alī's decision in a case of breach. The husband was told in plain words that he must abide by the judgement of the arbiters appointed under this verse.

36 And serve Allāh, and associate naught with Him, and be good to the parents and to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the neighbour of (your) kin and the alien neighbour,[574] and the companion in a journey and the wayfarer and those whom your right hands possess.[575] Surely Allāh loves not such as are proud, boastful,

وَاعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوْا بِهٖ شَيْئًا
وَّبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ اِحْسَانًا وَّبِذِي الْقُرْبٰى
وَالْيَتٰمٰى وَالْمَسٰكِيْنِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبٰى
وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنْبِ
وَابْنِ السَّبِيْلِ ۙ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُكُمْ ؕ اِنَّ
اللّٰهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُوْرًا ﴿۳۶﴾

37 Who are niggardly and bid people to be niggardly and hide that which Allāh has given them out of His grace. And We have prepared for the disbelievers an abasing chastisement —

الَّذِيْنَ يَبْخَلُوْنَ وَيَاْمُرُوْنَ النَّاسَ
بِالْبُخْلِ وَيَكْتُمُوْنَ مَآ اٰتٰهُمُ اللّٰهُ مِنْ
فَضْلِهٖ ؕ وَاَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ عَذَابًا مُّهِيْنًا ﴿۳۷﴾

38 And those who spend their wealth to be seen of men and believe not in Allāh nor in the Last Day. And as for him whose companion is the devil, an evil companion is he!

وَالَّذِيْنَ يُنْفِقُوْنَ اَمْوَالَهُمْ رِئَآءَ النَّاسِ
وَلَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ ؕ
وَمَنْ يَّكُنِ الشَّيْطٰنُ لَهٗ قَرِيْنًا فَسَآءَ قَرِيْنًا ﴿۳۸﴾

39 And what (harm) would it do them if they believe in Allāh and the Last Day and spend of that which Allāh has given them? And Allāh is ever Knower of them.

وَمَاذَا عَلَيْهِمْ لَوْ اٰمَنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْاٰخِرِ وَاَنْفَقُوْا مِمَّا رَزَقَهُمُ اللّٰهُ ؕ وَكَانَ
اللّٰهُ بِهِمْ عَلِيْمًا ﴿۳۹﴾

40 Surely Allāh wrongs not the weight of an atom; and if it is a good deed, He multiplies it and gives from Himself a great reward.[576]

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ ۚ وَاِنْ
تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُّضٰعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَّدُنْهُ
اَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿۴۰﴾

41 But how will it be when We bring from every people a witness and bring thee as a witness against these?[576a]

فَكَيْفَ اِذَا جِئْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ اُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيْدٍ
وَّجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلٰى هٰٓؤُلَآءِ شَهِيْدًا ﴿۴۱﴾

574 *The neighbour of kin* may mean *a neighbour who is a relative* or a Muslim neighbour, and *the alien neighbour* is either *a neighbour not related* or ***a neighbour of an alien religion*** (AH). The latter phrase (the qualifying word being derived from *janb*, meaning *a side*) signifies, according to lexicologists, *the person who is one's neighbour but who belongs to another people* (LL). Thus the charity of Islām is not limited to one's own people or one's own co-religionists, but is extended to aliens also.

575 By *those whom your right hands possess* are meant *all those with whose care a man is entrusted*, so that it includes even animals over which a man has

576, 576a, see next page.

42 On that day will those who disbelieved and disobeyed the Messenger desire that the earth were levelled with them. And they can hide no fact from Allāh.

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَّوَدُّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَعَصَوُا الرَّسُوْلَ لَوْ تُسَوّٰى بِهِمُ الْاَرْضُ ؕ وَلَا يَكْتُمُوْنَ اللّٰهَ حَدِيْثًا ﴿٤٢﴾

SECTION 7 : Purification of the Soul

43 O you who believe, go not near prayer when you are intoxicated till you know what you say,[577] nor after sexual intercourse[578] — except

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاَنْتُمْ سُكٰرٰى حَتّٰى تَعْلَمُوْا مَا تَقُوْلُوْنَ

control (AH, Rz). While dealing with the rights of women, the Qur'ān generalizes the law of doing good to others, so much so that it requires goodness to be extended even to a fellow-traveller or to a mere wayfarer. If even companions whose company is so short-lived are to be treated generously, how generous must a man be to her who is the companion of his whole life!

576 Such is the ever-recurring description of the preponderance of mercy in Divine nature: good is always multiplied and evil nullified. The constant multiplication of good shows no doubt that good must ultimately preponderate in the universe, and thus the Divine laws working in nature point to the fact that the universe is moving towards the goal of ultimate good.

576a The prophet sent to a people is frequently spoken of as being *a witness* (Ar. *shahīd*) in respect of them, and by *these* are here meant the followers of the Holy Prophet, or the community of Muḥammad. It is stated in a ḥadīth that this chapter was being recited before the Prophet and when the reciter came to this verse, tears flowed from the eyes of the Prophet and he said: " My Lord, I can bear witness about those among whom I am living, but what about those whom I have not seen " (Ibn Kathīr). From this it appears that the people spoken of here are Muslims who disobey the Prophet, and hence the Prophet's anxiety for the later generations of his followers. This is in fact made clear in the verse that follows in the words *those who disbelieved and disobeyed the Messenger*. Disobedience amounts to disbelief in practice.

577 There is some difference of opinion as to what is meant by *sukārā* here. Literally, the singular *sakarān* signifies *one intoxicated*, but while some consider the meaning here to be *intoxicated with drink*, others think it to be *intoxicated with sleep* (T, LL). And *sakr*, no doubt, may be applied in the latter sense, for its literal significance is *stopping up* (LL). The word is also *applied to confusion of judgment* (LL). The Holy Qur'ān speaks of *sakrat al-maut* (50:19 or the condition when one loses his senses at the approach of death. *Sakrat al-hamma* means the condition in which a person loses his senses on account of extreme grief. *Sakrat al-naum* is the condition when on account of the oppressive sensation of sleep one is not in full possession of one's senses. The word as used here may carry any of these senses.

The prohibition against praying when intoxicated was a step towards the total prohibition of drink, for the necessity of going to prayer five times a day would afford little opportunity for indulgence in drink. The verse makes it further clear that one must know the significance of what one says when praying to God.

578 The word *junub* (from *janb*, meaning *a side*) should not be translated as *impure* or *polluted*; it is a purely technical term, and means *one who is under*

you are merely passing by[579] — until you have bathed. And if you are sick, or on a journey, or one of you come from the privy, or you have touched the women,[580] and you cannot find water, betake yourselves to pure earth,[581] then wipe your faces and your hands. Surely Allāh is ever Pardoning, Forgiving.

وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتّٰى
تَغْتَسِلُوْا ۚ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَّرْضٰى أَوْ عَلٰى
سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَآءَ أَحَدٌ مِّنْكُمْ مِّنَ الْغَآئِطِ
أَوْ لٰمَسْتُمُ النِّسَآءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوْا مَآءً
فَتَيَمَّمُوْا صَعِيْدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوْا بِوُجُوْهِكُمْ
وَأَيْدِيْكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا غَفُوْرًا ﴿٤٣﴾

44 Seest thou not those to whom a portion of the Book was given? They buy error and desire to make you err from the (right) way.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِيْنَ أُوْتُوْا نَصِيْبًا مِّنَ الْكِتٰبِ
يَشْتَرُوْنَ الضَّلٰلَةَ وَيُرِيْدُوْنَ أَنْ
تَضِلُّوا السَّبِيْلَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 And Allāh best knows your enemies. And Allāh is sufficient as a Friend and Allāh is sufficient as a Helper.

وَاللّٰهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَعْدَآئِكُمْ ۗ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ
وَلِيًّا ۙ وَّكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ نَصِيْرًا ﴿٤٥﴾

46 Some of those who are Jews alter words from their places[582] and say, We have heard and we disobey; and (say), Hear without being made to hear, and (say), *Rā'inā*, distorting with their tongues and slandering religion. And if they had said, We hear and we obey, and hearken, and *unẓurnā*,[582a] it would have been better for them and more upright; but Allāh has cursed them on account of their disbelief, so they believe not but a little.

مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ هَادُوْا يُحَرِّفُوْنَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ
مَّوَاضِعِهٖ وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا
وَاسْمَعْ غَيْرَ مُسْمَعٍ وَّرَاعِنَا لَيًّا بِأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ
وَطَعْنًا فِي الدِّيْنِ ۗ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ قَالُوْا سَمِعْنَا
وَأَطَعْنَا وَاسْمَعْ وَانْظُرْنَا لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ
وَأَقْوَمَ ۙ وَلٰكِنْ لَّعَنَهُمُ اللّٰهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ
فَلَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ إِلَّا قَلِيْلًا ﴿٤٦﴾

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an obligation to perform a total ablution or *bathing* (LL). The connection with the root-meaning is that the person under such obligation is *on a side* or *remote from prayer* (R). When one such person, a *junub*, described himself as *najs* (*polluted* or *defiled*) in the presence of the Prophet, the latter corrected him, saying: "Glory to Allāh! A believer is not *najs* or *defiled*" (B. 5:23). The necessity to perform a total ablution arises in case of emission of seminal fluid due to sexual intercourse or *pollutio nocturna*.

579 *Going near prayer* may signify *going into mosques* (I'Ab-Rz), and the meaning in that case would be *unless you pass* (*through the mosques*) *as by a way*.

580 The *touching of women* is a euphemism for sexual intercourse. Many of the fine phrases used in the Holy Qur'ān to express this delicate relation were unknown to the Arabs; words and forms were adopted which would not shock the most delicate ears.

581, 582, 582a, see next page.

47 O you who have been given the Book, believe in what We have revealed, verifying that which you have, before We destroy the leaders and turn them on their backs, or curse them as We cursed the Sabbath-breakers.[583] And the command of Allāh is ever executed.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ ءَامِنُوا۟ بِمَا نَزَّلْنَا
مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا مَعَكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن نَّطْمِسَ
وُجُوهًا فَنَرُدَّهَا عَلَىٰٓ أَدْبَارِهَآ أَوْ نَلْعَنَهُمْ
كَمَا لَعَنَّآ أَصْحَٰبَ ٱلسَّبْتِ ۚ وَكَانَ
أَمْرُ ٱللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا ﴿٤٧﴾

48 Surely Allāh forgives not that a partner should be set up with Him, and forgives all besides that to whom He pleases. And whoever sets up a partner with Allāh, he devises indeed a great sin.[584]

إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَن يُشْرَكَ بِهِۦ وَيَغْفِرُ
مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَمَن يُشْرِكْ
بِٱللَّهِ فَقَدِ ٱفْتَرَىٰٓ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٨﴾

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581 *Ṣa'īd* means *high* or *elevated* ground, hence generally *land* or *ground* or *surface of the earth,* whether it be *dust* or *earth* or *otherwise* (LL). *Tayammum* (from *amma,* meaning *he repaired*) means striking both hands on pure earth, or any thing containing pure dust, and then passing the hands over the face and the backs of the hands. When water is not found, or is likely to do harm, *tayammum* suffices instead of ablution before prayer.

582 The corruption of the previous books is constantly referred to in the Holy Qur'ān, and, as the words clearly show, it implies a corruption of the text as well as a false rendering of it. The subject of the perversion of "holy writ" is specially dealt with in 2: 75–79, 5: 13, 41, and here; see 177a. The verification referred to in v. 47 and elsewhere implies only a verification of the general principles and particularly of the prophecies contained in those books.

582a See 150.

583 The word *wujūh* (sing., *wajh*) may mean either *faces* or *chiefs* and *leaders* (R, under *ṭams*) while *ṭams* means *obliteration* or *destruction* (R). The *obliteration of faces* is evidently a metaphorical expression meaning *depriving them of greatness and prosperity and bringing on them disgrace and adversity* (Bd). The same idea is intensified in *turning them on their backs.* The reference here is supposed to be to their ultimate banishment from Arabia.

The second form of punishment is their being overtaken by the curse which overtook the Sabbath-breakers, for which see 107.

584 *Shirk* or setting up partners with Allāh is spoken of as the gravest sin. A man's wrong belief does not in any way detract from the glory of God, but a belief in false deities lowers the dignity of man. Man is made to rule nature itself and all creatures, but when he lowers himself before creatures lower than himself whom he was really made to rule, he sets at naught the very purpose of his creation. It should be noted that *shirk* or setting up gods with God does not only mean idol-worship or worship of the forces of nature or a belief in the Divinity of mortals, but also includes the blind obedience which is rendered to great men; see note on 9: 31 and also the next footnote. It should be further remembered that the forgiveness spoken of here relates to those who die while guilty of *shirk*, but even they will be received into the mercy of God after suffering the consequences of their deeds. If a man is guilty of *shirk* and repents of it before his death all his sins including *shirk* are washed off and forgiven because he gives a new turn to his life.

49 Hast thou not seen those who attribute purity to themselves? Nay, Allāh purifies whom He pleases, and they will not be wronged a whit.[584a]

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يُزَكُّونَ أَنفُسَهُم ۚ بَلِ اللَّهُ يُزَكِّي مَن يَشَاءُ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ﴿٤٩﴾

50 See how they forge lies against Allāh! And sufficient is this as a manifest sin.[584b]

انظُرْ كَيْفَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ ۖ وَكَفَىٰ بِهِ إِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٠﴾

SECTION 8: **Kingdom granted to Abraham's Descendants**

51 Hast thou not seen those to whom a portion of the Book was given? They believe in sorcery[585] and diviners and say of those who disbelieve: These are better guided in the path than those who believe.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْجِبْتِ وَالطَّاغُوتِ وَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَٰؤُلَاءِ أَهْدَىٰ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا سَبِيلًا ﴿٥١﴾

52 Those are they whom Allāh has cursed. And whomever Allāh curses, thou wilt not find a helper for him.

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ ۖ وَمَن يَلْعَنِ اللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُ نَصِيرًا ﴿٥٢﴾

53 Or have they a share in the kingdom? But then they would not give to people even the speck on a date-stone.[586]

أَمْ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُلْكِ فَإِذًا لَّا يُؤْتُونَ النَّاسَ نَقِيرًا ﴿٥٣﴾

584a *Fatīl* means originally *pellicle of a date stone* or *dirt of the skin rolled between the fingers*; hence *a very small thing* (LL). The reference in those *who attribute purity to themselves* is to such doctors of law and monks (9:31) (as also to *'ulamā'* or *pīrs* to be met with among Muslims) who consider themselves to be above their votaries from whom they demand blind obedience to themselves. Hence such people are spoken of in connection with the mention of setting up partners with God in the previous verse.

584b Laying claim to purity for themselves is here called *a manifest sin.*

585 *Jibt* means *an idol* or *idols* (LL): 'Umar said, it means sorcery (B. 65:iv, 10). Some consider it to be the same word as *jibs,* which means *a worthless thing* (Rz), or *a thing in which there is no good.* For *ṭāghūt* see 343. Here it is explained as meaning *kāhin* or *diviner*: Jābir said that every tribe had its own diviner (B. 65:iv, 10). It is related that in making a compact with the Quraish the Jews worshipped their idols (Rz). But the words seem to refer to the general debasement of the Jews, who believed in all kinds of enchantment, divination, and sorcery, and had long bidden farewell in practice to the pure monotheism of Moses.

586 The reference is apparently to the temporal and spiritual kingdom which was promised to Abraham's seed, as clearly stated in the next verse. The Jews had been deprived of both. Love of wealth had debased them to such an extent that they were not fit for even temporal kingdom which could not be granted to a people who would not deal liberally with others.

54 Or do they envy the people for that which Allāh has given them of His grace ? But indeed We have given to Abraham's children the Book and the Wisdom, and We have given them a grand kingdom.[587]

أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۚ فَقَدْ آتَيْنَا آلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَآتَيْنَاهُمْ مُلْكًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٥٤﴾

55 So of them[588] is he who believes in him, and of them is he who turns away from him.[589] And Hell is sufficient to burn.

فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ آمَنَ بِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ صَدَّ عَنْهُ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِجَهَنَّمَ سَعِيرًا ﴿٥٥﴾

56 Those who disbelieve in Our Messages, we shall make them enter Fire. As often as their skins are burned, We shall change them for other skins,[590] that they may taste the chastisement. Surely Allāh is ever Mighty, Wise.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَوْفَ نُصْلِيهِمْ نَارًا ۖ كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ جُلُودُهُمْ بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿٥٦﴾

57 And those who believe and do good deeds, We shall make them enter Gardens wherein flow rivers, to abide in them for ever. For them therein are pure companions and We shall make them enter a pleasant shade.[591]

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۖ لَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ ۖ وَنُدْخِلُهُمْ ظِلًّا ظَلِيلًا ﴿٥٧﴾

58 Surely Allāh commands you to make over trusts[592] to those worthy of them, and that when you judge between people, you judge with justice. Surely Allāh admonishes you with what is excellent. Surely Allāh is ever Hearing, Seeing.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا ﴿٥٨﴾

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587 By the *people* are meant the Arabs. The promised kingdom was still in Abraham's seed, but was now transferred from the descendants of Israel to those of Ishmael, in accordance with the covenant made with Abraham ; see 168.

588 The children of Abraham, among whom were the Jews, are meant.

589 The personal pronoun is for the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, who was now the true exponent of Abraham's religion.

590 The form used signifies the continuance of the torment in accordance with the metaphor of fire.

591 *Ẓill* implies *mightiness* and *inaccessibility* and also *a state of ease*: the words are used here in allusion to *happiness* and *pleasantness* of life (R).

592 This section deals with the granting of kingdom to the Muslims, who are here required to entrust the affairs of State to people who are worthy of this responsibility. The words that follow, requiring judges to be just, corroborate this significance, the whole verse stating the reciprocal duties of the governed and the

59 O you who believe, obey Allāh and obey the Messenger and those in authority from among you; then if you quarrel about any thing, refer it to Allāh and the Messenger, if you believe in Allāh and the Last Day.[593] This is best and more suitable to (achieve) the end.[594]

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡۤا اَطِيۡعُوا اللّٰهَ وَاَطِيۡعُوا
الرَّسُوۡلَ وَاُولِى الۡاَمۡرِ مِنۡكُمۡ ۚ فَاِنۡ
تَنَازَعۡتُمۡ فِىۡ شَىۡءٍ فَرُدُّوۡهُ اِلَى اللّٰهِ وَالرَّسُوۡلِ
اِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ تُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالۡيَوۡمِ الۡاٰخِرِ ؕ
ذٰلِكَ خَيۡرٌ وَّاَحۡسَنُ تَاۡوِيۡلًا ﴿٥٩﴾

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governors. Explaining the word *amānat* (sing. of *amānāt*, the word occurring here and translated *trusts*), I'Ab said that it means *duties* (LA). The Prophet himself explained the word *amānat* as meaning *Government* or *affairs of State*. "The Prophet said, When the amānat (trust) is wasted, wait for the *sā'ah*, i.e. *the hour* or the *doom*. It was said, How will the trust be wasted, O Messenger of Allāh? He said, When Government is entrusted to those unworthy of it, then wait for the doom" (B. 81:35).

593 This verse lays down three important rules of guidance in matters relating to the welfare of the Muslim community and especially in those relating to affairs of State. These are obedience to God and His Messenger in the first place; secondly, obedience to those in authority from among the Muslims; and thirdly, referring matters to God and His Messenger in cases of dispute with those in authority. God and His Messenger are thus the final authority. This is explained in the Ḥadīth. "To hear and obey," said the Prophet, "is binding so long as one is not commanded to disobey God; when one is commanded to disobey God, he shall not hear or obey (the authorities)" (B. 56:108). The words *ulu-l-amr*, meaning *those in authority*, have a wide significance, so that in different matters relating to the life of man different persons would be in authority. Thus the commander of a section of the army was considered as one in authority (B. 65: iv, 11). Temporal authorities are to be obeyed in secular matters while religious authorities must be obeyed in religious matters. It is especially in matters religious that differences would arise, in which case it would be necessary to refer the matter to God and His Messenger; in other words to the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. Judgments of the great Imāms are acceptable only subject to the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. The great Imām Abū Ḥanīfah is himself reported to have said: "Give up my word for the Word of Allāh; give up my word for the word of the Messenger of Allāh".

As regards the secular authorities, the rule is laid down in the Ḥadīth that "the authority of those entrusted with it should not be disputed, unless," the Prophet added, "you see an act of open disbelief in which you have a clear argument from Allāh" (B. 93:2).

The words of the verse speak only of those in authority *from among you*, and the question therefore arises, what should the Muslims do in case they have to live under non-Muslim authority? In such a case the Prophet's own example in his relations with Abyssinia is a sufficient guide. About a hundred of the companions were advised by the Prophet to seek shelter in the Christian Kingdom of Abyssinia where they lived for about ten years subject to the laws of the land. The rule is, however, laid down in clear words as already quoted that "when one is commanded to disobey God, he shall not hear or obey the authorities"

594 *Ta'wīl* (from *āla, he returned*) signifies *interpretation*, because the words are *returned* to their sense. But from the same original sense of *returning* follows its use in the sense of *marja'*, i.e. *final sequel*, and *'āqibah*, i.e. *issue, end, result* (LL), and this is the significance which suits the context here.

SECTION 9 : **The Prophet must be obeyed**

60 Hast thou not seen those who assert that they believe in that which has been revealed to thee and that which was revealed before thee ? They desire to seek the judgment of the devil,[595] though they have been commanded to deny him. And the devil desires to lead them far astray.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا بِمَآ
أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَآ أُنْزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ يُرِيدُونَ
أَنْ يَّتَحَاكَمُوٓا إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ وَقَدْ أُمِرُوٓا
أَنْ يَّكْفُرُوا بِهٖ ؕ وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطٰنُ أَنْ
يُّضِلَّهُمْ ضَلٰلًا ۢ بَعِيدًا ﴿٦٠﴾

61 And when it is said to them, Come to that which Allāh has revealed and to the Messenger, thou seest the hypocrites turning away from thee with aversion.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلٰى مَآ أَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ
وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ رَأَيْتَ الْمُنٰفِقِينَ يَصُدُّونَ
عَنْكَ صُدُودًا ﴿٦١﴾

62 But how is it that when a misfortune befalls them on account of that which their hands have sent before, they come to thee swearing by Allāh : We desired naught but good and concord ?

فَكَيْفَ إِذَآ أَصٰبَتْهُمْ مُّصِيبَةٌ ۢ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ
أَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ جَآءُوكَ يَحْلِفُونَ ۖ بِاللّٰهِ
إِنْ أَرَدْنَآ إِلَّآ إِحْسٰنًا وَّتَوْفِيقًا ﴿٦٢﴾

63 These are they, the secrets of whose hearts Allāh knows ; so turn aside from them and admonish them and speak to them effective words concerning themselves.[596]

أُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللّٰهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ ق
فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُلْ لَّهُمْ فِيٓ
أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا ۢ بَلِيغًا ﴿٦٣﴾

64 And We sent no messenger but that he should be obeyed by Allāh's command. And had they, when they wronged themselves, come to thee and asked forgiveness of Allāh, and the Messenger had (also) asked forgiveness for them, they would have found Allāh Oft-returning (to mercy), Merciful.

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ
اللّٰهِ ؕ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَّلَمُوٓا أَنْفُسَهُمْ جَآءُوكَ
فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللّٰهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ
لَوَجَدُوا اللّٰهَ تَوَّابًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٦٤﴾

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595 For *ṭāghūt* see 343. The people spoken of here are the hypocrites as made clear in the verse that follows. The reference here is said to be to Ka'b, son of Ashraf, a Jew ; others think it is to Abū Bardah, a diviner ; others consider the *ṭāghūt* here to be a particular *idol* or *idols generally*, to whom disputes were taken to be decided by divination (Rz). The hypocrites inclined to idols, or the diviners who, being their leaders in devil-worship, are called *devils*.

596 A person is said to be *balīgh* (from *balagha*, meaning *be attained the*

65 But no, by thy Lord! they believe not until they make thee a judge of what is in dispute between them, then find not any straitness in their hearts as to that which thou decidest and submit with full submission.

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتّٰى يُحَكِّمُوْكَ
فِيْمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوْا فِيْٓ اَنْفُسِهِمْ
حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوْا تَسْلِيْمًا ۝٦٥

66 And if We had enjoined them, Lay down your lives[597] or go forth from your homes, they would not have done it except a few of them. And if they had done what they are exhorted to do, it would certainly have been better for them and more strengthening:

وَلَوْ اَنَّا كَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ اَنِ اقْتُلُوْٓا اَنْفُسَكُمْ
اَوِ اخْرُجُوْا مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ مَّا فَعَلُوْهُ اِلَّا قَلِيْلٌ
مِّنْهُمْ ۭ وَلَوْ اَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوْا مَا يُوْعَظُوْنَ بِهٖ
لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ وَاَشَدَّ تَثْبِيْتًا ۝٦٦

67 And then We would certainly have given them from Ourselves a great reward,

وَّاِذًا لَّاٰتَيْنٰهُمْ مِّنْ لَّدُنَّآ اَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا ۝٦٧

68 And We would certainly have guided them in the right path.

وَّلَهَدَيْنٰهُمْ صِرَاطًا مُّسْتَقِيْمًا ۝٦٨

69 And whoever obeys Allāh and the Messenger, they are with those upon whom Allāh has bestowed favours from among the prophets and the truthful and the faithful and the righteous, and a goodly company are they![598]

وَمَنْ يُّطِعِ اللّٰهَ وَالرَّسُوْلَ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ مَعَ
الَّذِيْنَ اَنْعَمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنَ النَّبِيّٖنَ
وَالصِّدِّيْقِيْنَ وَالشُّهَدَاۗءِ وَالصّٰلِحِيْنَ ۚ
وَحَسُنَ اُولٰٓئِكَ رَفِيْقًا ۝٦٩ۭ

70 Such is the grace from Allāh, and Allāh is sufficient as Knower.

ذٰلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللّٰهِ ۭ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ عَلِيْمًا ۝٧٠ۧ

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utmost point to which he directed his course) who is *chaste in speech* or *effective* or *penetrating in tongue*. Applied to a saying, it also signifies *an effectual speech* or *a speech producing an effect* (LL).

597 The companions of the Prophet had to lay down their lives in defence of their faith, and had to leave their homes for the sake of their religion. But the hypocrites at Madīnah were too weak of heart to undergo such hardships. They were only required to contribute to the struggle which was being carried on for national defence and to obey the Prophet's orders which was a far easier task, but they did not do even this.

598 Those upon whom Allāh has bestowed favours are spoken of as belonging to four classes: (1) The prophets. (2) The truthful — the original word *ṣiddīq* literally means *one who is always truthful* and in the religious language *one who is true in his saying and his belief, and who confirms his truth by his deed or acting* (LL). (3) The faithful — the original word shahīd means *one who bears witness to the truth of the religion of Allāh*, both by his words and deeds, and one slain in defence of his religion is included because he too gives evidence of the

SECTION 10: **Believers must defend Themselves**

71 O you who believe, take your precautions, then go forth in detachments or go forth in a body.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا خُذُوۡا حِذۡرَكُمۡ فَانۡفِرُوۡا ثُبَاتٍ اَوِ انۡفِرُوۡا جَمِيۡعًا ﴿۷۱﴾

72 And among you is he who would hang back. Then if a misfortune befalls you he says: Allāh indeed bestowed a favour on me as I was not present with them.

وَاِنَّ مِنۡكُمۡ لَمَنۡ لَّيُبَطِّئَنَّ‌ ۚ فَاِنۡ اَصَابَتۡكُمۡ مُّصِيۡبَةٌ قَالَ قَدۡ اَنۡعَمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَىَّ اِذۡ لَمۡ اَكُنۡ مَّعَهُمۡ شَهِيۡدًا ﴿۷۲﴾

73 And if bounty from Allāh comes to you, he would cry, as if there were no friendship between you and him: Would that I had been with them, then I should have achieved a mighty success!

وَلَٮِٕنۡ اَصَابَكُمۡ فَضۡلٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ لَيَقُوۡلَنَّ كَاَنۡ لَّمۡ تَكُنۡۢ بَيۡنَكُمۡ وَبَيۡنَهٗ مَوَدَّةٌ يّٰلَيۡتَنِىۡ كُنۡتُ مَعَهُمۡ فَاَفُوۡزَ فَوۡزًا عَظِيۡمًا ﴿۷۳﴾

74 So let those fight in the way of Allāh who sell this world's life for the Hereafter. And whoever fights in the way of Allāh, be he slain or be he victorious, We shall grant him a mighty reward.

فَلۡيُقَاتِلۡ فِىۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ الَّذِيۡنَ يَشۡرُوۡنَ الۡحَيٰوةَ الدُّنۡيَا بِالۡاٰخِرَةِ‌ ؕ وَمَنۡ يُّقَاتِلۡ فِىۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ فَيُقۡتَلۡ اَوۡ يَغۡلِبۡ فَسَوۡفَ نُـؤۡتِيۡهِ اَجۡرًا عَظِيۡمًا ﴿۷۴﴾

75 And what reason have you not to fight in the way of Allāh, and of the weak among the men and the women and the children, who say:

وَمَا لَـكُمۡ لَا تُقَاتِلُوۡنَ فِىۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ وَالۡمُسۡتَضۡعَفِيۡنَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَآءِ وَالۡوِلۡدَانِ الَّذِيۡنَ يَقُوۡلُوۡنَ رَبَّنَاۤ اَخۡرِجۡنَا

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truth of religion by laying down his life. (4) The righteous or those who stick to the right course in all their deeds, come what may.

Those who obey Allāh and the Messenger are here told that they are *with* the perfect ones who belong to the four classes, the prophets, the truthful, the faithful and the righteous. The significance is clear. They have not attained to the perfection of these four classes of the perfect ones, yet they are *with* them, i.e., they will be in their company in the life to come. The Prophet's sayings make it clear. He is reported to have said: "The truthful and honest merchant is with the prophets, the truthful and the faithful" (Tr. 12:4). It does not mean that an honest merchant becomes a prophet, but that he is in the company of the prophets. According to another ḥadīth, the Prophet was asked about a person who loves a people but is not one of them, and he replied that *a man is with those whom he loves* (M. 45:50). And Anas is reported to have said: "I love the Messenger of Allāh and I love Abū Bakr and 'Umar and I hope that Allāh will raise me with them, though I have not done the deeds which they did" (M. 45:50). Thus this verse promises to those who have not attained to perfection the company of those who have attained to perfection when the former have done their best to obey God and His Messenger.

Our Lord, take us out of this town, whose people are oppressors, and grant us from Thee a friend, and grant us from Thee a helper![599]

مِنْ هٰذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا ۚ
وَاجْعَلْ لَّنَا مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا ۚ وَّاجْعَلْ
لَّنَا مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ نَصِيرًا ﴿٧٥﴾

76 Those who believe fight in the way of Allāh, and those who disbelieve fight in the way of the devil. So fight against the friends of the devil; surely the struggle of the devil is ever weak.[600]

اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا يُقَاتِلُوْنَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۚ
وَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا يُقَاتِلُوْنَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ
الطَّاغُوْتِ فَقَاتِلُوْٓا اَوْلِيَآءَ الشَّيْطٰنِ ۚ اِنَّ
كَيْدَ الشَّيْطٰنِ كَانَ ضَعِيْفًا ﴿٧٦﴾

SECTION 11 : **Attitude of the Hypocrites**

77 Hast thou not seen those to whom it was said: Withhold your hands, and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate. But when fighting is prescribed for them, lo! a party of them fear men as they ought to fear Allāh, or with a greater fear, and say: Our Lord, why hast Thou ordained fighting for us? Wouldst Thou not grant us respite to a near term?[601] Say: The enjoyment of this world is short, and the Hereafter is better for him who keeps his duty. And you shall not be wronged a whit.

اَلَمْ تَرَ اِلَى الَّذِيْنَ قِيْلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوْٓا اَيْدِيَكُمْ
وَاَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتُوا الزَّكٰوةَ ۚ فَلَمَّا
كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ اِذَا فَرِيْقٌ مِّنْهُمْ
يَخْشَوْنَ النَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ اللّٰهِ اَوْ اَشَدَّ
خَشْيَةً ۚ وَقَالُوْا رَبَّنَا لِمَ كَتَبْتَ عَلَيْنَا
الْقِتَالَ ۚ لَوْلَآ اَخَّرْتَنَآ اِلٰٓى اَجَلٍ قَرِيْبٍ ۗ
قُلْ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيْلٌ ۚ وَالْاٰخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ
لِّمَنِ اتَّقٰى ۗ وَلَا تُظْلَمُوْنَ فَتِيْلًا ﴿٧٧﴾

At any rate none can become a prophet by obeying the Prophet. If this were true, not only would all the truthful and the faithful and the righteous be prophets, because they perfectly obeyed Allāh and His Messenger, but even all those who tried to follow them would have been raised to the dignity of prophethood which is absurd on the face of it. And to talk of some people becoming prophets after the door to prophethood has been closed is sheer ignorance of the basic principles laid down by the Holy Book.

599 This verse explains what is meant by fighting in the way of Allāh. While most of the believers who had the means had escaped from Makkah, which is here spoken of as the city *whose people are oppressors*, there remained those who were weak and unable to undertake a journey. These were still persecuted and oppressed by the Makkans, as is clearly shown by the words of the verse, and not only men, but even women and young children, were persecuted. Fighting to deliver them from the persecution of the oppressors was really fighting in the way of Allāh. The next verse shows that these very oppressors are spoken of as fighting in the way of the devil.

600 This is a prophecy that those who are siding with the devil and are fighting against the Truth will ultimately be vanquished.

601 The injunction to fight was distasteful, and more particularly so to those

78 Wherever you are, death will overtake you, though you are in towers, raised high. And if good befalls them, they say: This is from Allāh; and if a misfortune befalls them, they say: This is from thee. Say: All is from Allāh. But what is the matter with these people that they make no effort to understand anything?

أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكُّمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُّشَيَّدَةٍ ۗ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَٰذِهِ مِنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ ۖ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَٰذِهِ مِنْ عِندِكَ ۚ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ ۖ فَمَالِ هَٰؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا ﴿٧٨﴾

79 Whatever good befalls thee (O man), it is from Allāh, and whatever misfortune befalls thee, it is from thyself.[602] And We have sent thee (O Prophet) to mankind as a Messenger. And Allāh is sufficient as a witness.

مَّا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ ۖ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِن سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِن نَّفْسِكَ ۚ وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ﴿٧٩﴾

80 Whoever obeys the Messenger, he indeed obeys Allāh. And whoever turns away, We have not sent thee as a keeper over them.

مَّن يُطِعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ ۖ وَمَن تَوَلَّىٰ فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا ﴿٨٠﴾

81 And they say: Obedience. But when they go out from thy presence, a party of them plan by night doing otherwise than what thou sayest.[603] And Allāh writes down what they plan by night, so turn aside from them and trust in Allāh. And Allāh is sufficient as having charge of affairs.

وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةٌ فَإِذَا بَرَزُوا مِنْ عِندِكَ بَيَّتَ طَائِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي تَقُولُ ۖ وَاللَّهُ يَكْتُبُ مَا يُبَيِّتُونَ ۖ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا ﴿٨١﴾

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who were weak in faith. Had there been any hope of plunder to animate the ranks of Muslims, those who loved this world most (who are here called the hypocrites) would have been foremost in fighting; but as they knew that they were fighting against odds, they considered the execution of this order as equivalent to courting death, and requested to be granted a respite until they died a natural death.

602 Good and evil, or benefits and misfortunes, proceed from Allāh; but while He sends benefits from Himself, i.e. out of His beneficence, no evil or misfortune afflicts a man unless his own hands have called for it. There is no discrepancy in the two statements, the one made at the end of the last verse — *All is from Allāh* — and the other made here. The previous verse states that the hypocrites attributed their misfortunes to the Prophet; they are told that misfortunes were sent by Allāh. This verse tells them that, though sent by Allāh, the immediate cause of these misfortunes was to be found in their own doings.

603 The reference here is to the secret counsels of the hypocrites, who were always plotting against the Prophet while they kept an appearance of obedience to him.

82 Will they not then meditate on the Qur'ān? And if it were from any other than Allāh, they would have found in it many a discrepancy.[604]

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ ۚ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا ﴿٨٢﴾

83 But if any news of security or fear comes to them, they spread it abroad. And if they had referred it to the Messenger and to those in authority among them, those of them who can search out knowledge of it would have known it. And were it not for the grace of Allāh upon you and His mercy, you would certainly have followed the devil save a few.[605]

وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوِ الْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا بِهِ ۖ وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَىٰ أُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنْبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَاتَّبَعْتُمُ الشَّيْطَانَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٣﴾

84 Fight then in Allāh's way — thou art not responsible except for thyself; and urge on the believers. It may be that Allāh will restrain the fighting of those who disbelieve. And Allāh is stronger in prowess and stronger to give exemplary punishment.[606]

فَقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ لَا تُكَلَّفُ إِلَّا نَفْسَكَ وَحَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَكُفَّ بَأْسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۚ وَاللَّهُ أَشَدُّ بَأْسًا وَأَشَدُّ تَنْكِيلًا ﴿٨٤﴾

85 Whoever intercedes in a good cause has a share of it, and whoever intercedes in an evil cause has a portion of it. And Allāh is ever Keeper over all things.[607]

مَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ نَصِيبٌ مِنْهَا ۚ وَمَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً سَيِّئَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ كِفْلٌ مِنْهَا ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُقِيتًا ﴿٨٥﴾

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604 The Qur'ān was not written out and given on one occasion, but it continued to be delivered in small portions during twenty-three years under the most varying circumstances. From the solitary recluse of the cave of Ḥirā', the Prophet had to pass through such a variety of circumstances to be the sole monarch and legislator of the whole of Arabia, that the life of no other individual human being affords us such a varying study. It is quite true that the earlier revelation deals mostly with such problems as Divine Unity and Majesty and the responsibility of human actions in general, while the later revelation had to deal with a large number of questions relating to the social and moral well-being of society; but what strikes one throughout the entire revelation is that it keeps up one and the same strain — absolute submission to Allāh, entire trust in Him, perfect confidence of future success, a liberal view of humanity, an attitude of charity towards all nations and religions, and goodness to all alike. The spirit of the revelations to the solitary, persecuted, and rejected preacher of Makkah does not differ in these and a hundred other particulars from the spirit of the revelations to the sole temporal and spiritual monarch of Arabia. There are no discrepancies even in the details of narratives — such, for instance, as are met with in the Bible — and this is especially true of the numerous prophecies which

605, 606, 607, see next page.

86 And when you are greeted with a greeting, greet with one better than it, or return it.[608] Surely Allāh ever takes account of all things.

وَإِذَا حُيِّيتُم بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَآ أَوْ رُدُّوهَآ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ حَسِيبًا ﴿٨٦﴾

87 Allāh, there is no god but He — He will certainly gather you together on the Resurrection day, there is no doubt in it. And who is more true in word than Allāh ?

ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ لَيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۗ وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ ٱللَّهِ حَدِيثًا ﴿٨٧﴾

SECTION 12 : **How to deal with the Hypocrites**

88 Why should you, then, be two parties in relation to the hypocrites while Allāh has made them return (to disbelief) for what they have earned ? Do you desire to guide him whom Allāh leaves in error ? And whomsoever Allāh leaves in error thou canst not find a way for him.[609]

فَمَا لَكُمْ فِى ٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ فِئَتَيْنِ وَٱللَّهُ أَرْكَسَهُم بِمَا كَسَبُوٓا ۚ أَتُرِيدُونَ أَن تَهْدُوا مَنْ أَضَلَّ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ ٱللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُۥ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٨﴾

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were uttered by the Prophet when an absolutely helpless man. Had they not proceeded from the Omniscient Being, Who knows the future as He knows the past, they could certainly not have been free from numerous discrepancies.

605 Divine grace and mercy were manifested by raising a prophet who delivered them from the bondage of sin and from the slavery of the devil.

606 These words show how great was the confidence of the Prophet in the ultimate triumph of the noble cause with which he was entrusted. The primary duty to defend Islām *lay on him alone*, as against all the hosts of Arabia. This shows that he never put any trust in the prowess of his followers, and his confidence was based solely on Divine help. With no material resources, he was sure not only that he would be able to restrain the fighting of his powerful opponents, but also that they would meet with condign punishment at his hands.

607 The meaning is that *he who joins himself to another and assists him, and becomes to him as one of a pair or an intercessor in doing good or evil, and thus aids him and strengthens him, partakes with him the benefit or the harm of it* (R). It is also held by some that *shafā'at* here implies "that one institutes for another a way of good or a way of evil, which the other imitates, and thus becomes to him as if he were one of a pair" (LL). The connection is clear; the Prophet made himself an example of good for others to imitate or to aid him. For the meaning of *shafā'at*, see 79.

608 A greeting is a prayer for the good of another, *tahiyyah* being originally *a prayer for one's long life*. The Islāmic greeting is *al-salāmu 'alai-kum*, which means *peace be to you*, so that when two Muslims meet they are required to pray for one another's good. The minimum requirement is that a greeting must be returned in the same words. Hence the other party says *wa 'alaikum al-salām*, meaning *and to you be peace*. But it is recommended that the greeting should be returned in better words, and hence, to the words of the reply are added the words *wa rahmatu-llāhi wa barakātuh*, i.e. *and the mercy of Allāh and His blessings*. But what is really aimed at is that a Muslim should always wish good for, or do good to, his brother, and the other is required to do greater good in return.

609; see next page.

89 They long that you should disbelieve as they have disbelieved so that you might be on the same level; so take not from among them friends until they flee (their homes) in Allāh's way. Then if they turn back (to hostility), seize them and kill them wherever you find them, and take no friend nor helper from among them,

وَدُّوا لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا فَتَكُونُونَ سَوَآءً فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءَ حَتّٰى يُهَاجِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ ۚ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَخُذُوهُمْ وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُّمُوهُمْ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ وَلِيًّا وَّلَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٨٩﴾

90 Except those who join a people between whom and you there is an alliance, or who come to you, their hearts shrinking from fighting you or fighting their own people. And if Allāh had pleased, He would have given them power over you, so that they would have fought you. So if they withdraw from you and fight you not and offer you peace, then Allāh allows you no way against them.[610]

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ إِلٰى قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِّيثَاقٌ أَوْ جَآءُوكُمْ حَصِرَتْ صُدُورُهُمْ أَنْ يُّقَاتِلُوكُمْ أَوْ يُقَاتِلُوا قَوْمَهُمْ ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ فَلَقٰتَلُوكُمْ ۚ فَإِنِ اعْتَزَلُوكُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ وَأَلْقَوْا إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَمَ ۙ فَمَا جَعَلَ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٠﴾

91 You will find others who desire to be secure from you and secure from their own people. Whenever they are made to return to hostility, they are plunged into it.[611] So if they withdraw not from you, nor offer you peace and restrain their hands, then seize them and kill them wherever you find them. And against these We have given you a clear authority.

سَتَجِدُونَ اٰخَرِينَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَّأْمَنُوكُمْ وَيَأْمَنُوا قَوْمَهُمْ ۚ كُلَّمَا رُدُّوٓا إِلَى الْفِتْنَةِ أُرْكِسُوا فِيهَا ۚ فَإِنْ لَّمْ يَعْتَزِلُوكُمْ وَيُلْقُوٓا إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَمَ وَيَكُفُّوٓا أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَخُذُوهُمْ وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ ۚ وَأُولٰٓئِكُمْ جَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطٰنًا مُّبِينًا ﴿٩١﴾

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609 Clearly those waverers are implied here who went back to disbelief after they accepted Islām, and thus again joined the disbelievers. As to their identity, there are six different conjectures, and I need not puzzle the reader with these.

610 This verse explains the previous one, showing clearly that even waverers were not to be killed or fought against if they refrained from fighting, though they may have gone over to disbelief after accepting Islām. The commentators agree that the persons referred to in this verse were disbelievers and not Muslims, and they are generally supposed to have been the Banī Mudlaj (Bd). Note also that we have here the clear injunction that if any people offered peace, they were not to be fought against.

611 By *mischief*, or *fitnah*, is meant *war with the Muslims* (Rz). Two tribes, Asad and Ghaṭfān, came to the Muslims and showed an inclination to remain at

SECTION 13: **Murderer of a Muslim**

92 And a believer would not kill a believer except by mistake.[612] And he who kills a believer by mistake should free a believing slave, and blood-money should be paid to his people unless they remit it as alms. But if he be from a tribe hostile to you and he is a believer, the freeing of a believing slave (suffices). And if he be from a tribe between whom and you there is a covenant, the blood-money should be paid to his people along with the freeing of a believing slave; but he who has not the means should fast for two months successively: a penance from Allāh. And Allāh is ever Knowing, Wise.

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ اَنْ يَّقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا اِلَّا
خَطَـًٔا ۚ وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَـًٔا فَتَحْرِيْرُ
رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ وَّدِيَةٌ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ اِلٰۤى اَهْلِهٖۤ
اِلَّاۤ اَنْ يَّصَّدَّقُوْا ؕ فَاِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَدُوٍّ
لَّكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيْرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُّؤْمِنَةٍ ؕ
وَاِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍۢ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِّيْثَاقٌ
فَدِيَةٌ مُّسَلَّمَةٌ اِلٰۤى اَهْلِهٖ وَتَحْرِيْرُ رَقَبَةٍ
مُّؤْمِنَةٍ ۚ فَمَنْ لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ
مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ ۫ تَوْبَةً مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ
عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ﴿۹۲﴾

93 And whoever kills a believer intentionally, his punishment is hell, abiding therein; and Allāh is wroth with him and He has cursed him and prepared for him a grievous chastisement.[614]

وَمَنْ يَّقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُّتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَآؤُهٗ
جَهَنَّمُ خٰلِدًا فِيْهَا وَغَضِبَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَلَعَنَهٗ وَاَعَدَّ لَهٗ عَذَابًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿۹۳﴾

94 O you who believe, when you go forth (to fight) in Allāh's way, make investigation, and say not to any one who offers you salutation, Thou art not a believer,[614a] seeking the good

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْۤا اِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِيْ
سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ فَتَبَيَّنُوْا وَلَا تَقُوْلُوْا لِمَنْ
اَلْقٰۤى اِلَيْكُمُ السَّلٰمَ لَسْتَ مُؤْمِنًا ۚ تَبْتَغُوْنَ

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peace; but when they went back and their people invited them to join them in fighting with the Muslims, they responded to the call. Such people could not be trusted. The importance of these directions in time of war, when the Muslims were hemmed in on all sides by enemies, can hardly be overestimated.

612 This verse and the one following it show that the man who killed a believer intentionally could not be a believer. In the state of warfare which then existed in Arabia, disbelievers often made use of ruses, professing a firm belief in Islām and thus tempting the Muslims to go over to them as religious teachers, and afterwards murdering them.

614 The commentators are agreed that this verse speaks of a disbeliever who murders a believer. In fact, the word *intentionally* stands here for murdering a man because he is a believer, as this was what the disbelievers often did.

614a The original word for salutation is *salām* (meaning *peace*), the first word of the Muslim salutation stands therefore for the Muslim salutation. The Muslims were surrounded by enemies on all sides, yet they were told not to presume that every Arab tribe belonged to the enemy camp but were to make an investigation first, whether the tribe was really hostile to Islām. Even when a

of this world's life. But with Allāh there are abundant gains. You too were such before, then Allāh conferred a benefit on you ; so make investigation. Surely Allāh is ever Aware of what you do.[615]

عَرَضَ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ۫ فَعِنْدَ اللّٰهِ مَغَانِمُ كَثِيْرَةٌ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ كُنْتُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلُ فَمَنَّ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَتَبَيَّنُوْا ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرًا ﴿۹۴﴾

95 The holders back from among the believers, not disabled by injury, and those who strive hard in Allāh's way with their property and their persons, are not equal. Allāh has made the strivers with their property and their persons to excel the holders-back a (high) degree. And to each Allāh has promised good. And Allāh has granted to the strivers above the holders-back a mighty reward —

لَا يَسْتَوِي الْقٰعِدُوْنَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ غَيْرُ اُولِي الضَّرَرِ وَ الْمُجٰهِدُوْنَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ بِاَمْوَالِهِمْ وَ اَنْفُسِهِمْ ؕ فَضَّلَ اللّٰهُ الْمُجٰهِدِيْنَ بِاَمْوَالِهِمْ وَ اَنْفُسِهِمْ عَلَى الْقٰعِدِيْنَ دَرَجَةً ؕ وَ كُلًّا وَّعَدَ اللّٰهُ الْحُسْنٰى ؕ وَ فَضَّلَ اللّٰهُ الْمُجٰهِدِيْنَ عَلَى الْقٰعِدِيْنَ اَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿۹۵﴾

96 (High) degrees from Him and protection and mercy. And Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful.

دَرَجٰتٍ مِّنْهُ وَ مَغْفِرَةً وَّ رَحْمَةً ؕ وَ كَانَ اللّٰهُ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿۹۶﴾

SECTION 14: **Muslims who remained with the Enemy**

97 (As for) those whom the angels cause to die while they are unjust to themselves, (the angels) will say: What were you doing? They will say: We were weak in the earth.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ تَوَفّٰىهُمُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ ظَالِمِيْٓ اَنْفُسِهِمْ قَالُوْا فِيْمَ كُنْتُمْ ؕ قَالُوْا كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِيْنَ فِي الْاَرْضِ ؕ قَالُوْٓا اَلَمْ تَكُنْ

man belonging to an enemy tribe offered the Muslim salutation, to show that he was a Muslim, he was to be taken as a brother Muslim and could not be dealt with as an enemy. I'Ab relates a case in which the Muslims while searching for the enemy came upon a man who was tending his goats. The man offered them the Muslim salutation but was killed as he gave no other indication of being a Muslim (B. 65: iv, 18). It was to stop such cases that the revelation came. Incidentally it lays down the principle that no Muslim can be called a *kāfir* ; not even the man whose claim to Islām is borne out only by offering the Muslim salutation. The general tendency among the Muslims to declare each other *kāfir* is, however, so strong that even the plain injunction of this verse is set at naught under the pretext that no Jew or Christian or Hindu can be called a Muslim simply because he offers the Muslim salutation. What the verse lays down is not when a person known to us as a Jew or a Christian or a Hindu can be declared to have become a Muslim, but that a Muslim cannot be called a *kāfir* if he gives indication of his being a Muslim simply by offering the Muslim salutation.

615 The Muslims were forbidden to kill a man merely because he was a disbeliever. This is made clear in Section 12, where it is laid down that only those disbelievers could be killed who fought against the Muslims. But even

(They will) say: Was not Allāh's earth spacious, so that you could have migrated therein? So these it is whose refuge is hell — and it is an evil resort.[616]

أَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا فِيهَا ۚ فَأُولَٰئِكَ
مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا ﴿٩٧﴾

98 Except the weak from among the men and the women and the children who have not the means, nor can they find a way (to escape);

إِلَّا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ
وَالْوِلْدَانِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا
يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٩٨﴾

99 So these, it may be that Allāh will pardon them. And Allāh is ever Pardoning, Forgiving.

فَأُولَٰئِكَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ ۚ وَ
كَانَ اللَّهُ عَفُوًّا غَفُورًا ﴿٩٩﴾

100 And whoever flees in Allāh's way, he will find in the earth many a place of escape and abundant resources. And whoever goes forth from his home fleeing to Allāh and His Messenger, then death overtakes him, his reward is indeed with Allāh. And Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful.

وَمَنْ يُهَاجِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِي
الْأَرْضِ مُرَاغَمًا كَثِيرًا وَسَعَةً ۚ وَمَنْ
يَخْرُجْ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
ثُمَّ يُدْرِكْهُ الْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ عَلَى
اللَّهِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا ﴿١٠٠﴾

SECTION 15: **Prayer when Fighting**

101 And when you journey in the earth, there is no blame on you if you shorten the prayer, if you fear that those who disbelieve will give you trouble.[617] Surely the disbelievers are an open enemy to you.

وَإِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ
جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْصُرُوا مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ ۖ إِنْ خِفْتُمْ
أَنْ يَفْتِنَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۚ إِنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ
كَانُوا لَكُمْ عَدُوًّا مُبِينًا ﴿١٠١﴾

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when a people fought against the Muslims, a man from among them was not to be killed if he gave the slightest indication that he was a Muslim.

616 By *those who were unjust to their souls* are meant persons who were convinced of the truth of Islām, but chose to remain among the disbelievers, who did not allow them to give expression to their beliefs, notwithstanding that they had the means to join the Muslims and avow Islām openly.

617 It is agreed that the prayer service on a journey is shorter than the ordinary prayer service in the *ẓuhr*, *'aṣr* and *'ishā'* prayers and consists of two *rak'ahs farḍ* instead of four. It is further clear from reports that this was so before the revelation of this verse. According to 'Ā'ishah, prayer as instituted from the first consisted of two *rak'ahs* only, whether one was journeying or not, and later on ordinary service in these three prayers was increased to four (B. 8:1). According to IAb, prayer as enjoined from the first consisted of four *rak'ahs* in these three prayers ordinarily, and two *rak'ahs* when journeying (M.6). According to both these views, the shortening of prayer as mentioned in this verse is quite different from the ordinary shorter service of the journey, and its details are given in the next verse. According to 'Umar, however, the shortening on a journey was a result of the revelation of this verse, and though originally this shortening was allowed only when there was danger from the enemy, it was later on allowed

102 And when thou art among them and leadest the prayer for them, let a party of them stand up with thee, and let them take their arms. Then when they have performed their prostration, let them go to your rear, and let another party who have not prayed come forward and pray with thee, and let them take their precautions and their arms. Those who disbelieve long that you may neglect your arms and your baggage, that they may attack you with a sudden united attack. And there is no blame on you, if you are inconvenienced on account of rain or if you are sick, to put away your arms; and take your precautions. Surely Allāh has prepared abasing chastisement for the disbelievers.[618]

وَإِذَا كُنْتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ الصَّلٰوةَ فَلْتَقُمْ
طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ مَّعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوٓا أَسْلِحَتَهُمْ
فَإِذَا سَجَدُوا فَلْيَكُونُوا مِنْ وَّرَآئِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ
طَآئِفَةٌ أُخْرٰى لَمْ يُصَلُّوا فَلْيُصَلُّوا مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا
حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ ۚ وَدَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
لَوْ تَغْفُلُونَ عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ
فَيَمِيلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَّيْلَةً وَّاحِدَةً ۗ وَلَا جُنَاحَ
عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ كَانَ بِكُمْ أَذًى مِّنْ مَّطَرٍ أَوْ
كُنْتُمْ مَّرْضٰٓى أَنْ تَضَعُوٓا أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ ۚ وَخُذُوا
حِذْرَكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْكٰفِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا ﴿١٠٢﴾

103 So when you have finished the prayer, remember Allāh standing and sitting and reclining. But when you are secure, from danger, keep up (regular) prayer. Prayer indeed has been enjoined on the believers at fixed times.[619]

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلٰوةَ فَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ قِيٰمًا
وَّقُعُودًا وَّعَلٰى جُنُوبِكُمْ ۚ فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ
فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ ۚ إِنَّ الصَّلٰوةَ كَانَتْ
عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتٰبًا مَّوْقُوتًا ﴿١٠٣﴾

104 And be not weak-hearted in pursuit of the enemy. If you suffer they (too) suffer as you suffer, and you hope from Allāh what they hope not. And Allāh is ever Knowing, Wise.

وَلَا تَهِنُوا فِي ابْتِغَآءِ الْقَوْمِ ۗ إِنْ تَكُونُوا
تَأْلَمُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْلَمُونَ كَمَا تَأْلَمُونَ ۚ
وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ ۗ
وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٠٤﴾

on every journey, whether there was any danger or not. When a question was put to him why prayer was being shortened on a journey when there was no longer any danger, there being peace all around, he replied that he put the same question to the Prophet of God and was told that the shortening "was a *sadaqah* or charitable gift of God, so accept His gift" (AD. 4:1).

618 This verse and the previous one show the importance of prayer in Islām, which could not be neglected even when facing the enemy. The soldiers of Islām were not men with whom fighting was a primary occupation; the chief object of their lives, as these verses show, was to hold communion with the Divine Being, forgetting even their imminent danger, when the time of holding such communion arrived.

619, see next page.

SECTION 16 : Hypocrites are Dishonest

105 Surely We have revealed the Book to thee with truth that thou mayest judge between people by means of what Allāh has taught thee. And be not one pleading the cause of the dishonest,[620]

106 And ask the forgiveness of Allāh. Surely Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful.[621]

107 And contend not on behalf of those who act unfaithfully to their souls. Surely Allāh loves not him who is treacherous, sinful :

108 They seek to hide from men and they cannot hide from Allāh, and He is with them when they counsel by night matters which please Him not. And Allāh ever encompasses what they do.[622]

إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِمَا أَرَاكَ اللَّهُ ۚ وَلَا تَكُن لِّلْخَائِنِينَ خَصِيمًا ﴿١٠٥﴾

وَاسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿١٠٦﴾

وَلَا تُجَادِلْ عَنِ الَّذِينَ يَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ خَوَّانًا أَثِيمًا ﴿١٠٧﴾

يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَهُوَ مَعَهُمْ إِذْ يُبَيِّتُونَ مَا لَا يَرْضَىٰ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطًا ﴿١٠٨﴾

According to what is stated in this verse, the congregation performed only one *rak'ah* of prayer with the Prophet who was leading the prayer and said two *rak'ahs*, but we are told in a ḥadīth that the other *rak'ah* was said by each part of the congregation separately (B. 12:1). This shows the importance of offering prayer in congregation which could not be neglected even on the field of battle.

619 By *kitāb mauqūt*, or *a timed ordinance*, is meant an ordinance regulated as to time, or *ordained to be performed at fixed times*. The hours of prayer were therefore fixed by the Prophet under Divine guidance, and the observance of the hours of prayer is an essential part of the due observance of prayer. It is this feature of the Islamic prayer which makes it a unique force in the unification of the human race.

620 With a little difference in details, the commentators agree that the occasion of the revelation of these verses was a dispute between a Muslim and a Jew, in which judgment was given by the Prophet against the Muslim. Ṭa'mah ibn Ubairaq had stolen a coat of mail, and having hidden it at a Jew's afterwards accused the Jew of the theft, while his tribe supported him. The Prophet, notwithstanding the open enmity of the Jews, cleared the Jew of the charge. It was a time when every Muslim hand was sorely needed for the defence of Islām, and a verdict against a man supported by his whole tribe meant the loss of that tribe. But such considerations did not carry any weight with the Prophet. Thus these verses lay down the broad principle that dishonesty must be punished, and the balance of justice must be held equal between Muslims and non-Muslims and between friends and foes.

621 The injunction in this as well as the previous verse is meant for every Muslim who is called upon to act as a judge. He must be strictly just as between his own people and aliens, and must further ask the protection of Allāh from being guilty of an act of injustice, even unknowingly, for it is only through Divine protection, that a man in this position can avoid partiality.

622 Those who supported the guilty man are spoken of here. All such persons are condemned as hypocrites. The same subject is continued in the verses that follow.

109 Behold! You are they who may contend on their behalf in this world's life, but who will contend with Allāh on their behalf on the Resurrection day, or who will have charge of their affairs?

هَٰٓأَنتُمْ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ جَٰدَلْتُمْ عَنْهُمْ فِى الْحَيَوٰةِ
الدُّنْيَا فَمَن يُجَٰدِلُ اللّٰهَ عَنْهُمْ يَوْمَ
الْقِيَٰمَةِ أَم مَّن يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيلًا ﴿١٠٩﴾

110 And whoever does evil or wrongs his soul, then asks forgiveness of Allāh, will find Allāh Forgiving, Merciful.

وَمَن يَعْمَلْ سُوٓءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُۥ ثُمَّ
يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللّٰهَ يَجِدِ اللّٰهَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿١١٠﴾

111 And whoever commits a sin, commits it only against himself. And Allāh is ever Knowing, Wise.

وَمَن يَكْسِبْ إِثْمًا فَإِنَّمَا يَكْسِبُهُۥ عَلَىٰ
نَفْسِهِۦ ۚ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١١١﴾

112 And whoever commits a fault or a sin, then accuses of it one innocent, he indeed takes upon himself the burden of a calumny and a manifest sin.

وَمَن يَكْسِبْ خَطِيٓـَٔةً أَوْ إِثْمًا ثُمَّ يَرْمِ
بِهِۦ بَرِيٓـًٔا فَقَدِ احْتَمَلَ بُهْتَٰنًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١١٢﴾

SECTION 17 : **Secret Counsels of the Hypocrites**

113 And were it not for Allāh's grace upon thee and His mercy, a party of them had certainly designed to ruin thee. And they ruin only themselves,[623] and they cannot harm thee in any way. And Allāh has revealed to thee the Book and the Wisdom, and taught thee what thou knewest not, and Allāh's grace on thee is very great.

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكَ وَرَحْمَتُهُۥ لَهَمَّت
طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنْهُمْ أَن يُضِلُّوكَ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ
إِلَّآ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۖ وَمَا يَضُرُّونَكَ مِن شَىْءٍ ۚ
وَأَنزَلَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُن تَعْلَمُ ۚ وَكَانَ
فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٣﴾

114 There is no good in most of their secret counsels except (in) him who enjoins charity or goodness or reconciliation between people. And whoever does this, seeking Allāh's pleasure, We shall give him a mighty reward.

لَّا خَيْرَ فِى كَثِيرٍ مِّن نَّجْوَىٰهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ
بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَٰحٍۭ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ ۚ
وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ ابْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللّٰهِ
فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١١٤﴾

115 And whoever acts hostilely to the Messenger after guidance has become manifest to him and follows

وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ
لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

623, see next page.

other than the way of the believers, We turn him to that to which he (himself) turns and make him enter hell; and it is an evil resort.[624]

نُوَلِّهٖ مَا تَوَلّٰى وَنُصْلِهٖ جَهَنَّمَ ۭ وَسَاۗءَتْ مَصِيْرًا ۝١١٥

SECTION 18 · **Idolatry condemned**

116 Surely Allāh forgives not setting up partners with Him, and He forgives all besides this to whom He pleases. And whoever sets up a partner with Allāh, he indeed goes far astray.

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ اَنْ يُّشْرَكَ بِهٖ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُوْنَ ذٰلِكَ لِمَنْ يَّشَاۗءُ ۭ وَمَنْ يُّشْرِكْ بِاللّٰهِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلٰلًۢا بَعِيْدًا ۝١١٦

117 Besides Him they call on nothing but female divinities[625] and they call on nothing but a rebellious devil,[626]

اِنْ يَّدْعُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِهٖٓ اِلَّآ اِنٰثًا ۚ وَاِنْ يَّدْعُوْنَ اِلَّا شَيْطٰنًا مَّرِيْدًا ۝١١٧

118 Whom Allāh has cursed. And he said: Certainly I will take of Thy servants an appointed portion;

لَّعَنَهُ اللّٰهُ ۘ وَقَالَ لَاَتَّخِذَنَّ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ نَصِيْبًا مَّفْرُوْضًا ۝١١٨

119 And certainly I will lead them astray and excite in them vain desires and bid them so that they will slit the

وَّلَاُضِلَّنَّهُمْ وَلَاُمَنِّيَنَّهُمْ وَلَاٰمُرَنَّهُمْ فَلَيُبَتِّكُنَّ اٰذَانَ الْاَنْعَامِ وَلَاٰمُرَنَّهُمْ فَلَيُغَيِّرُنَّ

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623 *Aḍalla-hū* is the equivalent of *ahlaka-hū, he destroyed him* or *brought him to perdition* (LL).

624 This verse clearly speaks of the hypocrites, who followed *a way other than the way* of the believers. Only a distortion of the words could make them signify that it was a sin to differ with the majority of the Muslims on any question of religion.

625 *Ināth* has two significances, either of which may be adopted. (1) It signifies *inanimate things*, as trees and stones and wood. (2) It also means *idols*, because they named the idols as *females*, for instance Lāt, 'Uzzā, Manāt (LL). Ḥasan says every one of the Arabian tribes had an idol, which they called the *unthā* (lit., *female*) of such a tribe (Rz). Hence the word may also be translated as *feminine divinities*.

626 *Marīd* and *mārid* have both the same significances, viz. *one devoid of all good* (R). According to LL the significance of *marīd* is *insolent* or *rebellious*.

ears of the cattle,[627] and bid them so that they will alter Allāh's creation.[628] And whoever takes the devil for a friend, forsaking Allāh, he indeed suffers a manifest loss.

خَلْقَ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَ مَنْ يَّتَّخِذِ الشَّيْطٰنَ وَلِيًّا مِّنْ
دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا مُّبِيْنًا ﴿۱۱۹﴾

120 He promises them and excites vain desires in them. And the devil promises them only to deceive.

يَعِدُهُمْ وَ يُمَنِّيْهِمْ ؕ وَ مَا يَعِدُهُمُ
الشَّيْطٰنُ اِلَّا غُرُوْرًا ﴿۱۲۰﴾

121 These — their refuge is hell, and they will find no way of escape from it.

اُولٰٓئِكَ مَاْوٰىهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۫ وَ لَا يَجِدُوْنَ
عَنْهَا مَحِيْصًا ﴿۱۲۱﴾

122 And those who believe and do good, We shall make them enter Gardens in which rivers flow, to abide therein for ever. It is Allāh's promise, in truth. And who is more truthful in word than Allāh?

وَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَ عَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ
جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ
فِيْهَآ اَبَدًا ؕ وَعْدَ اللّٰهِ حَقًّا ؕ وَ مَنْ اَصْدَقُ
مِنَ اللّٰهِ قِيْلًا ﴿۱۲۲﴾

123 It will not be in accordance with your vain desires[629] nor the vain desires of the People of the Book. Whoever does evil, will be requited for it and will not find for himself besides Allāh a friend or a helper.

لَيْسَ بِاَمَانِيِّكُمْ وَ لَاۤ اَمَانِيِّ اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ ؕ
مَنْ يَّعْمَلْ سُوْٓءًا يُّجْزَ بِهٖ ۙ وَ لَا يَجِدْ لَهٗ
مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلِيًّا وَّ لَا نَصِيْرًا ﴿۱۲۳﴾

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627 The practice of slitting or cutting off the ear of certain animals was a prevalent form of polytheism in Arabia, for such an animal was looked upon as devoted to certain idols. See further 742.

628 A comparison with 30:30 will show clearly that by *Allāh's creation* is here meant the *religion of Allāh*, because the true religion is the natural religion of man. In 30:30 we have: "Then set thy face upright for religion in the right state: the nature made by Allāh in which He has made men; there is no altering Allāh's creation, that is the right religion, but most people know not". By the devil's changing the creation of Allāh is therefore meant the changing of the natural religion of man which requires obedience to Allāh and His laws. Some commentators understand by changing the creation of Allāh *the using of His created things for an object other than that for which they were created*, and worshipping objects such as the sun, etc., which were really created to be subservient to man.

629 The vain desires of the idolaters were that they would not be raised after death: "And they say, There is nothing but our life in this world, and we will not be raised" (6:29). As regards the People of the Book: "The Jews and the Christians say, We are the sons of Allāh and His beloved ones" (5:18). The true law — the law of nature — is described in what follows, that evil or good has its own reward.

124 And whoever does good deeds, whether male or female, and he (or she) is a believer — these will enter the Garden, and they will not be dealt with a whit unjustly.

وَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِنَ الصّٰلِحٰتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ اَوْ اُنْثٰى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ يَدْخُلُوْنَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُوْنَ نَقِيْرًا ﴿۱۲۴﴾

125 And who is better in religion than he who submits himself entirely to Allāh while doing good (to others) and follows the faith of Abraham, the upright one? And Allāh took Abraham for a friend.

وَمَنْ اَحْسَنُ دِيْنًا مِّمَّنْ اَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهٗ لِلّٰهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَّاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ حَنِيْفًا ؕ وَاتَّخَذَ اللّٰهُ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ خَلِيْلًا ﴿۱۲۵﴾

126 And to Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. And Allāh ever encompasses all things.

وَلِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيْطًا ﴿۱۲۶﴾

SECTION 19: **Equitable Dealings with Orphans and Women**

127 And they ask thee a decision about women. Say: Allāh makes known to you His decision concerning them; and that which is recited to you in the Book is concerning widowed women, whom you give not what is appointed for them, while you are not inclined to marry them, nor to the weak among children, and that you should deal justly with orphans. And whatever good you do, Allāh is surely ever Knower of it.[630]

وَيَسْتَفْتُوْنَكَ فِي النِّسَآءِ ؕ قُلِ اللّٰهُ يُفْتِيْكُمْ فِيْهِنَّ ۙ وَمَا يُتْلٰى عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتٰبِ فِيْ يَتٰمَى النِّسَآءِ الّٰتِيْ لَا تُؤْتُوْنَهُنَّ مَا كُتِبَ لَهُنَّ وَتَرْغَبُوْنَ اَنْ تَنْكِحُوْهُنَّ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِيْنَ مِنَ الْوِلْدَانِ ۙ وَاَنْ تَقُوْمُوْا لِلْيَتٰمٰى بِالْقِسْطِ ؕ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوْا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ بِهٖ عَلِيْمًا ﴿۱۲۷﴾

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630 The reference in the words, *that which is recited to you in the Book,* is to v. 3, see 535. There is almost a consensus of opinion on this point. *Yatāma-l-nisā'i* means *orphans of women*; also *women having no husbands* or *widows* (LA). The doing of good to women and orphans is stressed in the Holy Qur'ān again and again. What is stated here is that a decision regarding the doing of good to women, to weak children and to orphans has already been given. The words, *and that which is recited to you in the Book* is concerning *widowed women whom you give not what is appointed for them while you are not inclined to marry them,* are parenthetical, being a reference to v. 3. Whatever significance of the words *yatāma-l-nisā'i* is adopted, the meaning of the parenthetical passage is that the order given in v. 3 in the words *if you fear that you cannot act equitably towards orphans marry such women as seem good to you,* relates to orphans of the women (or to widows) whom their share in inheritance was denied, both their share and the share of their orphan children, nor were people inclined to marry them owing to the burden which they brought with them in the shape of their children. So the permission was given that they may marry such women, even up

128 And if a woman fears ill-usage from her husband or desertion[632] no blame is on them if they effect a reconciliation between them. And reconciliation is better. And avarice is met with in (men's) minds. And if you do good (to others) and keep your duty, surely Allāh is ever Aware of what you do.

وَاِنِ امۡرَاَةٌ خَافَتۡ مِنۡۢ بَعۡلِهَا نُشُوۡزًا اَوۡ اِعۡرَاضًا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيۡهِمَاۤ اَنۡ يُّصۡلِحَا بَيۡنَهُمَا صُلۡحًا ‌ؕ وَالصُّلۡحُ خَيۡرٌ ‌ؕ وَاُحۡضِرَتِ الۡاَنۡفُسُ الشُّحَّ‌ ؕ وَاِنۡ تُحۡسِنُوۡا وَتَتَّقُوۡا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُوۡنَ خَبِيۡرًا ﴿۱۲۸﴾

129 And you cannot do justice between wives, even though you wish (it), but be not disinclined (from one) with total disinclination, so that you leave her in suspense. And if you are reconciled and keep your duty, surely Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful.

وَلَنۡ تَسۡتَطِيۡعُوۡۤا اَنۡ تَعۡدِلُوۡا بَيۡنَ النِّسَآءِ وَلَوۡ حَرَصۡتُمۡ‌ فَلَا تَمِيۡلُوۡا كُلَّ الۡمَيۡلِ فَتَذَرُوۡهَا كَالۡمُعَلَّقَةِ‌ ؕ وَاِنۡ تُصۡلِحُوۡا وَتَتَّقُوۡا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ غَفُوۡرًا رَّحِيۡمًا ﴿۱۲۹﴾

130 And if they separate, Allāh will render them both free from want out of His ampleness. And Allāh is ever Ample-giving, Wise.

وَاِنۡ يَّتَفَرَّقَا يُغۡنِ اللّٰهُ كُلًّا مِّنۡ سَعَتِهٖ‌ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ وَاسِعًا حَكِيۡمًا ﴿۱۳۰﴾

131 And to Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. And certainly We enjoined those who were given the Book before you and (We enjoin) you too to keep your duty to Allāh. And if you disbelieve, surely to Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. And Allāh is ever Self-sufficient, Praiseworthy.

وَلِلّٰهِ مَا فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِى الۡاَرۡضِ‌ ؕ وَلَقَدۡ وَصَّيۡنَا الَّذِيۡنَ اُوۡتُوا الۡكِتٰبَ مِنۡ قَبۡلِكُمۡ وَاِيَّاكُمۡ اَنِ اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ‌ ؕ وَاِنۡ تَكۡفُرُوۡا فَاِنَّ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِى الۡاَرۡضِ‌ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ غَنِيًّا حَمِيۡدًا ﴿۱۳۱﴾

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to four. It is an admitted fact that widows and their orphaned children received no share of inheritance. The Qur'ān brought about a great change: it required the giving of inheritance to both women and their orphaned children, and it also recommended that such women should be taken in marriage. The reference to v. 3 is made further clear in v. 129 which speaks of justice between wives.

632 There are two words, *nushūz* and *i'rāḍ*, used here. The former literally means *rising*, and *nushūz* on the part of the wife has already been explained in 572. *Nushūz* on the part of the husband signifies *treating her unjustly, being unkind to her* or *disliking and hating her* (LL), and hence it is rendered here as ill-usage or

132 And to Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. And Allāh suffices as having charge of affairs.

وَلِلّٰهِ مَا فِی السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِی الْاَرْضِ ؕ
وَکَفٰی بِاللّٰهِ وَکِیْلًا ﴿۱۳۲﴾

133 If He please, He will take you away, O people, and bring others. And Allāh is ever Powerful to do that.

اِنْ یَّشَاْ یُذْهِبْكُمْ اَیُّهَا النَّاسُ وَیَاْتِ
بِاٰخَرِیْنَ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰی ذٰلِكَ قَدِیْرًا ﴿۱۳۳﴾

134 Whoever desires the reward of this world — then with Allāh is the reward of this world and the Hereafter. And Allāh is ever Hearing, Seeing.

مَنْ كَانَ یُرِیْدُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْیَا فَعِنْدَ اللّٰهِ
ثَوَابُ الدُّنْیَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ
سَمِیْعًۢا بَصِیْرًا ﴿۱۳۴﴾

SECTION 20 : **Hypocrisy Condemned**

135 O you who believe, be maintainers of justice, bearers of witness for Allāh, even though it be against your own selves or (your) parents or near relatives — whether he be rich or poor, Allāh has a better right over them both.[633] So follow not (your) low desires, lest you deviate. And if you distort or turn away from (truth), surely Allāh is ever Aware of what you do.

یٰۤاَیُّهَا الَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُوْنُوْا قَوّٰمِیْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ
شُهَدَآءَ لِلّٰهِ وَلَوْ عَلٰۤی اَنْفُسِكُمْ اَوِ الْوَالِدَیْنِ
وَالْاَقْرَبِیْنَ ۚ اِنْ یَّكُنْ غَنِیًّا اَوْ فَقِیْرًا
فَاللّٰهُ اَوْلٰی بِهِمَا ۫ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوٰۤی اَنْ
تَعْدِلُوْا ۚ وَاِنْ تَلْوٗۤا اَوْ تُعْرِضُوْا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ
كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِیْرًا ﴿۱۳۵﴾

136 O you who believe, believe in Allāh and His Messenger and the Book which He has revealed to His Messenger and the Book which He revealed before. And whoever disbelieves in Allāh and His angels and His Books and His messengers and the Last Day, he indeed strays far away.

یٰۤاَیُّهَا الَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْۤا اٰمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ
وَالْكِتٰبِ الَّذِیْ نَزَّلَ عَلٰی رَسُوْلِهٖ وَالْكِتٰبِ
الَّذِیْۤ اَنْزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ ؕ وَمَنْ یَّكْفُرْ
بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتِهٖ وَكُتُبِهٖ وَرُسُلِهٖ
وَالْیَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلٰلًۢا بَعِیْدًا ﴿۱۳۶﴾

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cruelty. *I'rāḍ* is literally ***turning away, avoiding, shunning*** or ***leaving a thing***. Hence I render it as *desertion*.

633 The meaning is that you should not be partial to the rich man on account of some favour that you may expect from him or some harm that you fear from him, nor should you state other than the truth when the person against whom you bear witness is a poor man, on account of compassion for him. *Allāh has a **better right over them*** means that *they should be dealt with justly*. Thus, neither ties of kinship and love nor considerations of fear, favour, or compassion should make one swerve a hair's breadth from the truth.

137 Those who believe then disbelieve, again believe and again disbelieve, then increase in disbelief,[634] Allāh will never forgive them nor guide them in the (right) way.[635]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا ثُمَّ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا ثُمَّ ازْدَادُوا كُفْرًا لَّمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٣٧﴾

138 Give news to the hypocrites that for them is a painful chastisement—[636]

بَشِّرِ الْمُنَافِقِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٣٨﴾

139 Those who take disbelievers for friends rather than believers. Do they seek for might from them? Might surely belongs wholly to Allāh.

الَّذِينَ يَتَّخِذُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِن دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ أَيَبْتَغُونَ عِندَهُمُ الْعِزَّةَ فَإِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٣٩﴾

140 And indeed He has revealed to you in the Book that when you hear Allāh's messages disbelieved in and mocked at, sit not with them until they enter into some other discourse, for then indeed you would be like them. Surely Allāh will gather together the hypocrites and the disbelievers all in hell —[637]

وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ أَنْ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا فَلَا تَقْعُدُوا مَعَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ ۚ إِنَّكُمْ إِذًا مِّثْلُهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَامِعُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْكَافِرِينَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيعًا ﴿١٤٠﴾

141 Those who wait (for misfortunes) for you. Then if you have a victory from Allāh they say: Were we not with you? And if there is a chance for the disbelievers, they say: Did we not prevail over you and defend you from the believers? So Allāh will judge between you on the day of Resurrection. And Allāh will by no means give the disbelievers a way against the believers.

الَّذِينَ يَتَرَبَّصُونَ بِكُمْ فَإِن كَانَ لَكُمْ فَتْحٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَكُن مَّعَكُمْ وَإِن كَانَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نَصِيبٌ قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَسْتَحْوِذْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَنَمْنَعْكُم مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۗ وَلَن يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٤١﴾

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634 There were some waverers who again and again went over to disbelief. The mention in v. 136 of the Book "which He revealed before", shows clearly that the Jews are meant, among whom there were many hypocrites.

635 Allāh's not guiding them is the consequence of their own actions. They wavered first but in the end became firm in disbelief.

636 *Tabshīr* (related to *bushrah*, i.e. *complexion*) originally denotes *the announcing of an event which produces a change in the complexion*. In common acceptation it is used with regard *to the news which rejoices a man*, but is sometimes used for *the announcement of an event which grieves a man* (LL).

637 See 6:68 which was revealed at Makkah. The Muslims are told to leave the assembly where truth is derided. Criticism is quite a different thing and a Muslim should always be ready to meet any criticism of his religion.

SECTION 21 : **End of the Hypocrites**

142 The hypocrites seek to deceive Allāh, and He will requite their deceit to them.[638] And when they stand up for prayer, they stand up sluggishly — they do it only to be seen of men and remember Allāh but little,

إِنَّ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ يُخٰدِعُوْنَ اللّٰهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ
وَإِذَا قَامُوْٓا إِلَى الصَّلٰوةِ قَامُوْا كُسَالٰى
يُرَآءُوْنَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُوْنَ اللّٰهَ إِلَّا قَلِيْلًا ﴿١٤٢﴾

143 Wavering between that (and this) — (belonging) neither to these nor to those.[639] And whomsoever Allāh leaves in error, thou wilt not find a way for him.

مُّذَبْذَبِيْنَ بَيْنَ ذٰلِكَ لَآ إِلٰى هٰٓؤُلَآءِ
وَلَآ إِلٰى هٰٓؤُلَآءِ وَمَنْ يُّضْلِلِ اللّٰهُ فَلَنْ
تَجِدَ لَهٗ سَبِيْلًا ﴿١٤٣﴾

144 O you who believe, take not the disbelievers for friends rather than the believers. Do you desire to give Allāh a manifest proof against yourselves ?

يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْكٰفِرِيْنَ
أَوْلِيَآءَ مِنْ دُوْنِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ أَتُرِيْدُوْنَ
أَنْ تَجْعَلُوْا لِلّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطٰنًا مُّبِيْنًا ﴿١٤٤﴾

145 The hypocrites are surely in the lowest depths of the Fire,[640] and thou wilt find no helper for them,

إِنَّ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ فِي الدَّرْكِ الْأَسْفَلِ
مِنَ النَّارِ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيْرًا ﴿١٤٥﴾

146 Save those who repent and amend and hold fast to Allāh and are sincere in their obedience to Allāh — these are with the believers. And Allāh will soon grant the believers a mighty reward.

إِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ تَابُوْا وَأَصْلَحُوْا وَاعْتَصَمُوْا
بِاللّٰهِ وَأَخْلَصُوْا دِيْنَهُمْ لِلّٰهِ فَأُولٰٓئِكَ مَعَ
الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِ اللّٰهُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ
أَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿١٤٦﴾

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638 For the meaning of *khada'a* and *khāda'a* see 23. *Khādi'u-hum* means here *the requiter to them of their deceit* (LL). A comparison of this passage with the similar passage occurring in 2:9 makes the meaning perfectly clear.

639 *Mudhabdhab*, lit., *much driven away*, has the same significance as *mudhabdhib*, i.e., *wavering* or *vacillating between two things or affairs* (LL). The reference *in that and this* is to belief and disbelief, which is made clear by the words that follow — *belonging neither to these nor to those*, which refer to the *believers* and *disbelievers* spoken of in the concluding words of v. 141.

640 Insincerity in religion is the worst of all sins. Hence the hypocrites are spoken of as being in the lowest depths of the Fire. The most important question for every believer is: Are his actions in accordance with his avowed beliefs? Does he do what he says? If not, there is a tinge of hypocrisy in him. Elsewhere it is said: "O you who believe, why say you that which you do not ? — it is most hateful in the sight of Allāh that you say what you do not" (61:2, 3). The next verse makes a pointed reference to this — God will not punish the Muslims if they are true to their beliefs.

641 The word *shākir* when used as an attribute of the Divine Being signifies *One Who gives large reward for small works* or *in Whose estimation small works*

147 Why should Allāh chastise you if you are grateful and believe? And Allāh is ever Multiplier of rewards,[641] Knowing.

مَا يَفْعَلُ اللّٰهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ اِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ وَاٰمَنْتُمْ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ شَاكِرًا عَلِيْمًا ﴿۱۴۷﴾

PART VI

148 Allāh loves not the public utterance of hurtful speech, except by one who has been wronged.[642] And Allāh is ever Hearing, Knowing.

لَا يُحِبُّ اللّٰهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوْٓءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ اِلَّا مَنْ ظُلِمَ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ سَمِيْعًا عَلِيْمًا ﴿۱۴۸﴾

149 If you do good openly or keep it secret or pardon an evil, Allāh surely is ever Pardoning, Powerful.[642a]

اِنْ تُبْدُوْا خَيْرًا اَوْ تُخْفُوْهُ اَوْ تَعْفُوْا عَنْ سُوْٓءٍ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا قَدِيْرًا ﴿۱۴۹﴾

150 Those who disbelieve in Allāh and His messengers and desire to make a distinction between Allāh and His messengers and say: We believe in some and disbelieve in others; and desire to take a course in between —

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَكْفُرُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَرُسُلِهٖ وَيُرِيْدُوْنَ اَنْ يُّفَرِّقُوْا بَيْنَ اللّٰهِ وَرُسُلِهٖ وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَّنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ ۙ وَّيُرِيْدُوْنَ اَنْ يَّتَّخِذُوْا بَيْنَ ذٰلِكَ سَبِيْلًا ﴿۱۵۰﴾

151 These are truly disbelievers; and We have prepared for the disbelievers an abasing chastisement.

اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْكٰفِرُوْنَ حَقًّا ۚ وَاَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ عَذَابًا مُّهِيْنًا ﴿۱۵۱﴾

152 And those who believe in Allāh and His messengers and make no distinction between any of them, to them He will grant their rewards. And Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful.[643]

وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَرُسُلِهٖ وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوْا بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ اُولٰٓئِكَ سَوْفَ يُؤْتِيْهِمْ اُجُوْرَهُمْ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿۱۵۲﴾

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performed by His servants increase, and Who multiplies His rewards to them (T, LL).

642 The use of defamatory speech of every kind regarding others is strictly forbidden, but justification for it may exist in case a person has in some way been wronged.

642a If you pardon the evil which anyone has done to you, Allāh will pardon your evils, and grant you even good reward; He is not only Pardoning, but also Powerful to grant good reward.

643 To make distinction between Allāh and His messengers means to believe in one and not in the other. Islām requires the acceptance of all prophets who were raised for the regeneration of men, and hence a denial of any one of the

SECTION 22: **Transgressions of the Jews**

153 The People of the Book ask thee to bring down to them a Book from heaven; indeed they demanded of Moses a greater thing than that, for they said: Show us Allāh manifestly. So destructive punishment overtook them on account of their wrongdoing. Then they took the calf (for a god), after clear signs had come to them, but We pardoned this. And We gave Moses clear authority.

يَسْـَٔلُكَ اَهْلُ الْكِتٰبِ اَنْ تُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ
كِتٰبًا مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ فَقَدْ سَاَلُوْا مُوْسٰٓى اَكْبَرَ
مِنْ ذٰلِكَ فَقَالُوْٓا اَرِنَا اللّٰهَ جَهْرَةً فَاَخَذَتْهُمُ
الصّٰعِقَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ مِنْ
بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَتْهُمُ الْبَيِّنٰتُ فَعَفَوْنَا عَنْ
ذٰلِكَ وَاٰتَيْنَا مُوْسٰى سُلْطٰنًا مُّبِيْنًا ﴿١٥٣﴾

154 And We raised the mountain above them at their covenant. And We said to them: Enter the door making obeisance. And We said to them: Violate not the Sabbath; and We took from them a firm covenant.

وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَهُمُ الطُّوْرَ بِمِيْثَاقِهِمْ وَقُلْنَا
لَهُمُ ادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَّقُلْنَا لَهُمْ لَا
تَعْدُوْا فِي السَّبْتِ وَاَخَذْنَا مِنْهُمْ مِّيْثَاقًا غَلِيْظًا ﴿١٥٤﴾

155 Then for their breaking their covenant and their disbelief in the messages of Allāh and their killing the prophets wrongfully and their saying, Our hearts are covered; nay, Allāh has sealed them owing to their disbelief, so they believe not but a little:[643a]

فَبِمَا نَقْضِهِمْ مِّيْثَاقَهُمْ وَكُفْرِهِمْ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ
وَقَتْلِهِمُ الْاَنْۢبِيَآءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَّقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوْبُنَا
غُلْفٌ بَلْ طَبَعَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا
يُؤْمِنُوْنَ اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا ﴿١٥٥﴾

156 And for their disbelief and for their uttering against Mary a grievous calumny:[644]

وَّبِكُفْرِهِمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلٰى مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَانًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿١٥٦﴾

157 And for their saying: We have killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, the messenger of Allāh, and they killed him not, nor did they cause his death on the cross[645], but he was made to

وَّقَوْلِهِمْ اِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيْحَ عِيْسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ
رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوْهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوْهُ وَلٰكِنْ
شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ وَاِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اخْتَلَفُوْا فِيْهِ

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prophets named in the Holy Qur'ān takes a man out of the category of believers and places him among the disbelievers.

643a The incidents referred to in vv. 153-155 have been mentioned in detail in sections 6-8 of ch. 2, see the foot-notes there.

644 The calumny referred to was that Mary was guilty of fornication (Rz). Jewish tradition in this connection mentions Panther (Jewish Life of Jesus).

645, see next page.

appear to them as such.[646] And certainly those who differ therein are in doubt about it. They have no knowledge about it, but only follow a conjecture, and they killed him not for certain :

لَفِيْ شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ ۭ مَا لَهُمْ بِهٖ مِنْ عِلْمٍ
اِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوْهُ يَقِيْنًا ۝١٥٧

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645 The words *mā ṣalabū-hu* do not negative Jesus' being nailed to the cross; they negative his having expired on the cross as a result of being nailed to it. *Ṣalb* is a well-known way of killing (T, LA). *Ṣalaba-hū* means *he put him to death in a certain well-known manner* (LL). That Jesus died a natural death is plainly stated in 5:117: "And I was a witness of them so long as I was among them but when Thou didst cause me to die, Thou wert the Watcher over them" See 752. The Gospels contain clear testimony showing that Jesus Christ escaped death on the cross. The following points may be noted: (1) Jesus remained on the cross for a few hours only (Mark 15:25; John 19:14) but death by crucifixion was always tardy. (2) The two men crucified with Jesus were still alive when taken down from the cross; the presumption is that Jesus too was alive. (3) The breaking of legs was resorted to in the case of the two criminals, but dispensed with in the case of Jesus (John 19:32, 33). (4) The side of Jesus being pierced, blood rushed out and this was a certain sign of life. (5) Even Pilate did not believe that Jesus actually died in so short a time (Mark 15:44). (6) Jesus was not buried like the two criminals, but was given into the charge of a wealthy disciple of his, who lavished care on him and put him in a spacious tomb hewn in the side of a rock (Mark 15:46). (7) When the tomb was seen on the third day, the stone was found to have been removed from its mouth (Mark 16:4), which would not have been the case if there had been a supernatural rising. (8) Mary, when she saw him, took him for the gardener (John 20:15), which shows that Jesus had disguised himself as a gardener. (9) Such disguise would not have been needed if Jesus had risen from the dead. (10) It was in the same body of flesh that the disciples saw Jesus, and the wounds were still there deep enough for a man to thrust his hand in (John 20:25-28). (11) He still felt hunger and ate as his disciples ate (Luke 24:39-43). (12) Jesus Christ undertook a journey to Galilee with two of his disciples walking side by side with him (Matt. 28:10), which shows that he was fleeing for refuge; a journey to Galilee was not necessary to rise to heaven. (13) In all post-crucifixion appearances Jesus is found hiding himself as if he feared being discovered. (14) Jesus Christ prayed the whole night before his arrest to be saved from the accursed death on the cross, and he also asked his disciples to pray for him; the prayers of a righteous man in distress and affliction are always accepted. He seems to have even received a promise from God to be saved, and it was to this promise that he referred when he cried out on the cross: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Heb. 5:7 makes the matter still more clear, for there it is plainly stated that the prayer of Jesus was accepted: "When he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him who was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared"

The statements made in the Qur'ān corroborate the above statements quoted from the Gospels. Jesus did not die on the cross, nor was he killed as were the two thieves, but to the Jews he appeared as if he were dead.

646 The words *shubbiha la-hum* may bear two interpretations: *he was made to be like* (it) or *to resemble* (it); or *the matter was made dubious* or *obscure* (LL). The *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī* says the meaning may be that *the matter became dubious to them.* The story that some one else was made to resemble Jesus is not borne out by the words of the Qur'ān, which could only mean, if an object were mentioned, that Jesus was made to resemble some one, not that some one was made to resemble Jesus.

158 Nay, Allāh exalted him in His presence. And Allāh is ever Mighty, Wise.[649]

بَلْ رَّفَعَهُ اللّٰهُ اِلَيْهِ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ
عَزِيْزًا حَكِيْمًا ﴿۱۵۸﴾

159 And there is none of the People of the Book but will believe in this before his death ; and on the day of Resurrection he will be a witness against them.[650]

وَاِنْ مِّنْ اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ اِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهٖ
قَبْلَ مَوْتِهٖ ۚ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ يَكُوْنُ
عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيْدًا ﴿۱۵۹﴾

160 So for the iniquity of the Jews, We forbade them the good things which had been made lawful for them, and for their hindering many (people) from Allāh's way.

فَبِظُلْمٍ مِّنَ الَّذِيْنَ هَادُوْا حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ
طَيِّبٰتٍ اُحِلَّتْ لَهُمْ وَبِصَدِّهِمْ عَنْ
سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ كَثِيْرًا ﴿۱۶۰﴾

161 And for their taking usury — though indeed they were forbidden it — and their devouring the property of people falsely. And We have prepared for the disbelievers from among them a painful chastisement.

وَّاَخْذِهِمُ الرِّبٰوا وَقَدْ نُهُوْا عَنْهُ وَاَكْلِهِمْ
اَمْوَالَ النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ ؕ وَاَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ
مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا اَلِيْمًا ﴿۱۶۱﴾

162 But the firm in knowledge among them and the believers believe in that which has been revealed to thee and that which was revealed before thee, and those who keep up prayer and give the poor-rate and the believers in Allāh and the Last Day— these it is to whom We shall give a mighty reward.

لٰكِنِ الرّٰسِخُوْنَ فِي الْعِلْمِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ
يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِمَاۤ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكَ وَمَاۤ اُنْزِلَ مِنْ
قَبْلِكَ وَالْمُقِيْمِيْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَالْمُؤْتُوْنَ الزَّكٰوةَ
وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ
سَنُؤْتِيْهِمْ اَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿۱۶۲﴾

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649 For the significance of *raf'* see 437. Being exalted in the Divine presence was opposed to being killed on the cross. Deut. 21 : 23 explains this, for there we have, *he that is hanged is cursed of God*. If Jesus had died on the cross he would have been accursed ; hence the statement made here — he was not killed on the cross and accursed but he was exalted in the Divine presence.

650 Both the Jews and the Christians necessarily believe in the death of Jesus on the cross, while according to the Holy Qur'ān they have really no sure knowledge of it. The Jews reject his claim to Messiahship on the basis of Deut. 21 : 23 : "He that is hanged is accursed of God". Their belief is that since Jesus died on the cross he was accursed, and no one who is accursed of God can be a prophet. Following quite a different line of argument, a Christian believes that Jesus died on the cross and was accursed. He admits the truth of Deut. 21 : 23, but he says that unless Jesus were accursed he could not take away the sins of those that believe in him. As in Gal. 3 : 13 : "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us ; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on the tree". Hence the fundamental principle of the belief of both Jews and Christians is that Jesus died on the cross, and the meaning of the verse is clear, viz., every Jew and Christian, notwithstanding that he has no sure knowledge at all, must believe before his death that Jesus died on the cross.

SECTION 23 : **Previous Revelation bears out Quranic Statements**

163 Surely We have revealed to thee as We revealed to Noah and the prophets after him, and We revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and Jesus and Job and Jonah and Aaron and Solomon, and We gave to David a scripture.

إِنَّآ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ كَمَآ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ نُوحٍ وَّالنَّبِيّٖنَ مِنْ بَعْدِهٖ ۚ وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ إِبْرٰهِيمَ وَإِسْمٰعِيلَ وَإِسْحٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسٰى وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُونُسَ وَهٰرُونَ وَسُلَيْمٰنَ ۚ وَاٰتَيْنَا دَاوٗدَ زَبُورًا ﴿١٦٣﴾

164 And (We sent) messengers We have mentioned to thee before and messengers We have not mentioned to thee. And to Moses Allāh addressed His word, speaking (to him)—[651]

وَرُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنٰهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَرُسُلًا لَّمْ نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ ۚ وَكَلَّمَ اللّٰهُ مُوسٰى تَكْلِيمًا ﴿١٦٤﴾

165 Messengers, bearers of good news and warners, so that the people may have no plea against Allāh after the (coming of) messengers. And Allāh is ever Mighty, Wise.

رُسُلًا مُّبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنْذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللّٰهِ حُجَّةٌ ۢ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٦٥﴾

166 But Allāh bears witness by that which He has revealed to thee that He has revealed it with His knowledge, and the angels (also) bear witness. And Allāh is sufficient as a witness.

لٰكِنِ اللّٰهُ يَشْهَدُ بِمَآ أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ أَنْزَلَهٗ بِعِلْمِهٖ ۚ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ يَشْهَدُونَ ۚ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ شَهِيدًا ﴿١٦٦﴾

167 Those who disbelieve and hinder (others) from Allāh's way, they indeed have erred, going far astray.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ قَدْ ضَلُّوا ضَلٰلًا ۢ بَعِيدًا ﴿١٦٧﴾

168 Those who disbelieve and act unjustly, Allāh will never forgive them, nor guide them to a path,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَظَلَمُوا لَمْ يَكُنِ اللّٰهُ لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ طَرِيقًا ﴿١٦٨﴾

169 Except the path of hell, to abide in it for a long time. And that is easy to Allāh.

إِلَّا طَرِيقَ جَهَنَّمَ خٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۚ وَكَانَ ذٰلِكَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ يَسِيرًا ﴿١٦٩﴾

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651 The prophets spoken of here all belong to the Israelite race. Abraham and his immediate descendants are mentioned first; then follow the three prophets of Israel who suffered great tribulations, viz. Jesus, Job, and Jonah. The next group is that of the four who were both rulers and prophets, viz. Moses, Aaron, David and Solomon. But as David and Moses stand in a special relation to the

170 O mankind, the Messenger has indeed come to you with truth from your Lord, so believe, it is better for you. And if you disbelieve, then surely to Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. And Allāh is ever Knowing, Wise.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ قَدْ جَآءَكُمُ ٱلرَّسُولُ بِٱلْحَقِّ مِن رَّبِّكُمْ فَـَٔامِنُوا۟ خَيْرًا لَّكُمْ ۚ وَإِن تَكْفُرُوا۟ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَانَ ٱللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٧٠﴾

171 O People of the Book, exceed not the limits in your religion nor speak anything about Allāh, but the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, is only a messenger of Allāh and His word[652] which He communicated to Mary and a mercy from Him.[653] So believe in Allāh and His

يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَا تَغْلُوا۟ فِى دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا۟ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ إِلَّا ٱلْحَقَّ ۚ إِنَّمَا ٱلْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُۥٓ أَلْقَىٰهَآ إِلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِّنْهُ فَـَٔامِنُوا۟

Holy Prophet, the former singing his praises throughout his Psalms and the latter prophesying his advent in the clearest words, they are spoken of separately at the end. The good news which they brought relates as much to the peace and happiness which is granted to the righteous as to the advent of one who, coming at the end, should unite the qualifications of all the prophets in his own person, and accordingly make the nations of the earth as one nation.

652 *Kalimah,* or *word,* is here equivalent to *prophecy,* in which sense the word is frequently used in the Holy Qur'ān. Jesus is called a *prophecy* because he was born in accordance with a prophecy from Allāh, just as in a saying the Holy Prophet speaks of himself as "*the prayer of my father Abraham*", the significance being that he appeared in fulfilment of Abraham's prayer. For a fuller explanation see 423. And the significance of *ilqā'* varies according to its object. When its object is a tangible thing, it implies the act of throwing or casting. But you say *alqaitu ilai-hi khair-an,* i.e., *I did good to him,* and *alqaitu ilai-hi-l-mawaddata,* i.e., *I offered love to him* (T, LL), and *alqā ilayya sirra-hū,* i.e. *he revealed to me his secret* (T in art. *sirr*), and *alqaitu ilai-hi-l-qaula* which corresponds to what is said here, the object of the verb being *kalimah* instead of *qaul,* both having the same meaning, must be rendered *I communicated to him the saying.* Sale's and Rodwell's *conveying into Mary* and Palmer's *casting into Mary,* as if the object were a tangible one, are foreign to the real sense of the word.

653 *Rauḥ* and *rūḥ* both mean *mercy* of Allāh, according to Az (LL under *rauḥ*), this being the proper significance of the word in the passage under discussion. *Rūḥ* also signifies *inspiration* or *Divine revelation* (T, LL). If this significance is adopted, it would be an explanation of what is said in the foregoing words, i.e. His prophecy which He communicated to Mary. The passage would thus mean that the advent of Jesus was in accordance with a prophecy and an inspiration from the Divine Being. Even if we take *spirit* to be the meaning of the word *rūḥ*, it does in no way carry Jesus a step beyond the limits of mortality, for of Adam also it has been said, *I breathed My spirit into him* (15:29). In fact, according to the Holy Qur'ān the spirit of God is breathed into every man: "Then He made him complete and breathed into him of His spirit and gave you hearing and sight and hearts" (32:9). Further we have a saying referred to by LL under *rauḥ, aḥya al-nāsa bi-rūḥi-hī,* where the correct reading is *rūḥ,* and not *rauḥ,* meaning *He* (God) *has quickened all men with His spirit.* And *rūḥ-un min-hu,* which could only mean *a spirit from Him,* is further evidence that even in this sense the word is not exclusively applicable to Jesus, for he is not *the* word of God or *the* spirit from Him, but only *a* word or *a* spirit.

messengers. And say not, Three.[654] Desist, it is better for you. Allāh is only one God. Far be it from His glory to have a son. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. And sufficient is Allāh as having charge of affairs.

بِاللّٰهِ وَرُسُلِهٖ ۚ وَلَا تَقُوْلُوْا ثَلٰثَةٌ ؕ اِنْتَهُوْا خَيْرًا لَّكُمْ ؕ اِنَّمَا اللّٰهُ اِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ ؕ سُبْحٰنَهٗ اَنْ يَّكُوْنَ لَهٗ وَلَدٌ ۘ لَهٗ مَا فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِى الْاَرْضِ ؕ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ وَكِيْلًا ﴿١٧١﴾

SECTION 24 : **Prophethood of Jesus**

172 The Messiah disdains not to be a servant of Allāh, nor do the angels who are near to Him. And whoever disdains His service and is proud, He will gather them all together to Himself.

لَنْ يَّسْتَنْكِفَ الْمَسِيْحُ اَنْ يَّكُوْنَ عَبْدًا لِّلّٰهِ وَلَا الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ الْمُقَرَّبُوْنَ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّسْتَنْكِفْ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهٖ وَيَسْتَكْبِرْ فَسَيَحْشُرُهُمْ اِلَيْهِ جَمِيْعًا ﴿١٧٢﴾

173 Then as for those who believe and do good, He will pay them fully their rewards and give them more out of His grace. And as for those who disdain and are proud, He will chastise them with a painful chastisement,

فَاَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ فَيُوَفِّيْهِمْ اُجُوْرَهُمْ وَيَزِيْدُهُمْ مِّنْ فَضْلِهٖ ۚ وَاَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ اسْتَنْكَفُوْا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوْا فَيُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا اَلِيْمًا ۙ

174 And they will find for themselves besides Allāh no friend nor helper.

وَّلَا يَجِدُوْنَ لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلِيًّا وَّلَا نَصِيْرًا ﴿١٧٣﴾

175 O people, manifest proof has indeed come to you from your Lord and We have sent down to you a clear light.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَآءَكُمْ بُرْهَانٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَاَنْزَلْنَاۤ اِلَيْكُمْ نُوْرًا مُّبِيْنًا ﴿١٧٤﴾

176 Then as for those who believe in Allāh and hold fast by Him, He will admit them to His mercy and grace, and guide them to Himself on a right path.

فَاَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَاعْتَصَمُوْا بِهٖ فَسَيُدْخِلُهُمْ فِىْ رَحْمَةٍ مِّنْهُ وَفَضْلٍ ۙ وَّيَهْدِيْهِمْ اِلَيْهِ صِرَاطًا مُّسْتَقِيْمًا ﴿١٧٥﴾

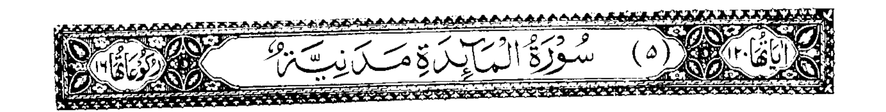
654 The doctrine of Trinity is plainly rejected here. There are not three persons in Godhead, but only one: *Allāh is only one God*. The Holy Qur'ān nowhere says that the Christian Trinity is formed of Jesus, Mary, and God, though it no doubt refers to the Roman Catholic doctrine of the worship of Mary in 5:116, for which see 751.

177 They ask thee for a decision. Say: Allāh gives you a decision concerning the person who has neither parents nor children. If a man dies (and) he has no son and he has a sister, hers is half of what he leaves, and he shall be her heir if she has no son. But if there be two (sisters), they shall have two-thirds of what he leaves. And if there are brethren, men and women, then for the male is the like of the portion of two females. Allāh makes clear to you, lest you err. And Allāh is Knower of all things.[655]

يَسْتَفْتُوْنَكَ ؕ قُلِ اللّٰهُ يُفْتِيْكُمْ فِي الْكَلٰلَةِ ؕ
اِنِ امْرُؤٌا هَلَكَ لَيْسَ لَهٗ وَلَدٌ وَّلَهٗۤ اُخْتٌ
فَلَهَا نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ ۚ وَهُوَ يَرِثُهَاۤ اِنْ لَّمْ
يَكُنْ لَّهَا وَلَدٌ ؕ فَاِنْ كَانَتَا اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُمَا
الثُّلُثٰنِ مِمَّا تَرَكَ ؕ وَاِنْ كَانُوْۤا اِخْوَةً
رِّجَالًا وَّنِسَآءً فَلِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ
الْاُنْثَيَيْنِ ؕ يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ اَنْ تَضِلُّوْا ؕ
وَاللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ۟

655 The rule given here supplements the law of inheritance as given at the commencement of this chapter, and is said to have been revealed very late. As explained in 549, the *kalālah* spoken of here is different from the *kalālah* spoken of in v. 12. Here there are neither children nor parents and therefore the whole of the inheritance goes to the brothers and the sisters.

Reversion to the law of inheritance just after speaking of Jesus Christ has perhaps a deeper meaning. It is a fact that no prophet appeared among the Israelites after Jesus Christ, and therefore his death really left Israel without a spiritual head who should rise to the eminence of prophethood. The spiritual kingdom which was promised to Abraham and which hitherto remained in the house of Israel, was now taken from the Israelites and made over to the brother nation, the Ishmaelites. This would also explain the words addressed to Moses: "God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me" (Deut. 18:15), where the spiritual inheritance is clearly made to devolve on the brethren of the Israelites, i.e. the Ishmaelites, and thus *from the midst of thee* is clearly explained as meaning *from the midst of thy brethren.* Moses saw clearly that the Israelites would lose their title to the inheritance of the spiritual kingdom before the advent of the Prophet who was to be his *like.* And Jesus made the same clear in different words when he said, addressing the Israelites: 'The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a people bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21:43).



CHAPTER 5

Al-Mā'idah : THE FOOD

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 16 *sections*; 120 *verses*)

The name of this chapter is taken from the mention of a demand for *food* — "the daily bread" — on the part of the followers of Jesus Christ, to which reference is made towards the end of this chapter. The chapter deals with the Christians in particular and the adoption of this name might be with a view to express the Christian love of the dainties of this life.

This chapter stands in almost the same relation to the last as the 3rd to the 2nd. Thus, while the 4th chapter deals chiefly with the hypocrites, the 5th deals with those who had assumed open enmity to Islām, being interspersed here and there with directions for the Muslims. Again, while the 4th chapter deals with the question of Jewish disobedience, this gives prominence to the Christian transgressions due to their inordinate worldly love, this distinction being made plain in the concluding portions of the two chapters.

The chapter opens with an exhortation to the Muslims to remain true to their obligations. This injunction is followed by certain details relating to the performance of the pilgrimage, to foods, and to social relations with other people and by the announcement that Religion was made perfect in Islām. The second section, which calls attention to the duty of uprightness, is, as it were, a caution against laying too much stress upon details of the law to the utter neglect of the inner qualities which make the real man. The third section speaks of the covenants made with the Jews and the Christians, and of the violation of their covenant by the Christians in assigning a Divine dignity to a mere mortal. The fourth section takes up the Jewish violation of the covenant, at the very outset of their national life, and points out the evil consequences of their disobedience. The fifth section, opening with a lesson to the Jews in Cain's aggression, plainly points towards the end to the punishment of the Jews who were now engaged in making war upon the Prophet, and the subject of the punishment of similar offences is continued in the sixth section. The seventh speaks of the relation of the Quranic revelation to previous revelations, and points out that this final revelation is really the fulfilment and perfection of all those revelations. The eighth section warns the Muslims of the hostile attitude of the Jews and the Christians and those who apostatize, the subject being continued in the ninth, which speaks of their mockery of the Muslim religion. The tenth introduces the subject of Christian deviation from the truth, while the eleventh shows that the Qur'ān is not unjust to them on account of their enmity towards Islām, valuing the meekness of monks and priests among them, and recognizing their nearness to Islām in contrast with the Jews and the polytheists. The three sections that follow are specially addressed to the believers, while hinting at Christian disregard of the middle course and of their aggression against the Muslims. The twelfth section, while warning the Muslims on the one hand of such practices as monkery, which required a man to deprive himself even of lawful things, cautions them on the other against the use of impure drugs, such as intoxicating liquors, and the acquisition of property by illegal means, such as gambling, the two besetting sins of Christian nations, and requires obedience and regard of duty to be made the main principle of action. The thirteenth section lays stress on the security of the Ka'bah, containing a prophetic allusion to the designs of powerful Christian

nations. The fourteenth section, containing further directions for the Muslims, lays special stress on the gravity of the sin of polytheism, which had led the Christians farthest away from the truth, notwithstanding their proximity to Islām. The two concluding sections of the chapter deal with the Christian religion more plainly. Attention is drawn in the fifteenth to the Christian love of this life and their being subjected to an unprecedented punishment as a result of their materialistic tendencies. The sixteenth, which is the last section, contains a plain condemnation of the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus out of the mouth of that prophet himself, and makes it clear that this doctrine found way into the Christian religion after his death and gives hope of their finally finding protection in Islām.

A consideration of the topics dealt with in this chapter and the opinions of different authorities, lead us to the almost certain conclusion that this chapter follows in the order of revelation, as it does in arrangement, the last chapter, and the main portion of it was revealed within 5-7 Hijrah. The tendency of some Christian critics to ascribe verses condemning certain Jewish or Christian doctrines to a period when political relations with these people became strained is to be deprecated, for, as a matter of fact, the Qur'ān did not deny the good in these religions at any time, nor did it ever approve of their errors. For instance, it is in an early Makkan revelation that we find the Christian doctrine of the sonship of Jesus condemned in the severest terms (19:88-92), while it is here, in a late Madīnah revelation, that we find the Christians praised on account of their meekness.

There is, however, one verse in this chapter which belongs to a much later period than the main portion of the chapter, the date of the revelation of which can be fixed with certainty. It is the third verse, and it speaks of the perfection of religion in Islām. Of its revelation in the Holy Prophet's last pilgrimage to Makkah in the year 10 A.H. there is not the least doubt, and, further, there is the clearest testimony that it was revealed on the 9th *Dhu-l-Ḥijjah* in that year, when the Holy Prophet was on the plain of 'Arafāt (B. 2:32).

SECTION 1 **Perfection of Religion in Islām**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 O you who believe, fulfil the obligations.[656] The cattle quadrupeds are allowed to you except that which is recited to you, not violating the prohibition against game when you are on the pilgrimage.[657] Surely Allāh orders what He pleases.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْۤا اَوْفُوْا بِالْعُقُوْدِ ؕ اُحِلَّتْ لَكُمْ بَهِيْمَةُ الْاَنْعَامِ اِلَّا مَا يُتْلٰى عَلَيْكُمْ غَيْرَ مُحِلِّى الصَّيْدِ وَاَنْتُمْ حُرُمٌ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَحْكُمُ مَا يُرِيْدُ ۝١

2 O you who believe, violate not the signs of Allāh,[658] nor the Sacred Month, nor the offerings, nor the victims with garlands,[659] nor those repairing to the Sacred House seeking the grace and pleasure of their Lord. And when you are free from pilgrimage obligations, then hunt. And let not hatred of a people — because they hindered you from the Sacred Mosque — incite you to transgress. And help

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تُحِلُّوْا شَعَآئِرَ اللّٰهِ وَلَا الشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَآئِدَ وَلَاۤ آٰمِّيْنَ الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ يَبْتَغُوْنَ فَضْلًا مِّنْ رَّبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَانًا ؕ وَاِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوْا ؕ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ

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656 Respect for all *covenants, contracts, agreements, leagues, treaties,* and *engagements,* all of which are included in the significance of the word *'uqūd* (sing. *'aqd, a tie*) (LL), and also of all Divine ordinances given for the welfare of the individual and society, is the very first necessity of social relations. The word includes *the covenants imposed by God as well as the mutual agreements made by men* (LL). Thus respect for *law,* religious as well as temporal, is taught here.

657 The prohibition of game during pilgrimage is mentioned in connection with the security of the Ka'bah in section 13, so that even wild animals are secure during the time; see 735. The words *except that which is recited to you* relate to the prohibited foods mentioned already in 2:173, 6:146, 16:115, and detailed further in v. 3 here.

658 *Sha'ā'ir* is plural of *sha'īrah* which means a *sign* (R). It is derived from *sha'ara* meaning *he knew* a thing, and by *sha'ā'ir Allāh* are therefore meant *matters through which the knowledge of Allāh is obtained.* According to IJ, it signifies *all duties imposed by God on man* and thus includes all Divine ordinances, obligations, commandments and prohibitions. Ḥasan says *sha'ā'ir Allāh* means *dīn Allāh* or *the religion of Allāh.* Rites and ceremonies in connection with the pilgrimage and places where these ceremonies are performed are also known by this name. Hence the Safā and the Marwah are also called *sha'ā'ir Allāh* in 2:158.

659 *Hady* is plural of *hadyah,* and means *what is driven* (to Makkah), and

one another in righteousness and piety, and help not one another in sin and aggression,[660] and keep your duty to Allāh. Surely Allāh is severe in requiting (evil).

شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ اَنْ صَدُّوْكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ
الْحَرَامِ اَنْ تَعْتَدُوْا ۘ وَتَعَاوَنُوْا عَلَى الْبِرِّ
وَالتَّقْوٰى ۪ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوْا عَلَى الْاِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ ۪
وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿۲﴾

3 Forbidden to you is that which dies of itself, and blood, and flesh of swine, and that on which any other name than that of Allāh has been invoked, and the strangled (animal), and that beaten to death, and that killed by a fall, and that killed by goring with the horn, and that which wild beasts have eaten — except what you slaughter;[661] and that which is sacrificed on stones set up[662] (for idols), and that you seek to divide by arrows;[663] that is a transgression. This day have those who disbelieve despaired of your religion, so fear them not, and fear Me. This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour to you and chosen for you Islām as a religion.[664] But whoever is compelled by hunger, not inclining wilfully to sin, then surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ
الْخِنْزِيْرِ وَمَآ اُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللّٰهِ بِهٖ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ
وَالْمَوْقُوْذَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيْحَةُ
وَمَآ اَكَلَ السَّبُعُ اِلَّا مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ ۟
وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ وَاَنْ تَسْتَقْسِمُوْا
بِالْاَزْلَامِ ؕ ذٰلِكُمْ فِسْقٌ ؕ اَلْيَوْمَ يَئِسَ
الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْ دِيْنِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ
وَاخْشَوْنِ ؕ اَلْيَوْمَ اَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِيْنَكُمْ
وَاَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِيْ وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ
الْاِسْلَامَ دِيْنًا ؕ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ فِيْ
مَخْمَصَةٍ غَيْرَ مُتَجَانِفٍ لِّاِثْمٍ ۙ فَاِنَّ
اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۳﴾

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qalā'id is plural of *qilādah,* meaning *a necklace* or *what is put upon the neck of an animal* that is brought as an offering to Makkah for sacrifice (LA, LL), and hence also the *animal which is made to wear a garland.* The word *qalā'id* as a description of such animals is used to intensify respect for them, because they bear a clear mark showing that they are meant to be sacrificed. It should be noted that only camels are made to wear garlands, while *hady* includes all kinds of animals brought as offering.

660 The principle laid down here as to uprightness of conduct in dealing even with those whom one hates is laudable, and the international code of modern world stands sorely in need of such a principle of uprightness. Requiring equal treatment for all nations — for those whom we hate and for those whom we love — Islām alone can serve as an international law.

661 The exception may apply to all the five classes. The infinitive noun *tadhkiyah* means *causing the natural heat to pass forth.* Technically, it indicates a particular mode of slaughtering (R, LL); and the meaning is that if an animal partly eaten by wild beasts is found while yet alive, and is slaughtered in the proper manner, its flesh is allowed.

662 According to Ibn Juraij, these were certain stones which were set up around the Ka'bah, over or near which it was customary to kill animals as

663, 664, see next page.

4 They ask thee as to what is allowed them. Say: The good things are allowed to you, and what you have taught the beasts and birds of prey, training them to hunt — you teach them of what Allāh has taught you; so eat of that which they catch for you and mention the name of Allāh over it; and keep your duty to Allāh. Surely Allāh is Swift in reckoning.[665]

يَسْـَٔلُونَكَ مَاذَآ أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ ۖ قُلْ أُحِلَّ
لَكُمُ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتُ ۙ وَمَا عَلَّمْتُم مِّنَ ٱلْجَوَارِحِ
مُكَلِّبِينَ تُعَلِّمُونَهُنَّ مِمَّا عَلَّمَكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ۖ
فَكُلُوا۟ مِمَّآ أَمْسَكْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَٱذْكُرُوا۟ ٱسْمَ
ٱللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ ۖ وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
سَرِيعُ ٱلْحِسَابِ ④

5 This day (all) good things are made lawful for you. And the food of those who have been given the Book is lawful for you and your food is

ٱلْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمُ ٱلطَّيِّبَٰتُ ۖ وَطَعَامُ
ٱلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا۟ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ حِلٌّ لَّكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ

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offerings to certain idols, their blood being sprinkled and flesh laid on the stones (Rz).

663 *Istaqsamtu-hū* means, according to R, *I asked him to divide,* and he adds: "Then it is used to signify *dividing*". If this significance be adopted, the *azlām* (lit. *arrows without a head and without a feather*) would mean the headless arrows of the game of hazard. The Arabs played with such arrows for division of the flesh of a slaughtered camel bought on credit (LL). This significance is favoured by the context, for it prohibits dividing flesh of slaughtered animals by means of certain arrows with which was played the game of chance called *maisir.* A comparison with 6:146, where slaying in other than Allāh's name is called a transgression, as here dividing by arrows is called a transgression, also shows this to be the correct significance. Probably animals devoted to idols were divided by arrows when slain. According to others, however, *istaqsama* means *he sought to know what was allotted to him* by means of the *azlām.* When one of them desired to make a journey, or to get married, or to perform some other important affair, he drew out arrows, on one of which was written "My Lord has commanded me", on a second, "My Lord has forbidden me", while a third arrow was blank. He did or refrained from doing the desired thing according to the arrow which came forth, repeating the operation if a blank arrow came out (Rz).

664 External testimony as to the late revelation of this verse has already been quoted in the introductory note to this chapter. The very subject-matter of the verse shows that it must have been revealed towards the close of the Holy Prophet's life, and hence it is held by all authorities that no precept was revealed after this. The Prophet died eighty-one or eighty-two days after its revelation (Rz). This verse is a clear testimony to the perfection of religion in Islām, no such claim being made by any other book or religion. Just before Muḥammad, Jesus had said: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth" (Jn. 16:12, 13). The Prophet Muhammad was thus the last of the prophets, because religion being perfected, no prophet was needed after him.

665 Game killed by means of beasts and birds of prey taught to hunt is allowed. When, however, the beast or the bird is sent after the prey, the name of Allāh should be mentioned. Game killed by an arrow or by a shot is allowed, subject to the same condition. In either case, if the game is not killed before it falls into the hands of the hunter, it should be slaughtered; if it is already killed, it is lawful in that condition.

lawful for them.[666] And so are the chaste from among the believing women and the chaste from among those who have been given the Book before you,[667] when you give them their dowries, taking (them) in marriage, not fornicating nor taking them for paramours in secret. And whoever denies faith,[668] his work indeed is vain; and in the Hereafter he is of the losers.

حِلٌّ لَّهُمْ وَالْمُحْصَنٰتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنٰتِ
وَالْمُحْصَنٰتُ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ
مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ اِذَآ اٰتَيْتُمُوْهُنَّ اُجُوْرَهُنَّ
مُحْصِنِيْنَ غَيْرَ مُسٰفِحِيْنَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِيْٓ
اَخْدَانٍ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّكْفُرْ بِالْاِيْمَانِ فَقَدْ
حَبِطَ عَمَلُهٗ ؗ وَهُوَ فِى الْاٰخِرَةِ مِنَ
الْخٰسِرِيْنَ ۝

666 The question arises here whether the food of those who have been given the Book is lawful even when that food includes what is expressly unlawful according to the Holy Qur'ān. The answer to this question must be given in the negative. A thing which is clearly prohibited cannot become lawful because it is offered by a Jew or a Christian. According to I'Ab by *ṭa'ām* is here meant *dhabīḥah* (B. 72:22). Thus animals slaughtered by the Jews or the Christians are allowed when slaughtered in the name of God. When an animal is not slaughtered in the name of God, it is prohibited according to some while others allow it. See further 816 where I quote B. 72:22, according to which the animal slaughtered by the People of the Book is disallowed only when the slaughterer is heard mentioning other than Allāh's name.

667 Both the Jewish and the Christian laws do not compare well with the Islamic law in this respect. In Islām intermarriages with idol-worshippers are totally prohibited (2:221), but in the case of a people whose religion is based on a revealed book, in which category fall almost all the nations of the world, the taking of their women in marriage is expressly allowed. The giving away of Muslim women in marriage to followers of other religions is not, however, expressly mentioned, and practice from the earliest times is against it. Indeed, while women belonging to other religions would be happy in a Muslim household, because of the status and rights which Islām confers on woman, Muslim women in an alien household would be in a condition of distress, because they would lose the rights which they enjoy in Muslim society. It may be added that the law here given is not limited to the Jews and the Christians, but includes the followers of all religions based on revelation. Hence the law was extended to the Persians by the companions of the Holy Prophet. As for the Jewish law, see Deut. 7:3: "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son". Paul follows the Jewish law: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. 6:14).

668 The *denial of faith* is variously explained. Some think it means *denial of Allāh*; others, *denial of the unity of Allāh*; while still others think that *faith* stands for *the revelation* of the Qur'ān.

SECTION 2: **Duty of Uprightness**

6 O you who believe, when you rise up for prayer, wash your faces, and your hands up to the elbows, and wipe your heads, and (wash) your feet up to the ankles. And if you are under an obligation[668a], then wash (yourselves). And if you are sick or on a journey, or one of you comes from the privy, or you have had contact with women and you cannot find water, betake yourselves to pure earth and wipe your faces and your hands therewith. Allāh desires not to place a burden on you but He wishes to purify you, and that He may complete His favour on you, so that you may give thanks.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِذَا قُمْتُمْ اِلَى الصَّلٰوةِ
فَاغْسِلُوْا وُجُوْهَكُمْ وَاَيْدِيَكُمْ اِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ
وَامْسَحُوْا بِرُءُوْسِكُمْ وَاَرْجُلَكُمْ اِلَى
الْكَعْبَيْنِ ؕ وَاِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوْا ؕ وَ
اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَّرْضٰٓى اَوْ عَلٰى سَفَرٍ اَوْ جَآءَ اَحَدٌ
مِّنْكُمْ مِّنَ الْغَآئِطِ اَوْ لٰمَسْتُمُ النِّسَآءَ فَلَمْ
تَجِدُوْا مَآءً فَتَيَمَّمُوْا صَعِيْدًا طَيِّبًا
فَامْسَحُوْا بِوُجُوْهِكُمْ وَاَيْدِيْكُمْ مِّنْهُ ؕ
مَا يُرِيْدُ اللّٰهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّنْ حَرَجٍ
وَّلٰكِنْ يُّرِيْدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهٗ
عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ ۝٦

7 And remember Allāh's favour on you and His covenant with which He bound you when you said: We have heard and we obey.[669] And keep your duty to Allāh. Surely Allāh knows what is in the breasts.

وَاذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَةَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمِيْثَاقَهُ
الَّذِيْ وَاثَقَكُمْ بِهٖٓ ۙ اِذْ قُلْتُمْ سَمِعْنَا
وَاَطَعْنَا ۫ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌۢ
بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ ۝٧

8 O you who believe, be upright for Allāh, bearers of witness with justice; and let not hatred of a people incite you not to act equitably. Be just; that is nearer to observance of duty. And keep your duty to Allāh. Surely Allāh is Aware of what you do.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُوْنُوْا قَوّٰمِيْنَ لِلّٰهِ
شُهَدَآءَ بِالْقِسْطِ ۫ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ
قَوْمٍ عَلٰٓى اَلَّا تَعْدِلُوْا ؕ اِعْدِلُوْا ۫ هُوَ اَقْرَبُ
لِلتَّقْوٰى ۫ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ خَبِيْرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝٨

9 Allāh has promised to those who believe and do good deeds: For them is forgiveness and a mighty reward.

وَعَدَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ ۙ
لَهُمْ مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَّاَجْرٌ عَظِيْمٌ ۝٩

668a I.e., under an obligation to perform a total ablution; see 578.

669 The reference in the covenant is generally supposed to be to the oath of fidelity taken by the Madinites at *'Aqabah*, but some have taken it to be the acceptance of the law of Islām, others consider it to be the evidence of human nature spoken of in 7:172, while still others understand by it the swearing of the allegiance at Hudaibiyah (IJ), which is also referred to in 48:10, 18.

10 And those who disbelieve and reject Our messages, such are the companions of the flaming fire.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿١٠﴾

11 O you who believe, remember Allāh's favour on you when a people had determined to stretch out their hands against you, but He withheld their hands from you; and keep your duty to Allāh. And on Allāh let the believers rely.[670]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ هَمَّ قَوْمٌ أَنْ يَبْسُطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١﴾

SECTION 3: **Christian Violation of the Covenant**

12 And certainly Allāh made a covenant with the Children of Israel, and We raised up among them twelve chieftains.[671] And Allāh said: Surely I am with you. If you keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and believe in My messengers and assist them and offer to Allāh a goodly gift, I will certainly cover your evil deeds, and cause you to enter Gardens wherein rivers flow. But whoever among you disbelieves after that, he indeed strays from the right way.[672]

وَلَقَدْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَبَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ نَقِيبًا ۖ وَقَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ ۖ لَئِنْ أَقَمْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَيْتُمُ الزَّكَاةَ وَآمَنْتُمْ بِرُسُلِي وَعَزَّرْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَقْرَضْتُمُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ۚ فَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ ﴿١٢﴾

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670 The occasions on which the enemies of Islām endeavoured to take away the life of the Prophet or to exterminate the Muslims are too numerous to mention here. The commentators, however, think that there is special reference to the attempt made by the Banī Nadīr on the life of the Holy Prophet.

671 It is strange to find Rodwell adding a note here that the Prophet "invented these twelve leaders of tribes", whereas they are clearly mentioned by name in Num. 1:5-15, and in the 16th verse they are called *princes of the tribes of their fathers*; while in the 44th verse we have: "And the princes of Israel, being twelve men". And further, in Num. 13:3-15 we again read of twelve *heads* of the Children of Israel having been sent to search the land of Canaan.

672 The land was described by Joshua and Caleb as "a land which floweth with milk and honey" (Num. 14:8).

13 But on account of their breaking their covenant We cursed them and hardened their hearts. They alter the words from their places and neglect a portion of that whereof they were reminded. And thou wilt always discover treachery in them excepting a few of them — so pardon them and forgive. Surely Allāh loves those who do good (to others).

فَبِمَا نَقْضِهِمْ مِّيْثَاقَهُمْ لَعَنّٰهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا
قُلُوْبَهُمْ قٰسِيَةً ۚ يُحَرِّفُوْنَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ
مَّوَاضِعِهٖ ۙ وَنَسُوْا حَظًّا مِّمَّا ذُكِّرُوْا بِهٖ ۚ
وَلَا تَزَالُ تَطَّلِعُ عَلٰى خَآئِنَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ اِلَّا
قَلِيْلًا مِّنْهُمْ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاصْفَحْ ؕ اِنَّ
اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿۱۳﴾

14 And with those who say, We are Christians, We made a covenant,[673] but they neglected a portion of that whereof they were reminded so We stirred up enmity and hatred among them to the day of Resurrection. And Allāh will soon inform them of what they did.[674]

وَمِنَ الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّا نَصٰرٰٓى اَخَذْنَا
مِيْثَاقَهُمْ فَنَسُوْا حَظًّا مِّمَّا ذُكِّرُوْا بِهٖ ۠
فَاَغْرَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَآءَ اِلٰى
يَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ ؕ وَسَوْفَ يُنَبِّئُهُمُ اللّٰهُ
بِمَا كَانُوْا يَصْنَعُوْنَ ﴿۱۴﴾

15 O People of the Book, indeed Our Messenger has come to you, making clear to you much of that which you concealed of the Book and passing over much.[675] Indeed, there has come to you from Allāh, a Light and a clear Book,[676]

يٰٓاَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ قَدْ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُوْلُنَا
يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ كَثِيْرًا مِّمَّا كُنْتُمْ تُخْفُوْنَ
مِنَ الْكِتٰبِ وَيَعْفُوْا عَنْ كَثِيْرٍ ۬ قَدْ جَآءَكُمْ
مِّنَ اللّٰهِ نُوْرٌ وَّ كِتٰبٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿۱۵﴾

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673 "I have yet many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come" (John 16:12, 13). The kingdom of God so often spoken of in the Gospel is no other than the spiritual kingdom established by the Holy Prophet, the Gospel being in fact only the good news of his advent.

674 The prophecy that there shall always be hatred and enmity between the various Christian peoples has proved true in all ages, and never more clearly than in our own day. They will find peace only when they accept Islām.

675 There were many truths which the Jews and the Christians had lost, their scriptures not having remained free from corruption, and many which were to be met with in their books but which they did not act upon. Some of these which were of permanent value were revealed in the Holy Qur'ān, but others — referred to in *passing over much* — had been given to them to suit only the requirements of the time when they were given and were not now needed. Or, the reference may be to the prophecies of the advent of the Holy Prophet, for the Qur'ān refers to only very few of them.

676 Two things are here spoken of as having come from Allāh, a Light and a clear Book. The Light is the Prophet, and the Book, the Qur'ān. The Prophet is the greatest spiritual Light which ever dawned upon this earth. Hence he is called a light-giving sun: "O Prophet, We have sent thee as a witness and as

16 Whereby Allāh guides such as follow His pleasure into the ways of peace, and brings them out of darkness into light by His will, and guides them to the right path.

يَهْدِي بِهِ اللّٰهُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَهٗ سُبُلَ السَّلٰمِ وَيُخْرِجُهُمْ مِّنَ الظُّلُمٰتِ إِلَى النُّوْرِ بِإِذْنِهٖ وَيَهْدِيْهِمْ إِلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ﴿١٦﴾

17 They indeed disbelieve who say: Surely, Allāh — He is the Messiah, son of Mary. Say: Who then could control anything as against Allāh when He wished to destroy the Messiah, son of Mary, and his mother and all those on the earth?[677] And Allāh's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and what is between them. He creates what He pleases. And Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْٓا إِنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيْحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ ؕ قُلْ فَمَنْ يَّمْلِكُ مِنَ اللّٰهِ شَيْـًٔا إِنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُّهْلِكَ الْمَسِيْحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهٗ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيْعًا ؕ وَلِلّٰهِ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ؕ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿١٧﴾

18 And the Jews and the Christians say: We are the sons of Allāh and His beloved ones. Say: Why does He then chastise you for your sins?[678] Nay, you are mortals from among those whom He has created. He forgives whom He pleases and chastises whom He pleases.[679] And Allāh's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, and to Him is the eventual coming.

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُوْدُ وَالنَّصٰرٰى نَحْنُ أَبْنٰٓؤُا اللّٰهِ وَأَحِبَّآؤُهٗ ؕ قُلْ فَلِمَ يُعَذِّبُكُمْ بِذُنُوْبِكُمْ ؕ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ بَشَرٌ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقَ ؕ يَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَلِلّٰهِ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ؗ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿١٨﴾

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a bearer of good news and as a warner, and as one inviting to Allāh and a light-giving sun" (33:45, 46).

677 The meaning is that Jesus Christ and his mother Mary, and all those who were then on the earth, tasted equally of death; hence Jesus Christ was an ordinary human being and not God, for if he had been God he would not have died. *In* sometimes signifies *idh* or *when* (Mgh-LL), and this is the significance here. It is a mistake to take it as referring to the future, for with Jesus Christ is mentioned Mary and the whole generation then living, and their meeting death was undoubtedly a thing of the past.

678 In the Gospels it is said: "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God" (Matt. 5:9). The Christians think they are the people spoken of here. The Jews considered themselves as a favourite nation, because they thought they were the only nation chosen by God for the gift of Divine revelation, to the exclusion of all other nations of the world. Thus they considered themselves friends of God. They are told that their sins were so great that they were punished for them even in this life. How could people sunk so deep in sins be friends of God or sons of God?

679 It is in accordance with Divine laws that forgiveness and punishment

19 O People of the Book, indeed Our Messenger has come to you explaining to you after a cessation of the messengers,[680] lest you say: There came not to us a bearer of good news nor a warner. So indeed a bearer of good news and a warner has come to you. And Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ عَلَىٰ فَتْرَةٍ مِّنَ الرُّسُلِ أَن تَقُولُوا مَا جَاءَنَا مِن بَشِيرٍ وَلَا نَذِيرٍ فَقَدْ جَاءَكُم بَشِيرٌ وَنَذِيرٌ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٩﴾

SECTION 4: **Israelites' Violation of the Covenant**

20 And when Moses said to his people: O my people, remember the favour of Allāh to you when He raised prophets among you and made you kings and gave you what He gave not to any other of the nations.[681]

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ يَا قَوْمِ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَعَلَ فِيكُمْ أَنبِيَاءَ وَجَعَلَكُم مُّلُوكًا وَآتَاكُم مَّا لَمْ يُؤْتِ أَحَدًا مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 O my people, enter the Holy Land which Allāh has ordained for you and turn not your backs, for then you will turn back losers.

يَا قَوْمِ ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَرْتَدُّوا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِكُمْ فَتَنقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

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are exercised, and the alleged atonement of Christ had brought about no change in that law.

680 Several centuries had elapsed since the appearance of any prophet in any country when the great Arabian Prophet made his appearance. No nation in the world claims the appearance of any messenger in it between the advent of Jesus Christ and that of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad. The world was, as it were, preparing itself for the advent of the greatest of all prophets, who was to be a messenger to all the nations of the world. Hence the cessation of prophecy among all people. The name of Khālid is mentioned by some people, but there is no authentic ḥadīth to this effect, nor any historical evidence showing that any prophet of that name had appeared after Jesus. On the other hand, there is an authentic ḥadīth according to which the Holy Prophet said, speaking of Jesus Christ: "There has been no prophet between him and me" (B. 21:48).

681 There is no anachronism here. The Israelites are here told that two favours had been bestowed upon them: (1) prophets were raised among them; (2) they were made kings. The reference need not be to the earlier history of the Israelites, but to their history as dating from the time of Moses, for the advent of Moses had brought about an entire change both in their spiritual and political status. Not only had two prophets, Moses and Aaron, already appeared among them, but with the Mosaic law was laid down the basis of a dispensation which gave them promise of numerous prophets appearing among them. And politically

22 They said: O Moses, therein are a powerful people, and we shall not enter it until they go out from it; if they go out from it, then surely we will enter.[682]

قَالُوا يٰمُوسٰى إِنَّ فِيهَا قَوْمًا جَبَّارِينَ وَإِنَّا لَنْ نَّدْخُلَهَا حَتّٰى يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ يَّخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا فَإِنَّا دٰخِلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 Two men of those who feared, on whom Allāh had bestowed a favour, said: Enter upon them by the gate, for when you enter it you will surely be victorious; and put your trust in Allāh, if you are believers.[683]

قَالَ رَجُلٰنِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنْعَمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمَا ادْخُلُوا عَلَيْهِمُ الْبَابَ فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُمُوهُ فَإِنَّكُمْ غٰلِبُونَ وَعَلَى اللّٰهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 They said: O Moses, we will never enter it so long as they are in it; go therefore thou and thy Lord, and fight; surely here we sit.

قَالُوا يٰمُوسٰى إِنَّا لَنْ نَّدْخُلَهَا أَبَدًا مَّا دَامُوا فِيهَا فَاذْهَبْ أَنْتَ وَرَبُّكَ فَقَاتِلَا إِنَّا هٰهُنَا قٰعِدُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 He said: My Lord, I have control of none but my own self and my brother; so distinguish between us and the transgressing people.

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ إِلَّا نَفْسِي وَأَخِي فَافْرُقْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ الْقَوْمِ الْفٰسِقِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 He said: It will surely be forbidden to them for forty years — they will wander about in the land. So grieve not for the transgressing people.[685]

قَالَ فَإِنَّهَا مُحَرَّمَةٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً يَتِيهُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْفٰسِقِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

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they had no doubt already emerged as an independent nation, being masters of themselves and no more slaves of their Egyptian masters. They had already acquired kingship, but the words as well contain a clear prophetic reference to their future career as a ruling nation. Spiritual dominance combined with political supremacy was manifestly a favour which was not bestowed upon any of the other contemporary nations.

682 "All the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature" (Num. 13:32). For the murmurings of the Israelites and their refusal to go against the enemy, see Num. 14:1-4.

683 "And Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh . . . spoke unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying . . . If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land . . . their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us, fear them not" (Num. 14:6-9).

685 "Surely they shall not see the land which I sware unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked Me see it" (Num. 14:23). The forty years spoken of here represent the life of that generation.

SECTION 5 : **Cain and Abel—murderous plots against the Prophet**

27 And relate to them with truth the story of the two sons of Adam, when they offered an offering, but it was accepted from one of them and was not accepted from the other. He said: I will certainly kill thee. (The other) said: Allāh accepts only from the dutiful.[686]

وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ابْنَيْ آدَمَ بِالْحَقِّ إِذْ قَرَّبَا قُرْبَانًا فَتُقُبِّلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمَا وَلَمْ يُتَقَبَّلْ مِنَ الْآخَرِ ۖ قَالَ لَأَقْتُلَنَّكَ ۖ قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 If thou stretch out thy hand against me to kill me I shall not stretch out my hand against thee to kill thee. Surely I fear Allāh, the Lord of the worlds:

لَئِنْ بَسَطْتَ إِلَيَّ يَدَكَ لِتَقْتُلَنِي مَا أَنَا بِبَاسِطٍ يَدِيَ إِلَيْكَ لِأَقْتُلَكَ ۖ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 I would rather that thou shouldst bear the sin against me and thine own sin,[687] thus thou wouldst be of the companions of the Fire; and that is the recompense of the unjust.

إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ تَبُوءَ بِإِثْمِي وَإِثْمِكَ فَتَكُونَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَاءُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 At length his mind made it easy for him to kill his brother, so he killed him; so he became one of the losers.

فَطَوَّعَتْ لَهُ نَفْسُهُ قَتْلَ أَخِيهِ فَقَتَلَهُ فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 Then Allāh sent a crow scratching the ground to show him how to cover the dead body of his brother.[688] He said: Woe is me! Am I not able to be as this crow and cover the dead body of my brother? So he became of those who regret.

فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ غُرَابًا يَبْحَثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُرِيَهُ كَيْفَ يُوَارِي سَوْءَةَ أَخِيهِ ۚ قَالَ يَا وَيْلَتَا أَعَجَزْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِثْلَ هَٰذَا الْغُرَابِ فَأُوَارِيَ سَوْءَةَ أَخِي ۖ فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ النَّادِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

686 The reference is apparently to the story of Cain and Abel. Compare Gen. 4:3-12. Some commentators are, however, of opinion that the reference is to two men from among the Israelites, because every man may be spoken of as a son of Adam (Rz). But the whole story may be taken allegorically to refer to the Jewish plots against the Holy Prophet, where the Israelites may be taken for the aggressive and sinful brother and the Ishmaelites, as represented by the Holy Prophet, for the righteous one. It may be noted that in v. 11 we have a reference to the Jewish plots against the Prophet's life, and the two sections that follow are, as it were, parenthetical, reminding the Jews and the Christians of their covenants and their violation of them, and the subject of v. 11 is continued in this and the following section.

687 *Ithmī* here means not *my sin*, but *the sin committed against me*, i.e., *the*

688, see next page.

32 For this reason We prescribed for the Children of Israel that whoever kills a person, unless it be for manslaughter or for mischief in the land, it is as though he had killed all men. And whoever saves a life, it is as though he had saved the lives of all men.[689] And certainly Our messengers came to them with clear arguments, but even after that many of them commit excesses in the land.

مِنْ أَجْلِ ذٰلِكَ ۚ كَتَبْنَا عَلٰى بَنِيٓ إِسْرَآءِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا ۭ وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَآ أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا ۭ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ لَمُسْرِفُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 The only punishment of those who wage war against Allāh and His Messenger and strive to make mischief in the land[690] is that they should be murdered, or crucified, or their hands and their feet should be cut off on opposite sides, or they should be imprisoned.[691] This shall be a disgrace for them in this world, and in the Hereafter they shall have a grievous chastisement,

إِنَّمَا جَزٰٓؤُا الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا أَنْ يُّقَتَّلُوٓا أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوٓا أَوْ تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِّنْ خِلَافٍ أَوْ يُنْفَوْا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ ۭ ذٰلِكَ لَهُمْ خِزْيٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَهُمْ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٣٣﴾

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sin of murder; while by *ithmi-ka* is meant *thy sin*, i.e., *his previous sin* on account of which his offering was not accepted. The righteous brother tells the wicked one that even after knowing that he intended to kill him he would not be the first to raise his hand against him and kill him, but he would rather that the guilty one should go on adding to his sins.

688 The Bible is silent on this point; but there is nothing improbable in primitive man learning from other creatures.

689 The reference is generally understood to be to the gravity of the crime of murder, requiring the execution of the criminal. But by *the killing of a person* may as well be meant the killing of the Prophet, who had come to establish righteousness. The killing of that great teacher of righteousness was indeed equivalent to the killing of all men and the saving of the life of that great Saviour of humanity was equivalent to saving humanity itself. The reference is to the Jewish plots against the life of the Holy Prophet, and that is the reason for mentioning here the Israelites in particular.

690 The words used here imply originally all those opponents of Islām who waged war on the Muslims and made mischief in the land by causing loss to the life and property of innocent Muslims who fell into their hands. But it has generally been accepted as including all dacoits and murderers who cause disorder in a settled state of society. In fact, when war came to an end in Arabia and the kingdom of Islām was established over the whole peninsula, the enemies of Islām, being unable to oppose its authority openly, resorted to dacoity and murder to disturb the peace which was now established in the land. Hence, though it is such enemies that are primarily spoken of here, the words are general and include all cases of murder and dacoity.

691, see next page.

34 Except those who repent before you overpower them;[692] so know that Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَقْدِرُوا عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

SECTION 6 : **Punishment of Offenders**

35 O you who believe, keep your duty to Allāh, and seek means of nearness to Him, and strive hard in His way that you may be successful.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 Those who disbelieve, even if they had all that is in the earth, and the like of it with it, to ransom themselves therewith from the chastisement of the day of Resurrection, it would not be accepted from them; and theirs is a painful chastisement.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ أَنَّ لَهُمْ مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَّمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لِيَفْتَدُوا بِهِ مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَا تُقُبِّلَ مِنْهُمْ ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 They would desire to come forth from the Fire, and they will not come forth from it, and theirs is a lasting chastisement.

يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَّخْرُجُوا مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَا هُمْ بِخَارِجِينَ مِنْهَا ۖ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٣٧﴾

The punishment described is of four kinds, which clearly shows that the punishment to be inflicted in any particular case would depend upon the circumstances of the case, as well as the time and place where the crime was committed. For instance, if murder has been committed in the course of dacoity, the punishment would include the execution of the culprit, which may take the form of crucifixion if the offence is so heinous or the culprit has caused such terror in the land that the leaving of his body on the cross is necessary as a deterrent. In other cases, the punishment may be imprisonment, where the severer punishment of cutting off of hands is deemed unnecessary. The judge would take all the circumstances into consideration and inflict such punishment as he thought necessary. A particular case dealt with under this verse was that of a tribe called 'Ụrainah. Some men of this tribe came to the Prophet, and accepted Islām. They fell ill and were sent by the Prophet to a place at a little distance from Madīṇah for change of climate and recovery of health. But when they regained health, they killed the very people who had served them and went off with their camels. Then they committed dacoities and violated the chastity of women, and they were severely punished (B. 4:66, and the comments on it in *'Ainī*). Many other cases of this nature are recorded by IJ.

691 *Yunfau min-al-arḍ* literally means *they should be banished from the earth*, but according to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah the meaning here is *imprisonment* (*al-ḥabs*), and most lexicologists accept this (Rz). LA also accepts the interpretation that *they should be kept in the prison*. The reason is apparent. No one can be banished from the whole of the earth unless he is kept in prison. Deportation is included if we take *al-arḍ* as meaning a particular country.

692 This verse speaks of people the course of whose life has been changed before they are caught — *those who repent before you overpower them*. Repentance, of course, here means a changed course of life which is apparent to all. It clearly refers only to cases in which an enemy, who is guilty of crimes against life and property, becomes a Muslim before he falls into the hands of

38 And (as for) the man and the woman addicted to theft, cut off their hands as a punishment for what they have earned, an exemplary punishment from Allāh. And Allāh is Mighty, Wise.[693]

وَالسَّارِقُ وَالسَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوْٓا اَيْدِيَهُمَا جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالًا مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿۳۸﴾

39 But whoever repents after his wrongdoing and reforms, Allāh will turn to him (mercifully). Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

فَمَنْ تَابَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ ظُلْمِهٖ وَاَصْلَحَ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَتُوْبُ عَلَيْهِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۳۹﴾

40 Knowest thou not that Allāh is He to Whom belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth? He chastises whom He pleases, and forgives whom He pleases. And Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.

اَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَهٗ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضِ ؕ يُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَيَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿۴۰﴾

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the Muslims. He should not be tried and punished for what he did when he was in the hostile camp.

693 The *cutting off of hands* may be taken metaphorically or literally. You say *qaṭa'a lisāna-hū*, lit., *he cut off his tongue*, when you mean *he silenced him* (LA). If therefore *qaṭ' yad* is taken metaphorically, it would simply mean *restraining* the thief by imprisonment or otherwise. If taken literally, the hand may not be cut off for every theft, and this is a fact recognized by all jurists. What however I would particularly stress is the fact that the cutting off of the hand is the maximum punishment. As stated above in 690, in the case of dacoity the maximum punishment is death and the minimum punishment is imprisonment. Now theft is not as serious a crime as dacoity, and hence the minimum punishment for theft could not be severer than the minimum punishment for dacoity. In the case of dacoity, going upward in point of severity, the punishment is imprisonment, then cutting off of hands and feet, then death. Therefore what the Holy Qur'ān states here is only the maximum punishment for theft, the minimum punishment remaining the same, i.e. imprisonment.

It is moreover clear from v. 33 that the infliction of the severer or the milder punishment depends upon the circumstances of the case and the opinion of the judge. The crime of dacoity becomes severer or milder according to the loss of life or property that the victims of dacoity suffer. In theft, the loss is only caused to property and not to life and therefore death as a punishment in this case is eliminated, while the next grade of punishment, the cutting off of the hand, is retained as the maximum punishment, and maximum punishment would depend only on the exigency of the case. It may be the seriousness of the crime or the seriousness of the offender's addiction to the crime of theft that may call for the maximum punishment. Therefore generally the maximum punishment may be inflicted only in cases of habitual theft. The considerations which entitle us to make this distinction are as follows: (a) The punishment is called exemplary, and exemplary punishment could only be inflicted where the crime is very serious or the offender is an habitual criminal. (b) The punishment is not to be inflicted if the offender repents and turns from his evil course. The next verse shows that the punishment of cutting off the hand is only for a criminal *who does not reform*, i.e. *for the habitual offender*. Moreover, what is required is *repentance and reform*. To give a man a chance to reform it is necessary that he should be given freedom of action before the more serious punishment is inflicted. (c) The punishment of the cutting off of hands has been mentioned in connection with the more serious crimes spoken of in v. 33, while even those serious crimes may be punished with imprisonment only, and therefore mere stealing, which is by

41 O Messenger, let not those grieve thee who hasten to disbelief, from among those who say with their mouths, We believe, and their hearts believe not, and from among those who are Jews — they are listeners for the sake of a lie, listeners for another people who have not come to thee.[694] They alter the words after they are put in their (proper) places, saying: If you are given this, take it, and if you are not given this, be cautious. And he for whom Allāh intends temptation, thou controllest naught for him against Allāh. Those are they whose hearts Allāh intends not to purify. For them is disgrace in this world, and for them a grievous chastisement in the Hereafter.

يَاأَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ لَا يَحْزُنْكَ الَّذِينَ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ قُلُوبُهُمْ ۛ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا ۛ سَمَّاعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ سَمَّاعُونَ لِقَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ لَمْ يَأْتُوكَ ۖ يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهِ ۖ يَقُولُونَ إِنْ أُوتِيتُمْ هَٰذَا فَخُذُوهُ وَإِنْ لَمْ تُؤْتَوْهُ فَاحْذَرُوا ۚ وَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ فِتْنَتَهُ فَلَنْ تَمْلِكَ لَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُطَهِّرَ قُلُوبَهُمْ ۚ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٤١﴾

42 Listeners for the sake of a lie, devourers of forbidden things, so if they come to thee, judge between them or turn away from them. And if thou turn away from them, they cannot

سَمَّاعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ أَكَّالُونَ لِلسُّحْتِ ۚ فَإِنْ جَاءُوكَ فَاحْكُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ ۖ وَإِنْ تُعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ فَلَنْ يَضُرُّوكَ

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no means as serious an offence as dacoity, need not be punished always with the severer punishment of the cutting off of the hand.

It is true that the cutting off of the hand even for a first crime is reported in the Ḥadīth, but this may be due to the particular circumstances of the society at the time. It is for the judge to decide when to inflict the maximum punishment and when not. According to some ḥadīth, the hand was cut off when the amount stolen was one-quarter of a dīnār; according to others when it was one dīnār or more (AD. 37:12; Ns. 46:7). According to one ḥadīth the hand was not to be cut off when a theft was committed in the course of a journey (AD. 37:19). There are ḥadīth showing that the hand was not to be cut off for stealing fruit on a tree (AD. 37:13). The cutting off of the hand is also prohibited in the case of criminal misappropriation (AD. 37:14). Marwān had a person flogged for stealing young palm trees (AD. 37:13). Another ḥadīth states that when a certain person stole another's mantle valued at 30 dirhams from underneath his head, the owner of the mantle offered to sell the same to the person who had stolen it, and the Holy Prophet approved of this arrangement (AD. 37:15). In conclusion, I may add that I translate the word *al-sāriq* as meaning *one addicted to theft*, not only for the reasons given above but also because an explanatory reading of this word is *al-sarriq*, which is an *ism mubālaghah*, i.e., a noun of intensiveness from the same root.

694 The meaning is that they listen, but their object is only to invent lies

harm thee at all. And if thou judge, judge between them with equity. Surely Allāh loves the equitable.[695]

شَيْـًٔا ۭ وَاِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِيْنَ ۝

43 And how do they make thee a judge and they have the Torah wherein is Allāh's judgment? Yet they turn away after that! And these are not believers.[696]

وَكَيْفَ يُحَكِّمُوْنَكَ وَعِنْدَهُمُ التَّوْرٰىةُ فِيْهَا حُكْمُ اللّٰهِ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ ذٰلِكَ ۭ وَمَآ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۝

SECTION 7: The Qur'ān and Previous Scriptures

44 Surely We revealed the Torah, having guidance and light.[697] By it did the prophets who submitted themselves (to Allāh) judge for the Jews, and the rabbis and the doctors of law, because they were required to guard the Book of Allāh,[698] and they were

اِنَّآ اَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرٰىةَ فِيْهَا هُدًى وَّنُوْرٌ ۚ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّوْنَ الَّذِيْنَ اَسْلَمُوْا لِلَّذِيْنَ هَادُوْا وَالرَّبّٰنِيُّوْنَ وَالْاَحْبَارُ بِمَا اسْتُحْفِظُوْا مِنْ كِتٰبِ اللّٰهِ وَكَانُوْا

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and to give false reports to people who have not come to the Prophet. The words can also bear the interpretation that they listen only to the lies uttered by their rabbis, who have not come to thee. In fact, they were acting only as spies.

695 By the agreement drawn up between the various nationalities of Madīnah on the advent of the Holy Prophet there (see 126), all disputes were to be referred to the Holy Prophet, but the Jews had by this time become so inimical to the Prophet that he is allowed to refuse to judge between them. In case he judged between them, he is still told to judge with equity. To be equitable notwithstanding the severest enmity of the Jews and notwithstanding the knowledge that they were always plotting with the enemies of Islām for its extirpation, shows that the Prophet had reached the highest point of moral rectitude to which man can attain.

696 The Divine judgment in the Torah referred to here may either imply the Divine injunctions in the Torah, which the Jews refused to follow, or the prophecies of the advent of the Holy Prophet, which they refused to accept.

697 Verses 44-47 are supposed by Christian critics to be evidence of the purity of the text of the Torah and the Gospel. This is not true. That the Torah was a Divine revelation containing light and guidance has never been denied. What is denied is that that light and guidance were kept intact throughout the ages. It is further denied that these two books were meant for the whole world and for all ages. They certainly contained light and guidance, but only for one people — the Israelites, and for a limited time. Notwithstanding the light and guidance contained in the Torah, the Gospel was sent down for the Israelite people, which shows clearly that the light and guidance contained in the Torah were not considered sufficient even for the Israelites for all ages, to say nothing of other nations.

698 The statement made here is that the masters of Divine knowledge and

witnesses thereof. So fear not the people and fear Me, and take not a small price for My messages. And whoever judges not by what Allāh has revealed, those are the disbelievers.[699]

عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ ۚ فَلَا تَخْشَوُا النَّاسَ وَاخْشَوْنِ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۚ وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 And We prescribed to them in it that life is for life, and eye for eye, and nose for nose, and ear for ear, and tooth for tooth, and for wounds retaliation.[700] But whoso forgoes it, it shall be an expiation for him.[701] And whoever judges not by what Allāh has revealed, those are the wrongdoers.

وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنَّ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ وَالْأَنفَ بِالْأَنفِ وَالْأُذُنَ بِالْأُذُنِ وَالسِّنَّ بِالسِّنِّ وَالْجُرُوحَ قِصَاصٌ ۚ فَمَن تَصَدَّقَ بِهِ فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَّهُ ۚ وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 And We sent after them in their footsteps Jesus, son of Mary, verifying that which was before him of the Torah; and We gave him the Gospel containing guidance and light, and verifying that which was before it of the Torah, and a guidance and an admonition for the dutiful.[702]

وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَاةِ ۖ وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنجِيلَ فِيهِ هُدًى وَنُورٌ وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَاةِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

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the doctors "were required to guard the Book of Allāh", i.e. the Torah. The Qur'ān does not say that they were actually successful in doing so. On the other hand, alteration of those books is clearly spoken of in 2:75 and 2:79. As against this, the guarding of the Holy Qur'ān is spoken of as the work of God Himself; see 15:9: "Surely We have revealed the Reminder and We will most surely be its guardian".

699 It should be borne in mind that by judging is not meant only the judging of civil or criminal cases, but judging in all matters of religion, so that those who did not judge the revelation of the Holy Prophet by what was revealed in the Torah were disbelievers. And note that the adoption of the words *what Allāh has revealed* instead of the *Torah* is not without significance. It shows that the whole of the Torah as existing then was not looked upon by the Holy Qur'ān as being the Divine revelation.

700 Compare Exod. 21:23-25, Lev. 24:19-21.

701 If a man forgoes his right to an act of reprisal against his brother, this shall be an expiation for any wrong he may have done.

702 The description of the Gospel as containing light and guidance conveys the same significance as the similar statement regarding the Torah, for which see 697. In addition it is stated that the Gospel verified the Torah notwithstanding the fact that it introduces many new doctrines in place of those given in

47 And let the People of the Gospel judge by that which Allāh has revealed in it. And whoever judges not by what Allāh has revealed, those are the transgressors.

وَلْيَحْكُمْ اَهْلُ الْاِنْجِيْلِ بِمَآ اَنْزَلَ
اللّٰهُ فِيْهِ ؕ وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكُمْ بِمَآ اَنْزَلَ
اللّٰهُ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْفٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿۴۷﴾

48 And We have revealed to thee the Book with the truth, verifying that which is before it of the Book and a guardian over it,[703] so judge between them by what Allāh has revealed, and follow not their low desires (turning away) from the truth that has come to thee. For every one of you We appointed a law and a way.[704] And if Allāh had pleased He would have made you a single people, but that He might try you in what He gave you.[705] So vie one with another in virtuous deeds. To Allāh you will all return, so He will inform you of that wherein you differed ;

وَاَنْزَلْنَآ اِلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا
لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتٰبِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا
عَلَيْهِ فَاحْكُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ وَلَا
تَتَّبِعْ اَهْوَآءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَآءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ ؕ
لِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَّمِنْهَاجًا ؕ
وَلَوْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ اُمَّةً وَّاحِدَةً
وَّلٰكِنْ لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِيْ مَآ اٰتٰىكُمْ فَاسْتَبِقُوا
الْخَيْرٰتِ ؕ اِلَى اللّٰهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيْعًا
فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيْهِ تَخْتَلِفُوْنَ ﴿۴۸﴾

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the Mosaic law, as in the case of divorce, the law of reprisal, etc. This description of the Gospel clearly shows that by verification is meant only corroboration of the general principles and broad doctrines of the faith, such as the unity of God and equitable dealing with men, or the declaration by one prophet of the truth of a previous prophet, as the declaration of the truth of Moses by Jesus and of both by the Holy Prophet. It is in this sense that the Qur'ān is spoken of as verifying the Torah and the Gospel.

703 The Qur'ān is called *muhaimin* or *a guardian* over all previous revelation, thus showing that whatever was of permanent value in the previous scriptures has been preserved in the Qur'ān. The previous books contained a light and guidance for the people for whom they were meant, and they were commanded to judge by those books, but the Qur'ān is now the Book which judges all truth, wherever it may have been, and therefore is the only Book which should be followed.

704 The appointment of a law and a way for everyone refers to the giving of different laws to different nations in accordance with their requirements before the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān, which fulfilled the requirements of all nations and all ages. Thus the Qur'ān here recognizes the principle to which it refers frequently, that prophets were raised among every people, for which see particularly 10:47, 13:7, and 35:24.

705 This is one significance. Man is placed above the whole of creation in that he has been granted discretionary powers so that he can choose to follow one path or another, as against the rest of creation, which must necessarily follow the laws to which it is subject. Hence, led by that discretion, men follow different ways, adopting different sects, whereas if man's very nature had been so made as

49 And that thou shouldst judge between them by what Allāh has revealed, and follow not their low desires, and be cautious of them lest they seduce thee from part of what Allāh has revealed to thee. Then if they turn away, know that Allāh desires to afflict them for some of their sins. And surely many of the people are transgressors.

وَ اَنِ احْكُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ وَ لَا
تَتَّبِعْ اَهْوَآءَهُمْ وَ احْذَرْهُمْ اَنْ يَّفْتِنُوْكَ
عَنْۢ بَعْضِ مَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ اِلَيْكَ ؕ فَاِنْ
تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمْ اَنَّمَا يُرِيْدُ اللّٰهُ اَنْ يُّصِيْبَهُمْ
بِبَعْضِ ذُنُوْبِهِمْ ؕ وَ اِنَّ كَثِيْرًا مِّنَ
النَّاسِ لَفٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿۴۹﴾

50 Is it then the judgment of ignorance that they desire? And who is better than Allāh to judge for a people who are sure?

اَفَحُكْمَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَبْغُوْنَ ؕ وَ مَنْ اَحْسَنُ
مِنَ اللّٰهِ حُكْمًا لِّقَوْمٍ يُّوْقِنُوْنَ ﴿۵۰﴾

SECTION 8: **Relations of Muslims with Enemies**

51 O you who believe, take not the Jews and the Christians for friends. They are friends of each other. And whoever amongst you takes them for friends he is indeed one of them. Surely Allāh guides not the unjust people.[706]

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُوْدَ
وَ النَّصٰرٰۤى اَوْلِيَآءَ ؕ بَعْضُهُمْ اَوْلِيَآءُ
بَعْضٍ ؕ وَ مَنْ يَّتَوَلَّهُمْ مِّنْكُمْ فَاِنَّهٗ مِنْهُمْ ؕ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَهْدِى الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿۵۱﴾

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to make him unable to use his discretionary powers, all men would have been a single people, but then man's better qualities, which give him preference over the rest of creation, would not have been manifested. The words may, however, also mean, *if Allāh pleases He will make you a single people*. This would be a reference to the ultimate destiny of the human race. In fact all people are now growing to the consciousness that they are all but one nation.

706 All non-believers, whatever their own differences, had made common cause against Islām; this is what is meant by their being *friends of each other*. The Muslims are warned that they should not expect help or friendship from any party of them, whether Jews, Christians, or idolaters. It would have been weakness of faith in the ultimate triumph of Islām if, from fear of a powerful enemy, they had sought help and friendship here and there among a hostile people, as the next verse shows. When two nations are at war, an individual of one nation having friendly relations with the enemy nation is treated as an enemy; that is exactly what the Qur'ān says here.

52 But thou seest those in whose hearts is a disease, hastening towards them, saying: We fear lest a calamity should befall us.[707] Maybe Allāh will bring the victory or a commandment from Himself, so they will regret what they hid in their souls.[708]

فَتَرَى الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ يُسَارِعُونَ فِيهِمْ يَقُولُونَ نَخْشَىٰ أَن تُصِيبَنَا دَائِرَةٌ ۚ فَعَسَى اللَّهُ أَن يَأْتِيَ بِالْفَتْحِ أَوْ أَمْرٍ مِّنْ عِندِهِ فَيُصْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا أَسَرُّوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ نَادِمِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 And those who believe will say: Are these they who swore by Allāh with their most forcible oaths that they were surely with you? Their deeds will bear no fruit, so they will be losers.[709]

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَهَٰؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ ۙ إِنَّهُمْ لَمَعَكُمْ ۚ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَأَصْبَحُوا خَاسِرِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 O you who believe, should any one of you turn back from his religion, then Allāh will bring a people, whom He loves and who love Him, humble towards believers, mighty against the disbelievers, striving hard in Allāh's way and not fearing the censure of any censurer. This is Allāh's grace — He gives it to whom He pleases. And Allāh is Ample-giving, Knowing.[710]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَن يَرْتَدَّ مِنكُمْ عَن دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ ۙ أَذِلَّةٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٍ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٤﴾

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707 By hastening towards them is meant hastening to make friendship with them or seeking their help. The hypocrites did this, fearing a Muslim reverse.

708 By *victory* is meant a victory for the Muslims, and the reference is clearly to the conquest of Makkah. It shows that these verses were revealed before the conquest of Makkah in the year 8 A.H. The reference in *amr* or *commandment* is evidently to the establishment of the Kingdom of Islām, by which is meant the dominance of Islām, there being a further reference to the spiritual conquests of Islām in v. 54, for which see 710.

709 This was a prophecy that what the hypocrites were doing in opposition to the Prophet would prove of no effect. They would not be able to achieve the end which they had in view, and instead of bringing any loss to the Prophet they themselves would be the losers.

710 The Muslims were severely persecuted while at Makkah and their troubles at Madīnah increased tenfold owing to the presence of warring tribes on all sides. Yet they faced all these hardships with the greatest perseverance, and cases of apostacy were rare. In 6 A.H. Heraclius asked Abū Sufyān, who was then the leader of hostilities against the Prophet: "Does any one of them apostatize out of hatred for his religion?" Abū Sufyān's reply was, No. Again he asked him: Are they increasing or decreasing? Abū Sufyān said: "They are increasing in numbers" (B. 1:1). It is a fact that apostacy never thinned the ranks of Islām.

55 Only Allāh is your Friend and His Messenger and those who believe, those who keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, and they bow down.[711]

انما وليكم الله ورسوله والذين
امنوا الذين يقيمون الصلوة ويؤتون
الزكوة وهم ركعون ﴿٥٥﴾

56 And whoever takes Allāh and His Messenger and those who believe for friend — surely the party of Allāh, they shall triumph.

ومن يتول الله ورسوله والذين
امنوا فان حزب الله هم الغلبون ﴿٥٦﴾ ع

SECTION 9 : **The Mockers**

57 O you who believe, take not for friends those who take your religion as a mockery and a sport, from among those who were given the Book before you and the disbelievers; and keep your duty to Allāh if you are believers.[712]

يايها الذين امنوا لا تتخذوا الذين
اتخذوا دينكم هزوا ولعبا من الذين
اوتوا الكتب من قبلكم والكفار
اولياء ج واتقوا الله ان كنتم مؤمنين ﴿٥٧﴾

58 And when you call to prayer they take it as a mockery and a sport. That is because they are a people who understand not.

واذا ناديتم الى الصلوة اتخذوها
هزوا ولعبا ط ذلك بانهم قوم لا يعقلون ﴿٥٨﴾

59 Say: O People of the Book, do you find fault[713] with us for aught except that we believe in Allāh and in that which has been revealed to us and that which was revealed before, while most of you are transgressors?

قل يااهل الكتب هل تنقمون منا الا
ان امنا بالله وما انزل الينا وما انزل
من قبل لا وان اكثركم فسقون ﴿٥٩﴾

711 After warning the weak-hearted against taking their enemies for friends, the Holy Qur'ān now tells them who is their real friend who can help them in their distresses and difficulties. Allāh is really the only Friend of a believer; only He can come to his help in time of need. But there was God's Messenger among them and if God was a believer's true Friend, so was His Messenger, whose heart was full of sincerest sympathy for the true believers.

712 The Muslims were prohibited from having friendly relations with those who mocked their religion and their Prophet. Friendship with such people would indeed have led to a similar bent of mind.

713 *Naqama* followed by *min* means *he found fault with* (R).

60 Say: Shall I inform you of those worse than this in retribution from Allāh? They are those whom Allāh has cursed and upon whom He brought His wrath and of whom He made apes and swine, and who serve the devil. These are in a worse plight and further astray from the straight path.[714]

قُلْ هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِشَرٍّ مِّنْ ذٰلِكَ مَثُوبَةً عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ۚ مَنْ لَّعَنَهُ اللّٰهُ وَغَضِبَ عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهُمُ الْقِرَدَةَ وَالْخَنَازِيرَ وَعَبَدَ الطَّاغُوتَ ۚ أُولٰٓئِكَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَّأَضَلُّ عَنْ سَوَآءِ السَّبِيلِ ﴿٦٠﴾

61 And when they come to you, they say, We believe, and surely they come in unbelief and they go forth in it. And Allāh knows best what they conceal.

وَإِذَا جَآءُوكُمْ قَالُوٓا اٰمَنَّا وَقَدْ دَّخَلُوا بِالْكُفْرِ وَهُمْ قَدْ خَرَجُوا بِهٖ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

62 And thou seest many of them vying one with another in sin and transgression, and their devouring illegal gain. Certainly evil is that which they do.[715]

وَتَرٰى كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَأَكْلِهِمُ السُّحْتَ ۚ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 Why do not the rabbis and the doctors of law prohibit them from their sinful utterances and their devouring unlawful gain? Certainly evil are the works they do.

لَوْلَا يَنْهٰهُمُ الرَّبّٰنِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ عَنْ قَوْلِهِمُ الْإِثْمَ وَأَكْلِهِمُ السُّحْتَ ۚ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 And the Jews say: The hand of Allāh is tied up. Their own hands are shackled and they are cursed for what they say. Nay, both His hands are spread out.[716] He disburses as He pleases. And that which has been revealed to thee from thy Lord will certainly make many of them increase

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ يَدُ اللّٰهِ مَغْلُولَةٌ ۚ غُلَّتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَلُعِنُوا بِمَا قَالُوا ۘ بَلْ يَدٰهُ مَبْسُوطَتٰنِ ۙ يُنْفِقُ كَيْفَ يَشَآءُ ۚ وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ مَّآ أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ

714 Those who are spoken of as having been made apes and swine are the Jews. See 107 as explaining the significance of these words. It is remarkable that, though the people spoken of here are in both places the same, they are on one occasion called simply apes and on the other apes and swine. In addition, the same people are here spoken of as serving the devil. The concluding words that the people who were thus made apes and swine and the servants of the devil are "worse in plight and further astray from the straight path", are conclusive as establishing the fact that they were still men, because apes and swine could not be said to be straying from the straight path. The next verse makes this plainer, for these very apes and swine are there described as coming to the Messenger with unbelief and going away with unbelief.

715 *Suḥt* signifies *any property that is forbidden, not lawful to be gained* (LL). It is also applied to a *bribe* (R).

716 The Muslims as a community were mostly poor people who accepted

in inordinacy and disbelief. And We have cast among them enmity and hatred till the day of Resurrection. Whenever they kindle a fire for war Allāh puts it out, and they strive to make mischief in the land.[716a] And Allāh loves not the mischief-makers.

طُغْيَانًا وَّكُفْرًا ۗ وَأَلْقَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ۚ كُلَّمَا أَوْقَدُوا نَارًا لِّلْحَرْبِ أَطْفَأَهَا اللَّهُ ۚ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا ۚ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

65 And if the People of the Book had believed and kept their duty We would certainly have removed from them their evils, and made them enter gardens of bliss.

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْكِتَٰبِ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَكَفَّرْنَا عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلَأَدْخَلْنَاهُمْ جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 And if they had observed the Torah and the Gospel and that which is revealed to them from their Lord, they would certainly have eaten from above them and from beneath their feet. There is a party of them keeping to the moderate course; and most of them — evil is that which they do.[717]

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا التَّوْرَاةَ وَالْإِنجِيلَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِم مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ لَأَكَلُوا مِن فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِم ۚ مِّنْهُمْ أُمَّةٌ مُّقْتَصِدَةٌ ۖ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ سَاءَ مَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

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the truth. Moreover, they had left their property at Makkah. The Madīnah Muslims were an agricultural community and naturally not rich. The Jews on the other hand carried on business and their usurious transactions had made them very rich, hence they taunted the Muslims, saying that Allāh's hand was fettered. Compare also 3:180 and see 524. The words — *both His hands are spread out* — indicate that He will enrich the Muslims materially as well as spiritually.

716a It is clear from this that the Jews had a hand in the battles which the Quraish waged against Islām; in fact they gave them promises of help from within if they attacked Madīnah; perhaps they also financed these wars. The casting of enmity among them may relate to the enmity between the Jews and the Christians, because both are again and again referred to in this chapter.

717 If they had observed the Torah and the Gospel which contained clear prophecies of the Prophet's advent, they would have believed in the revelation of the Qur'ān as well. The eating from above is in reference to spiritual blessings and eating from beneath their feet signifies the earthly provisions; i.e., they would have had abundance of both. The attitude of liberality adopted by Islām towards even its most implacable foes is remarkable. Notwithstanding their strong enmity to Islām, a party of the Jews and the Christians is described as *keeping to the moderate course.*

SECTION 10 : **Christian Deviation from the Truth**

67 O Messenger, deliver that which has been revealed to thee from thy Lord ; and if thou do (it) not, thou hast not delivered His message. And Allāh will protect thee from men. Surely Allāh guides not the disbelieving people.[718]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن
رَّبِّكَ ۖ وَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُۥ ۚ
وَٱللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ
لَا يَهْدِى ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 Say : O People of the Book, you follow no good till you observe the Torah and the Gospel and that which is revealed to you from your Lord.[719] And surely that which has been revealed to thee from thy Lord will make many of them increase in inordinacy and disbelief : so grieve not for the disbelieving people.

قُلْ يَٰٓأَهْلَ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَسْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَىْءٍ
حَتَّىٰ تُقِيمُوا۟ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ وَٱلْإِنجِيلَ وَمَآ
أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۗ وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ
كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُم مَّآ أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ
طُغْيَٰنًا وَكُفْرًا ۖ فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى
ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 Surely those who believe and those who are Jews and the Sabeans and the Christians — whoever believes in Allāh and the Last Day and does good — they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve.

إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَٱلَّذِينَ هَادُوا۟
وَٱلصَّٰبِـُٔونَ وَٱلنَّصَٰرَىٰ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِٱللَّهِ
وَٱلْيَوْمِ ٱلْءَاخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَٰلِحًا فَلَا
خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 Certainly We made a covenant with the Children of Israel and We

لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَٰقَ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ

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718 In Makkah the Prophet's only enemies were the Quraish. His flight to Madīnah increased the difficulties tenfold. The Jews were a powerful nation, and a little plain speaking had made them the most dreadful enemies. Similar was the case of the Christians. The other tribes of Arabia had also, by this time, been successfully excited by the Quraish to side with them. The promise is therefore given that the Prophet will remain under Divine protection as against the innumerable dangers that threatened him from all quarters and the numerous plots against his life. But there is also a reference here to the Prophet's spiritual protection. Commenting on this verse R says: "The *'iṣmat,* or *protection,* of the prophets is God's protection of them, in the first place, by characterizing them with purity of essence (i.e. creating them pure from every sin in their very nature), then by granting them bodily as well as spiritual excellence, then by granting them help and keeping them firm (in trials), then by sending down tranquillity upon them and by the protection of their hearts (against evil)". RM also gives a similar explanation and says that their protection means their *protection from sins* from among all people.

719 This is a very severe condemnation of the contention of the Jews and

sent to them messengers. Whenever a messenger came to them with that which their souls desired not, some (of them) they called liars and some they (even) sought to kill.

وَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ رُسُلًا ۖ كُلَّمَا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَىٰ أَنْفُسُهُمْ ۙ فَرِيقًا كَذَّبُوا وَفَرِيقًا يَقْتُلُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

71 And they thought that there would be no affliction,[720] so they became blind and deaf; then Allāh turned to them mercifully but many of them (again) became blind and deaf.[721] And Allāh is Seer of what they do.

وَحَسِبُوا أَلَّا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ فَعَمُوا وَصَمُّوا ثُمَّ تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ عَمُوا وَصَمُّوا كَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

72 Certainly they disbelieve who say: Allāh, He is the Messiah, son of Mary. And the Messiah said: O Children of Israel, serve Allāh, my Lord and your Lord.[722] Surely whoever associates (others) with Allāh, Allāh has forbidden to him the Garden and his abode is the Fire. And for the wrongdoers there will be no helpers.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ ۖ وَقَالَ الْمَسِيحُ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ ۖ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ ﴿٧٢﴾

73 Certainly they disbelieve who say: Allāh is the third of the three.[723] And there is no God but One God. And if they desist not from what they say, a painful chastisement will surely

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلَاثَةٍ ۘ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَٰهٍ إِلَّا إِلَٰهٌ وَاحِدٌ ۚ وَإِنْ لَمْ يَنْتَهُوا عَمَّا يَقُولُونَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ

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the Christians. They had not preserved the Torah and the Gospel in their purity, and whatever remained of the original teachings of the prophets they did not act upon it, nor did they care for the prophecies which their own Books contained.

720 Although they had been repeatedly warned of the afflictions which would befall them, they still thought that, being a favoured nation, they would not suffer punishment for their evil deeds. They had been subjected to great sufferings at the hands of **Nebuchadnezzar** and the Babylonian rulers who followed him, large numbers having been slain and the rest taken prisoners. And again they suffered at the hands of Titus. See v. 78 where this affliction is spoken of as coming after David and Jesus.

721 Allāh's turning mercifully to them signifies the advent of Jesus, and their becoming blind and deaf a second time refers to their rejection of him.

722 "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. 4:10).

723 The well-known Christian doctrine of the Trinity is here plainly referred to. It should be noted that the name of Mary is never mentioned in connection with the doctrine of the Trinity. But as the Christians, especially the Roman Catholics, invested Mary with Divine character, as being the mother of God, the Qur'ān often mentions her along with Jesus as being an ordinary mortal.

befall such of them as disbelieve.[723a]

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 Will they not then turn to Allāh and ask His forgiveness? And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

أَفَلَا يَتُوبُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَهُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 The Messiah, son of Mary, was only a messenger; messengers before him had indeed passed away. And his mother was a truthful woman. They both used to eat food.[724] See how We make the messages clear to them! then behold, how they are turned away!

مَا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ وَأُمُّهُ صِدِّيقَةٌ ۖ كَانَا يَأْكُلَانِ الطَّعَامَ ۗ انظُرْ كَيْفَ نُبَيِّنُ لَهُمُ الْآيَاتِ ثُمَّ انظُرْ أَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 Say: Do you serve besides Allāh that which controls for you neither harm nor good? And Allāh — He is the Hearing, the Knowing.

قُلْ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا ۚ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 Say: O People of the Book, exaggerate not in the matter of your religion unjustly, and follow not the low desires of people who went astray before and led many astray, and went astray from the right path.[724a]

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَ قَوْمٍ قَدْ ضَلُّوا مِن قَبْلُ وَأَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا وَضَلُّوا عَن سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ ﴿٧٧﴾

SECTION 11: **Christian Nearness to Islām**

78 Those who disbelieved from among the Children of Israel were cursed by the tongue of David and

لُعِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَىٰ لِسَانِ دَاوُودَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ۚ

723a If the Jews were punished on account of their rejecting the prophets, the Christians are here told that punishment is also in store for them for their going to the other extreme in raising a mortal to the dignity of Godhead. The doctrine of the Atonement has slowly and gradually made the Christian world forget God altogether, and material advancement and the acquisition of worldly power has become their only concern. They first sought to subjugate the whole world, and, having done that, they are now seeking to overpower each other. Their mutual hatred and enmity as a punishment for their violation of the covenant of God has been already clearly spoken of in v. 14, and again in v. 64, as also in an earlier revelation: "And on that day We shall leave a part of them in conflict with another part" (18:99).

724 Feeling hungry and partaking of food shows that both Jesus and his mother were ordinary mortals. Every living thing needs food; it is only the Supreme Being Who has no need of it. As Jesus is clearly spoken of as eating food while alive, he could not remain alive without food, and this verse thus negatives the allegation that Jesus is still alive.

724a The *ghuluww* or *exaggeration* spoken of here refers to the Christian doctrine raising a mortal to the dignity of Godhead. The Christians are here told

Jesus, son of Mary. This was because they disobeyed and exceeded the limits.[725]

ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوا وَّكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

79 They forbade not one another the hateful things they did. Evil indeed was what they did.

كَانُوا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَن مُّنكَرٍ فَعَلُوهُ
لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

80 Thou seest many of them befriending those who disbelieve. Certainly evil is that which their souls send before for them, so that Allāh is displeased with them, and in chastisement will they abide.

تَرَىٰ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا ۚ لَبِئْسَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لَهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ
أَن سَخِطَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَفِي الْعَذَابِ
هُمْ خَالِدُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

81 And if they believed in Allāh and the Prophet[726] and that which is revealed to him, they would not take them for friends, but most of them are transgressors.

وَلَوْ كَانُوا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالنَّبِيِّ وَمَا
أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مَا اتَّخَذُوهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ وَلَٰكِنَّ
كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

82 Thou wilt certainly find the most violent of people in enmity against the believers to be the Jews and the idolaters; and thou wilt find the nearest in friendship to the believers to be those who say, We are Christians. That is because there are priests and monks among them and because they are not proud.[727]

لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِّلَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا ۖ
وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُم مَّوَدَّةً لِّلَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصَارَىٰ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
بِأَنَّ مِنْهُمْ قِسِّيسِينَ وَرُهْبَانًا وَ
أَنَّهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

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that in making this doctrine the basis of their religion they have only followed an erroneous doctrine preached by a people before them. Recent criticism has shown that the Christians have only followed previous idolatrous nations in ascribing a son to God. This subject has been fully discussed in the "Sources of Christianity" by the late Khwāja Kamāl-ud-Dīn.

725 After Moses, David and Jesus, who represent the highest achievement of Israelite prophethood in temporal and spiritual glory, spoke of the advent of the Holy Prophet in unmistakable terms. The *curse* is used here in its original sense of being removed further off from Divine mercy. Both prophets had warned the Jews that their transgressions called for Divine punishment which should soon overtake them if they did not mend their ways. The time of both was followed by a great affliction overtaking the Jews, in the respective depredations of the Babylonian kings and the destruction wrought by Titus.

726 By *al-Nabī* or *the Prophet* in the Qur'ān is always meant the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, and he is often spoken of and addressed as *al-Nabī* or *al-Rasūl, the Prophet* or *the Messenger*. In fact, he is referred to as *the Prophet* or *that Prophet* in earlier prophecy as well (John 1:21, 25). The Jews professed belief in the Unity of God, yet they made a common cause with the idolatrous Quraish to uproot Islām which was a religion of pure monotheism.

727 The Christians were nearer to Islām than the Jews, not only because the Muslims accepted Jesus Christ as a prophet of God, but because there were

PART VII

83 And when they hear that which has been revealed to the Messenger thou seest their eyes overflow with tears because of the truth they recognize. They say : Our Lord, we believe, so write us down with the witnesses.[728]

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ تَرَىٰ
أَعْيُنَهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ
الْحَقِّ ۚ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاكْتُبْنَا
مَعَ الشّٰهِدِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

84 And what (reason) have we that we should not believe in Allāh and in the Truth that has come to us, while we earnestly desire that our Lord should cause us to enter with the righteous people ?

وَمَا لَنَا لَا نُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا جَاءَنَا مِنَ
الْحَقِّ وَنَطْمَعُ أَنْ يُدْخِلَنَا رَبُّنَا مَعَ الْقَوْمِ
الصّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

85 So Allāh rewarded them for what they said, with Gardens wherein rivers flow to abide in them. And that is the reward of the doers of good.

فَأَثَابَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا قَالُوا جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِي
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَذٰلِكَ
جَزَاءُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

86 And those who disbelieve and reject Our messages, such are the companions of the flaming fire.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيٰتِنَا أُولٰئِكَ
أَصْحٰبُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٨٦﴾

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still among them many people who feared and worshipped God — there were priests and monks among them as the verse says. It is a fact that the Christian attitude towards Islām was never so inimical as the Jewish. The Negus, Emperor of Abyssinia, accepted Islām when he came to know of it through the Muslim emigrants in that country. Heraclius was favourably disposed towards it; even the Christian deputation of Najrān towards the end of the Prophet's life was so impressed with the Prophet's arguments that it decided not to have a *mubāhalah* with him. But the words here are more of a prophetical nature, and it is a fact, that in the early history of Islām, the Christians in Egypt, in N. Africa, in Syria, in Persia and other countries, accepted Islām in very large numbers, so that many of those communities became Muslims entirely or predominantly. At present, too, when Islām is being presented to the West, the Christians are receiving the message with an open heart.

728 This refers to the Christians who believed. An important personage belonging to this class was the Negus of Abyssinia, in whose dominions the Muslims found shelter in the early days of the Prophet's mission, when compelled to flee from Makkah on account of the severe persecutions of the Quraish. Even there they were followed by a deputation of the persecutors, who, in order to excite the religious hatred of the Christian monarch against the homeless Muslims, represented to the Negus that the fugitives not only denounced the idols of the Arabs but also spoke disparagingly of Jesus Christ. Whereupon, the Muslims being called upon to answer the charge, their leader read out the portion of the chapter "Mary" dealing with Jesus Christ, and the words so impressed the Negus that he wept, and said that Jesus Christ was not one whit more than the Qur'ān

SECTION 12 : **A Warning—Besetting Sins of Previous People**

87 O you who believe, forbid not the good things which Allāh has made lawful for you and exceed not the limits. Surely Allāh loves not those who exceed the limits.[729]

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تُحَرِّمُوْا طَيِّبٰتِ مَآ اَحَلَّ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوْا ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِيْنَ ﴿۸۷﴾

88 And eat of the lawful and good (things) that Allāh has given you, and keep your duty to Allāh, in Whom you believe.

وَكُلُوْا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللّٰهُ حَلٰلًا طَيِّبًا ۪ وَّاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْٓ اَنْتُمْ بِهٖ مُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿۸۸﴾

89 Allāh will not call you to account for that which is vain in your oaths, but He will call you to account for the making of deliberate oaths; so its expiation[730] is the feeding of ten poor men with the average (food) you feed your families with, or their clothing, or the freeing of a neck. But whoso finds not (means) should fast for three days. This is the expiation of your oaths when you swear. And keep your oaths.[731] Thus does Allāh make clear to you His messages that you may give thanks.

لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللّٰهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِيْٓ اَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلٰكِنْ يُّؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا عَقَّدْتُّمُ الْاَيْمَانَ ۚ فَكَفَّارَتُهٗٓ اِطْعَامُ عَشَرَةِ مَسٰكِيْنَ مِنْ اَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعِمُوْنَ اَهْلِيْكُمْ اَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ اَوْ تَحْرِيْرُ رَقَبَةٍ ؕ فَمَنْ لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلٰثَةِ اَيَّامٍ ؕ ذٰلِكَ كَفَّارَةُ اَيْمَانِكُمْ اِذَا حَلَفْتُمْ ؕ وَاحْفَظُوْٓا اَيْمَانَكُمْ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿۸۹﴾

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described him to be. That he subsequently became a true convert to Islām is clearly shown by a funeral service having been held for him by the Holy Prophet when news of his death reached Madīnah (B. 23:4).

729 These words not only denounce such self-denying practices as those adopted by the Christian monks, spoken of in the last section, but also the act of depriving oneself of Divine blessings by falling into evil and slothful habits. Thus, while the Muslims are told on the one hand not to follow the self-imposed restrictions of the Christians, they are at the same time warned that they can enjoy Divine blessings only so long as they strive arduously for them.

730 It is wrong to suppose that this verse sanctions the expiation of all kinds of oaths. Reading it along with the previous verses shows that the oaths referred to are in relation to vows, etc., by which one forbids oneself what is otherwise lawful. The injunction at the end of this verse, *keep your oaths,* also shows that oaths cannot be violated generally, and therefore expiation is only allowed in the case of oaths by which a man deprives himself of some lawful thing or of an occasion of virtue, as in 2:226. It is further evident that the Book which lays stress upon the faithful performance of all kinds of engagements could not allow the violating of agreements which had been confirmed with oaths.

731 The phrase *iḥfaẓū aimāna-kum* bears two interpretations. It means ***keep your oaths,*** i.e. be true to your oaths when you take them; and it also means *guard your oaths,* i.e. do not take oaths unless there is an urgent need.

90 O you who believe, intoxicants and games of chance and (sacrificing to) stones set up and (dividing by) arrows [731a] are only an uncleanness, the devil's work; so shun it that you may succeed.[732]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ
وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِنْ عَمَلِ
الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾

91 The devil desires only to create enmity and hatred among you by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to keep you back from the remembrance of Allāh and from prayer. Will you then keep back?[733]

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ
وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ
عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ ۚ فَهَلْ
أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

92 And obey Allāh and obey the Messenger and be cautious. But if you turn back then know that the duty of Our Messenger is only a clear deliverance of the message.

وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَاحْذَرُوا ۚ
فَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا عَلَىٰ رَسُولِنَا
الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿٩٢﴾

93 On those who believe and do good there is no blame for what they eat,[734] when they keep their duty and believe and do good deeds, then keep their duty and believe, then keep their duty and do good (to others). And Allāh loves the doers of good.

لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا طَعِمُوا إِذَا مَا اتَّقَوْا وَآمَنُوا
وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَآمَنُوا ثُمَّ
اتَّقَوْا وَأَحْسَنُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

731a See v. 3, and 662. 663.

732 This verse totally prohibits all intoxicants and games of chance; and besides, by classing them with sacrifices to stones set up for idols and dividing by arrows, subjects them to the prohibition of v. 3. It is related that when this verse was revealed a crier proclaimed in the streets of Madīnah that wine was prohibited, and in response to this every jar of wine in a Muslim house was emptied, so that wine flowed in the streets (B. 46:20). Never in the history of the world was such a deep-rooted evil as drink so suddenly yet so completely eradicated.

733 Only one very clear reason is here given why intoxicants and games of chance are forbidden. Elsewhere it is clearly stated that in intoxicants and games of chance there is a great sin (2:219).

734 The verse speaks of those who died before the prohibition came. But even if it be taken to refer to all believers, it would not justify doing what is unlawful, because one who believes, does good deeds, and keeps his duty will not approach any prohibited thing. In thrice mentioning belief and regard for duty, the reference is to the threefold duty of man, viz., to Allāh, to himself, and to others. Or, by the repetition of *believing* is meant carrying out belief into practice.

SECTION 13 : **Inviolability of the Ka'bah**

94 O you who believe, Allāh will certainly try you in respect of some game which your hands and your lances can reach, that Allāh may know who fears Him in secret. Whoever exceeds the limit after this, for him is a painful chastisement.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَيَبْلُوَنَّكُمُ اللَّهُ بِشَيْءٍ
مِنَ الصَّيْدِ تَنَالُهُ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَرِمَاحُكُمْ
لِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَخَافُهُ بِالْغَيْبِ ۚ فَمَنِ
اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٤﴾

95 O you who believe, kill not game while you are on pilgrimage.[735] And whoever among you kills it intentionally, the compensation thereof is the like of what he killed, from the cattle, as two just persons among you judge, as an offering to be brought to the Ka'bah, or the expiation thereof is the feeding of the poor or equivalent of it in fasting, that he may taste the unwholesome result of his deed. Allāh pardons what happened in the past. And whoever returns (to it), Allāh will punish him. And Allāh is Mighty, Lord of Retribution.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْتُلُوا الصَّيْدَ
وَأَنْتُمْ حُرُمٌ ۚ وَمَنْ قَتَلَهُ مِنْكُمْ مُتَعَمِّدًا
فَجَزَاءٌ مِثْلُ مَا قَتَلَ مِنَ النَّعَمِ يَحْكُمُ
بِهِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِنْكُمْ هَدْيًا بَالِغَ الْكَعْبَةِ
أَوْ كَفَّارَةٌ طَعَامُ مَسَاكِينَ أَوْ عَدْلُ ذَٰلِكَ
صِيَامًا لِيَذُوقَ وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِ ۗ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَمَّا
سَلَفَ ۚ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَيَنْتَقِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ ۗ
وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ ﴿٩٥﴾

96 Lawful to you is the game of the sea[736] and its food,[737] a provision for you and for the travellers, and the game of the land is forbidden to you so long as you are on pilgrimage, and keep your duty to Allāh, to Whom you shall be gathered.

أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ صَيْدُ الْبَحْرِ وَطَعَامُهُ مَتَاعًا
لَكُمْ وَلِلسَّيَّارَةِ ۖ وَحُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ صَيْدُ
الْبَرِّ مَا دُمْتُمْ حُرُمًا ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي
إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

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735 The prohibition to kill game when on pilgrimage mentioned in vv. 94-96, is a token of respect for the security of the Ka'bah (see v. 97), in addition to being a measure necessary for the safety of life in such a large gathering.

736 *Baḥr* is used here in an extensive sense, and by the game of the sea is meant all water game, whether sea, river, pond, or lake.

737 The *ṭa'ām* (lit. *food*) of the sea is here distinguished from its game, and means *what is found, the sea or the river having thrown it (on dry land)* (B. 72:12), or *what is left by the water having receded from it, for the catching*

97 Allāh has made the Ka'bah,[738] the Sacred House, a means of support for the people,[739] and the sacred month and the offerings and the victims with garlands. That is that you may know that Allāh knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, and that Allāh is Knower of all things.

جَعَلَ اللّٰهُ الْكَعْبَةَ الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ قِيٰمًا
لِّلنَّاسِ وَالشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَالْهَدْيَ
وَالْقَلَآئِدَ ؕ ذٰلِكَ لِتَعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَعْلَمُ
مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ
بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۹۷﴾

98 Know that Allāh is severe in requiting (evil) and that Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

اِعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ وَاَنَّ
اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۹۸﴾ ؕ

99 The duty of the Messenger is only to deliver (the message). And Allāh knows what you do openly and what you hide.

مَا عَلَى الرَّسُوْلِ اِلَّا الْبَلٰغُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ
مَا تُبْدُوْنَ وَمَا تَكْتُمُوْنَ ﴿۹۹﴾

100 Say: The bad and the good are not equal, though the abundance of the bad may please thee. So keep your duty to Allāh, O men of understanding, that you may succeed.

قُلْ لَّا يَسْتَوِي الْخَبِيْثُ وَالطَّيِّبُ وَلَوْ
اَعْجَبَكَ كَثْرَةُ الْخَبِيْثِ ۚ فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ يٰٓاُولِي
الْاَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿۱۰۰﴾ ع

SECTION 14 : **Some Directions for Muslims**

101 O you who believe, ask not about things which if made known to you would give you trouble; and if you ask about them when the Qur'ān is being revealed, they will be made known to you. Allāh pardons this; and Allāh is Forgiving, Forbearing.[740]

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَسْـَٔلُوْا عَنْ اَشْيَآءَ
اِنْ تُبْدَ لَكُمْ تَسُؤْكُمْ ۚ وَاِنْ تَسْـَٔلُوْا عَنْهَا
حِيْنَ يُنَزَّلُ الْقُرْاٰنُ تُبْدَ لَكُمْ ؕ عَفَا اللّٰهُ
عَنْهَا ؕ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ حَلِيْمٌ ﴿۱۰۱﴾

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of which no struggle is needed (Rz). According to I'Ab, *ṭa'ām* means *what dies of itself* in water — (it is allowed) unless it stinks (B. 72:12).

738 *Ka'bah*, from *ka'ba*, meaning *it swelled or became prominent*, is so called because of *its prominence*, or it is a prophetical name showing that it shall forever

739, 740, see next page.

102 A people before you indeed asked such questions, then became disbelievers therein.[741]

قَدْ سَأَلَهَا قَوْمٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَصْبَحُوْا بِهَا كٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

103 Allāh has not ordained a *baḥīrah* or a *sā'ibah* or a *waṣīlah* or a *ḥāmī*, but those who disbelieve fabricate a lie against Allāh. And most of them understand not.[742]

مَا جَعَلَ اللّٰهُ مِنْۢ بَحِيْرَةٍ وَّلَا سَآئِبَةٍ وَّلَا وَصِيْلَةٍ وَّلَا حَامٍ ۙ وَّلٰكِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا يَفْتَرُوْنَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ ۖ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

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have eminence in the world. *Al-Bait al-Ḥarām* (*The Sacred or Inviolable House*) is also one of its names, and among the Arabs it was known as *Bait Allāh*, or *the House of Allāh*. The building proper is 55 feet by 50 feet, but the whole courtyard in which it stands measures 530 feet by 500 feet.

739 This is a prophetic announcement that the Ka'bah will forever remain a support or stay for men, where pilgrims will flock from all parts of the world. The reference to this prophecy is elucidated in the concluding words: "This is that you may know that Allāh knows whatever is in the heavens and, whatever is in the earth"; that is, the fulfilment of this prophecy in all future ages will be a sign of the great knowledge of Allāh, Who pronounced it at a time when the Ka'bah was hardly known beyond the environs of Arabia; see 469.

740 As Islām discouraged rigorous practices, such as monastic life, it also prohibited questions relating to details on many points which would require this or that practice to be made obligatory, and much was left to individual will or the circumstances of the time and place. The exercise of judgment occupies a very important place in Islām and this gives ample scope to different nations and communities to frame laws for themselves to meet new and changed situations. The Ḥadīth shows that the Prophet also discouraged questions on details in which a Muslim could choose a way for himself (B. 3:28, 29).

741 It does not refer to a particular people. The history of previous nations shows that the statement is generally true.

742 The liberation of certain animals in honour of idols was a practice among the Arabs, and as Islām uprooted every vestige of idolatry, this practice is condemned here. *Baḥīrah* (from *baḥara*, meaning *he cut* or *slit*) means *a she-camel having her ear slit.* When a she-camel (according to some also a *ewe* or a *she-goat*) had brought forth five (or seven, or ten) young ones, the last of these, if a male, was slaughtered, but if a female, her ear was slit. According to others it was the mother; she being also exempted from slaughter and from carrying burdens (LL).

Sā'ibah (from *sāba*, which means *it ran of itself*) signifies any beast left to pasture without attention. According to some, it was the mother of a *baḥīrah*, or a she-camel which, having brought forth females at ten successive births, was set at liberty to pasture where she would, and was not ridden nor was her milk taken (LL).

Waṣīlah (from *waṣala*, i.e. *he connected* or *joined*) means a *she-goat* which brought forth twins, a male and a female; when the male was brought forth alone it was slaughtered to the idols, the female alone being kept; but in the case of the male and the female being born twins, the male was considered to be joined to the female, and was not therefore sacrificed to the gods (Rz).

Ḥāmī (from *ḥamā-hu*, i.e. *he prohibited* or *interdicted it* or *protected* or *guarded it*) means *a stallion-camel that has prohibited* or *interdicted his back* (to be used for bearing a rider or any burden); *that is left at liberty and not made any use of; whose offspring in the second degree of descent has been fertile* (LL).

104 And when it is said to them, Come to that which Allāh has revealed and to the Messenger, they say: Sufficient for us is that wherein we found our fathers. What! even though their fathers knew nothing and had no guidance!

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ
وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ قَالُوا حَسْبُنَا مَا وَجَدْنَا
عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا ۚ أَوَلَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ
لَا يَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

105 O you who believe, take care of your souls — he who errs cannot harm you when you are on the right way. To Allāh you will all return, so He will inform you of what you did.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۖ لَا
يَضُرُّكُم مَّن ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ ۚ إِلَى
اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا
كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

106 O you who believe, call to witness between you, when death draws nigh to one of you, at the time of making the will, two just persons from among you, or two others from among others than you,[743] if you are travelling in the land and the calamity of death befalls you. You should detain them after the prayer. Then if you doubt (them), they shall both swear by Allāh (saying): We will not take for it a price, though there be a relative nor will we hide the testimony of Allāh,[744] for then certainly we shall be sinners.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا شَهَادَةُ بَيْنِكُمْ إِذَا
حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ حِينَ الْوَصِيَّةِ
اثْنَانِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ أَوْ آخَرَانِ مِنْ
غَيْرِكُمْ إِنْ أَنتُمْ ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَأَصَابَتْكُم مُّصِيبَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۚ تَحْبِسُونَهُمَا
مِن بَعْدِ الصَّلَاةِ فَيُقْسِمَانِ بِاللَّهِ إِنِ
ارْتَبْتُمْ لَا نَشْتَرِي بِهِ ثَمَنًا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا
قُرْبَىٰ ۙ وَلَا نَكْتُمُ شَهَادَةَ اللَّهِ إِنَّا إِذًا
لَّمِنَ الْآثِمِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

107 If it be discovered that they are guilty of a sin, two others shall stand up in their place from among

فَإِنْ عُثِرَ عَلَىٰ أَنَّهُمَا اسْتَحَقَّا إِثْمًا فَآخَرَانِ
يَقُومَانِ مَقَامَهُمَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَحَقَّ

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743 The following story is related in connection with this verse. Two brothers, both Christians, Tamīm Dārī and 'Adī, were entrusted by their dying Muslim companion Budail, in Syria, with certain property to be made over to his relatives on their return to Madīnah. The two brothers, however, stole a cup of silver, making over the remaining property; the relatives found a complete list disclosing the existence of the stolen cup of silver as being part of the original property, and thus the evidence of the Christian brothers was shown to be false.

This story abundantly proves that so late as the revelation of this chapter, Muslim and Christian relations were still friendly. It further demonstrates that the evidence of the followers of an alien religion is admissible according to the Holy Qur'ān.

744 "The testimony of Allāh" stands for the testimony which Allāh has enjoined to be borne uprightly.

those against whom the first two have been guilty of a sin; so they shall swear by Allāh: Certainly our testimony is truer than the testimony of those two, and we have not exceeded the limit, for then surely we should be unjust.

عَلَيْهِمُ الْاَوْلَيٰنِ فَيُقْسِمٰنِ بِاللّٰهِ لَشَهَادَتُنَآ اَحَقُّ مِنْ شَهَادَتِهِمَا وَمَا اعْتَدَيْنَآ ۖ اِنَّآ اِذًا لَّمِنَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

108 Thus it is more probable that they will give true testimony[745] or fear that other oaths will be taken after their oaths. And keep your duty to Allāh and hearken. And Allāh guides not the transgressing people.

ذٰلِكَ اَدْنٰٓى اَنْ يَّاْتُوْا بِالشَّهَادَةِ عَلٰى وَجْهِهَآ اَوْ يَخَافُوْٓا اَنْ تُرَدَّ اَيْمَانٌۢ بَعْدَ اَيْمَانِهِمْ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَاسْمَعُوْا ۗ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

SECTION 15: **Christian Love of this Life**

109 On the day when Allāh will gather together the messengers and say: What was the response you received? They will say: We have no knowledge. Surely Thou art the great Knower of the unseen.[746]

يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُ اللّٰهُ الرُّسُلَ فَيَقُوْلُ مَاذَآ اُجِبْتُمْ ۗ قَالُوْا لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا ۗ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوْبِ ﴿١٠٩﴾

110 When Allāh will say: O Jesus, son of Mary, remember My favour to thee and to thy mother, when I strengthened thee with the Holy Spirit; thou spokest to people in the cradle and in old age, and when I taught thee the Book and the Wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel, and when thou didst determine out of clay a thing like the form of a bird by My permission, then thou didst breathe into it and it became a bird by My permission; and thou didst heal the

اِذْ قَالَ اللّٰهُ يٰعِيْسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ اذْكُرْ نِعْمَتِيْ عَلَيْكَ وَعَلٰى وَالِدَتِكَ ۘ اِذْ اَيَّدْتُّكَ بِرُوْحِ الْقُدُسِ ۗ تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِى الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا ۚ وَاِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرٰىةَ وَالْاِنْجِيْلَ ۚ وَاِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطِّيْنِ كَهَيْـَٔةِ الطَّيْرِ بِاِذْنِيْ فَتَنْفُخُ فِيْهَا فَتَكُوْنُ طَيْرًا ۢ بِاِذْنِيْ وَتُبْرِئُ الْاَكْمَهَ

745 A statement is said to be *'alā wajhi-hī* when it is made in a proper manner (LL, under *qaṣṣ*). The word *wajh* means *face* as well as *drift, mode* or *course*. The giving of testimony *'alā wajhi-hā* therefore means *giving it truly* or *according to facts*.

746 The question is, Did those to whom you were sent accept your message and remain true to it, or was it otherwise? The answer of the prophets is that only Allāh knew how their message was received, because they could not say how far its rejecters were guilty, nor how far the accepters of the message remained true to it after their death.

blind and the leprous by My permission; and when thou didst raise the dead by My permission;[747] and when I withheld the Children of Israel from thee when thou camest to them with clear arguments — but those of them who disbelieved said: This is nothing but clear enchantment.

وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي ۖ وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِي ۖ وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَنكَ إِذْ جِئْتَهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ إِنْ هَٰذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

111 And when I revealed to the disciples, saying, Believe in Me and My messenger, they said: We believe and bear witness that we submit.

وَإِذْ أَوْحَيْتُ إِلَى الْحَوَارِيِّينَ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِي وَبِرَسُولِي ۖ قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَاشْهَدْ بِأَنَّنَا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

112 When the disciples said: O Jesus, son of Mary, is thy Lord able to send down food to us from heaven?[748] He said: Keep your duty to Allāh if you are believers.

إِذْ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَن يُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ ۖ قَالَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾

113 They said: We desire to eat of it, and that our hearts should be at rest, and that we may know that thou hast indeed spoken truth to us, and that we may be witnesses thereof.

قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَن نَّأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُنَا وَنَعْلَمَ أَن قَدْ صَدَقْتَنَا وَنَكُونَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ ﴿١١٣﴾

114 Jesus, son of Mary, said: O Allāh, our Lord, send down to us food from heaven which should be to us an ever-recurring happiness[749] to the first of us and the last of us, and a sign from Thee, and give us sustenance and Thou art the Best of the sustainers.[750]

قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا أَنزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيدًا لِّأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا وَآيَةً مِّنكَ ۖ وَارْزُقْنَا وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾

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747 For being strengthened with the Holy Spirit, see 128; for speaking in the cradle and in old age, as also for the significance of *kahl,* see 426; for the miracles spoken of here, see 428, 429, 430; for the withholding of the Israelites, see 435, 436.

748 *Mā'idah* is from *māda,* which has two meanings: (1) *it became in a state of motion,* and (2) *he conferred a benefit or favour on him.* According to R, *māda-nī* means *he gave me food,* and *mā'idah* means both, *a table with food on it,* and *food.* It also means *knowledge,* because knowledge is the nutriment for hearts, as food is the nutriment for bodies (R). A table without food is not called *mā'idah* (LL).

749 The word *'Īd* used here means a festival, the literal significance being *an ever recurring happiness* or *source of enjoyment.*

750 This passage seems to refer to the well-known prayer for *daily bread,* which Jesus appears to have included in the famous Lord's prayer on account of

115 Allāh said: Surely I will send it down to you, but whoever disbelieves afterwards from among you, I will chastise him with a chastisement with which I will not chastise any one among the nations.[750a]

قَالَ اللّٰهُ اِنِّیْ مُنَزِّلُهَا عَلَیْكُمْ ۚ فَمَنْ
یَّكْفُرْ بَعْدُ مِنْكُمْ فَاِنِّیْۤ اُعَذِّبُهٗ عَذَابًا
لَّاۤ اُعَذِّبُهٗۤ اَحَدًا مِّنَ الْعٰلَمِیْنَ ۱۱۵

SECTION 16: **False Doctrines introduced after Jesus' Death**

116 And when Allāh will say: O Jesus, son of Mary, didst thou say to men, Take me and my mother for two gods besides Allāh?[751] He will say: Glory be to Thee! it was not for me to say what I had no right to (say). If I had said it, Thou wouldst indeed

وَ اِذْ قَالَ اللّٰهُ یٰعِیْسَی ابْنَ مَرْیَمَ ءَاَنْتَ
قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُوْنِیْ وَ اُمِّیَ اِلٰهَیْنِ
مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ قَالَ سُبْحٰنَكَ مَا یَكُوْنُ
لِیْۤ اَنْ اَقُوْلَ مَا لَیْسَ لِیْ ۗ بِحَقٍّ ؕ اِنْ
كُنْتُ قُلْتُهٗ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهٗ ؕ تَعْلَمُ مَا فِیْ

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the earthly inclinations of his disciples. The food of earth has no doubt been granted in abundance to the Christians, but this has deprived them of the heavenly food. Compare the Muslim's prayer in the opening chapter which craves not for bread but for the right path. The form of the prayer, that it should be *an ever-recurring happiness,* shows clearly that the prayer was not for a table laden with provisions, as is generally supposed. As to its being sent down from heaven, it should be borne in mind that, in the language of the Holy Qur'ān, everything is with God and is sent down to men. Compare 15:21: "And there is not a thing but with Us are the treasures of it, and We send it down only in a known measure."

750a This prophecy is being fulfilled before our eyes. The terrible calamities which the two World Wars have brought to humanity, and especially to the Christian nations, are *unprecedented* in human history — *a chastisement with which I will not chastise anyone among the nations.* And what is this punishment due to? The calamities which have befallen the world to-day, are due to the mad race for bread and for the wealth of this world. The neglect of the higher values of life and running blindly after material comforts has already brought to the world a ruin which it has never witnessed before, and nobody knows what catastrophe is yet in store for it.

751 From this description of Mary being taken for a god by the Christians, some Christian critics of the Qur'ān conclude that the doctrine of the Trinity according to the Qur'ān consists of three persons — God, Jesus and Mary. But this is an absolutely unwarranted conclusion. Mary is no doubt spoken of as being taken for an object of worship by the Christians; but the doctrine of the Trinity is not mentioned here, while the Divinity of Mary is not mentioned where the Trinity is spoken of. The doctrine and practice of Mariolatry, as it is called by Protestant controversialists, is too well-known. In the catechism of the Roman Church the following doctrines are to be found: "That she is truly the mother of God, and the second Eve, by whose means we have received blessing and life; that she is the mother of Pity and very specially our advocate; that her images are of the utmost utility" (*Ency.* Br. 11th ed., vol. 17, p. 813). It is also stated that her intercessions are directly appealed to in the Litany. And further, that there were certain women in Thrace, Scythia, and Arabia who were in the habit of worshipping the virgin as a goddess, the offer of a cake being one of the features of their worship. "From the time of the council of Ephesus (held in 431),"

have known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I know not what is in Thy mind. Surely Thou art the great Knower of the unseen.

نَفْسِي وَلَآ أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ﴿١١٦﴾

117 I said to them naught save as Thou didst command me: Serve Allāh, my Lord and your Lord; and I was a witness of them so long as I was among them, but when Thou didst cause me to die Thou wast the Watcher over them. And Thou art Witness of all things.[752]

مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَآ أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِۦٓ أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ ۚ وَكُنتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَّا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنتَ أَنتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَأَنتَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿١١٧﴾

118 If Thou chastise them, surely they are Thy servants; and if Thou protect them, surely Thou art the Mighty, the Wise.[752a]

إِن تُعَذِّبْهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ ۖ وَإِن تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١١٨﴾

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says the same writer, "to exhibit figures of the virgin and child became the approved expression of orthodoxy. . . . Of the growth of the Marian cultus, alike in the east and in the west, after the decision at Ephesus it would be impossible to trace the history. . . . Justinian in one of his laws bespeaks her advocacy for the Empire, and he inscribes the high altar in the new church of St. Sophia with her name. Narses looks to her directions on the field of battle. The Emperor Heraclius bears her image on his banner. John of Damascus speaks of her as the Sovereign lady to whom the whole creation has been made subject by her son. Peter Damian recognizes her as the most exalted of all creatures and apostrophizes her as deified and endowed with all power in heaven and in earth, yet not forgetful of our race." The Christian world had in fact felt "the need for a mediator to deal with the very mediator", and thus Mary was raised to the throne of Divinity along with Jesus. The recent proclamation of the Pope relating to the bodily assumption of Mary supports this conclusion, and will raise a new question for the Christian world whether Trinity really consists of God, Jesus and Mary?

752 This verse is a conclusive proof that Jesus died a natural death, and is not now alive in heaven. Here Jesus says that so long as he was among his followers he was a witness of their condition, and he did not find them holding the belief in his Divinity. The logical conclusion of this statement is that the false doctrine of his Divinity was introduced into the Christian faith *after his death*, after "*Thou didst cause me to die*"; see further 436.

A saying of the Holy Prophet is recorded in which the Holy Prophet speaks concerning himself in the very words which are here put into the mouth of Jesus. He said that he would be shown on the day of Resurrection some men who had gone against his teachings, and "I would say what the righteous servant said: I was a witness of them so long as I was among them, but when Thou didst cause me to die, Thou wast the Watcher over them" (B. 60:8).

This saying shows clearly that as it was after the death of the Holy Prophet that his followers perverted his teachings, so it was after the death of Jesus that his followers perverted his teachings.

Compare John 17:3: "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee,

752a, see next page.

119 Allāh will say: This is a day when their truth will profit the truthful ones. For them are Gardens wherein flow rivers abiding therein for ever. Allāh is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Allāh. That is the mighty achievement.

قَالَ اللّٰهُ هٰذَا يَوْمُ يَنْفَعُ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ صِدْقُهُمْ ؕ لَهُمْ جَنّٰتٌ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَاۤ اَبَدًا ؕ رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوْا عَنْهُ ؕ ذٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيْمُ ﴿۱۱۹﴾

120 Allāh's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and whatever is in them; and He is Possessor of power over all things.

لِلّٰهِ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَمَا فِيْهِنَّ ؕ وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَیْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿۱۲۰﴾

the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent"; and John 17:12: "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name".

752a The words *taghfir la-hum* (*protect* or *forgive them*) refer to their final protection which will be granted to the Christian nations through acceptance of Islām. If the forgiveness of sins was meant, the Divine attributes referred to would have been those speaking of forgiveness and mercy, as *al-Ghafūr, al-Raḥīm,* i.e. Forgiving, Merciful. Instead of that the attributes referred to are *al-'Azīz al-Ḥakīm,* or the Mighty, the Wise, which generally indicate that some great purpose would be achieved and a transformation would be brought about. Thus Sudī, one of the earliest commentators says, commenting on the words *taghfir la hum*: "If Thou protect them and thus bring them over from Christianity to the guidance of Islām" (IJ).

سُورَةُ الأَنعَامِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٦)

CHAPTER 6

Al-An'ām : THE CATTLE

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 20 *sections*; 166 *verses*)

The name of this chapter is taken from the mention of *cattle* in connection with certain superstitions and idolatrous practices of the Arabs, the abolition of which was needed to establish the doctrine of Divine Unity in all its purity. The object of Islām was not simply to preach Unity, but to make it the basis of a Muslim's practical life, and so to uproot all idolatrous practices.

The last chapter deals towards its close with the Christian doctrine of the deification of Jesus, and hence this chapter is introduced to deal at length with the doctrine of Divine Unity and its ultimate triumph, not only over idolatry, but over all kinds of polytheism. The Prophet had preached this noble doctrine for twelve whole years, without apparently causing any great change in the national idol-worship of the people. To an outward observer, therefore, the cause of the Prophet seemed an utter failure, yet so marvellous was his faith in the ultimate triumph of Divine Unity that no obstacle, no apparent failure, had shaken it in the least, and the words with which this chapter opens were uttered with unshakable confidence in the ultimate triumph of his cause, as if he had never received the least check in his onward course, and as though the goal was not only within sight, but close at hand.

Opening with a forcible declaration of the ultimate triumph of Divine Unity, and referring to the greatness of His mercy in the second section, the doctrine of Unity being always combined with the doctrine of the unique mercy of the Divine Being, it refers in the third to the polytheists' own evidence against their polytheism. The rejection of this great truth and its consequences are then stated in the fourth and fifth sections, mentioning incidentally the reward of believers in the sixth section. In the two succeeding sections the Divine judgment is declared to be imminent. The ninth, while calling attention to the necessity of submission to the Divine Being — the pith of Abraham's religion — mentions the arguments by which Abraham, that great Patriarch who may be said to be the father of monotheism, convinced his countrymen of the futility of the worship of any object other than Allāh. The tenth section mentions the names of seventeen other prophets who preached the Unity of the Divine Being, and the Holy Prophet is enjoined to follow in their footsteps. The eleventh section draws attention to the truth of the Divine revelation of the Qur'ān, which was now the bearer of that noble message of Divine Unity to mankind, and the next speaks of the ultimate triumph of that message. The thirteenth section states that this triumph would be brought about by a gradual progress, and the fourteenth refers to the polytheists' opposition. The plans adopted by the chief opponents are then hinted at in the fifteenth, and their failure prophesied in the sixteenth section, which deals with some of the evils of idolatry. The next two refer to the polytheists' self-imposed superstitious restrictions against the use of the flesh of certain animals, and the prohibited foods. The guiding rules of life are then briefly stated in the nineteenth section, while the chapter is closed by drawing attention to the great goal before the faithful; because, undoubtedly, the doctrine of Unity raised the ideal of human life to a very high standard.

The whole of this chapter was revealed in one portion (I'Ab-Rz). It is generally considered to belong to the last year of the Holy Prophet's life at Makkah.

SECTION 1 **Ultimate Triumph of Divine Unity**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Praise be to Allāh, Who created the heavens and the earth, and made darkness and light. Yet those who disbelieve set up equals to their Lord.[753]

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ الظُّلُمٰتِ وَالنُّوْرَ ۬ ثُمَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُوْنَ ①

2 He it is Who created you from clay, then He decreed a term. And there is a term named with Him ; still you doubt.[754]

هُوَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ طِيْنٍ ثُمَّ قَضٰىٓ اَجَلًا ؕ وَاَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى عِنْدَهٗ ثُمَّ اَنْتُمْ تَمْتَرُوْنَ ②

3 And He is Allāh in the heavens and in the earth. He knows your secret (thoughts) and your open (words), and He knows what you earn.[755]

وَهُوَ اللّٰهُ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَفِي الْاَرْضِ ؕ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّكُمْ وَجَهْرَكُمْ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُوْنَ ③

4 And there comes not to them any message of the messages of their Lord but they turn away from it.

وَمَا تَاْتِيْهِمْ مِّنْ اٰيَةٍ مِّنْ اٰيٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ اِلَّا كَانُوْا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِيْنَ ④

5 So they rejected the truth when it came to them, but soon will come to them the news of that which they mocked.

فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوْا بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ ؕ فَسَوْفَ يَاْتِيْهِمْ اَنْۢبٰٓؤُا مَا كَانُوْا بِهٖ يَسْتَهْزِءُوْنَ ⑤

6 See they not how many a generation We destroyed before them, whom We had established in the earth as We have not established you, and We sent the clouds pouring abundant rain on them, and We made the rivers flow beneath them? Then We destroyed them for their sins, and raised up after them another generation.

اَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَمْ اَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِّنْ قَرْنٍ مَّكَّنّٰهُمْ فِي الْاَرْضِ مَا لَمْ نُمَكِّنْ لَّكُمْ وَاَرْسَلْنَا السَّمَآءَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّدْرَارًا ۪ وَّجَعَلْنَا الْاَنْهٰرَ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ فَاَهْلَكْنٰهُمْ بِذُنُوْبِهِمْ وَاَنْشَاْنَا مِنْۢ بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا اٰخَرِيْنَ ⑥

7 And if We had sent down to thee a writing on paper, then they had touched it with their hands, those who

وَلَوْ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ كِتٰبًا فِيْ قِرْطَاسٍ فَلَمَسُوْهُ بِاَيْدِيْهِمْ لَقَالَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا

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753 The words that Allāh is the Maker of darkness and light are directed against the dualistic doctrine of the Magian religion, which holds light and

754, 755, see next page.

disbelieve would have said: This is nothing but clear enchantment.[756]

إِنْ هٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٧﴾

8 And they say: Why has not an angel been sent down to him? And if We send down an angel, the matter would be decided and then they would not be respited.[757]

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَآ أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ ؕ وَلَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا مَلَكًا لَّقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ ثُمَّ لَا يُنْظَرُوْنَ ﴿٨﴾

9 And if We had made him an angel, We would certainly have made him a man, and (thus) made confused to them what they confuse.[758]

وَلَوْ جَعَلْنٰهُ مَلَكًا لَّجَعَلْنٰهُ رَجُلًا وَّلَلَبَسْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَّا يَلْبِسُوْنَ ﴿٩﴾

10 And certainly messengers before thee were derided, but that which they derided encompassed those of them who scoffed.[759]

وَلَقَدِ اسْتُهْزِئَ بِرُسُلٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ فَحَاقَ بِالَّذِيْنَ سَخِرُوْا مِنْهُمْ مَّا كَانُوْا بِهٖ يَسْتَهْزِءُوْنَ ﴿١٠﴾

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darkness to be two co-eternal principles. The religion of Islām is the purest monotheism, and thus it holds that the ultimate cause of all things is the Great Maker of the heavens and the earth. Pure monotheism holds out before man the bright hope that, as goodness is inherent in the Divine Being, it is also the goal to which the creation moves on; while dualism considers the prevalence of evil to be necessary.

754 The first term is that of life and the second the Resurrection. All men are here said to be created from clay, which means, in the case of Adam as well as men generally, that the earth is the original source, and dust the first stage, of life.

755 Life in Resurrection spoken of in the previous verse is here stated to be the result of man's own actions, which, whether done secretly or openly, are known to God. It is out of *what you earn* that He shapes a new life for you.

756 Compare 4:153: "The People of the Book ask thee to bring down to them a book from heaven". So far removed are people from spiritual realities that they want to see them in a physical form. If truth had been sent down to man in the physical form of a book, and had not been revealed to the mind of man, it could not bring about a transformation in the minds of men. But even if it had taken a physical shape, they would have called it an enchantment, and still rejected it.

757 The Divine message was undoubtedly brought by an angel, but here again they wanted to see the spiritual reality of the angel in a physical form. The presence of angels was felt by the righteous in the transformation which they worked in their hearts but the hearts of the wicked were impervious to all good, and hence the only form in which the angels could make their presence felt to them was by punishing them for their evil deeds. Hence the coming of the angels to the guilty is always spoken of in the Qur'ān as being synonymous with the infliction of the punishment with which they were threatened. Compare 2:210, and v. 159.

758 The meaning is that if an angel were made a messenger to mankind, he would doubtless appear in the form of man inasmuch as the physical eye cannot see angels. Moreover only a human being could serve as a model for men. Thus in case an angel appeared in the shape of a man, there would still be the same confusion in their minds as when a human being was entrusted with the Divine message.

759 They ridiculed the idea of the Prophet and the believers being

SECTION 2: **Greatness of Divine Mercy**

11 Say: Travel in the land, then see what was the end of the rejectors.

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ انْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ⑪

12 Say: To whom belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth? Say: To Allāh. He has ordained mercy on Himself.[760] He will certainly gather you on the Resurrection day — there is no doubt about it. Those who have lost their souls will not believe.

قُلْ لِمَنْ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ قُلْ لِلّٰهِ ۚ كَتَبَ عَلٰى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ ۚ لَيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلٰى يَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۚ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ⑫

13 And to Him belongs whatever dwells in the night and the day. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing.

وَلَهُ مَا سَكَنَ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ ۚ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ⑬

14 Say: Shall I take for a friend other than Allāh, the Originator of the heavens and the earth, and He feeds and is not fed? Say: I am commanded to be the first of those who submit. And be thou not of the polytheists.

قُلْ أَغَيْرَ اللّٰهِ أَتَّخِذُ وَلِيًّا فَاطِرِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ يُطْعِمُ وَلَا يُطْعَمُ ۗ قُلْ إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ أَوَّلَ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ⑭

15 Say: Surely I fear, if I disobey my Lord, the chastisement of a grievous day.

قُلْ إِنِّي أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّي عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ⑮

16 He from whom it is averted on that day, Allāh indeed has had mercy on him. And this is a manifest achievement.

مَنْ يُصْرَفْ عَنْهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَقَدْ رَحِمَهُ ۚ وَذٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْمُبِينُ ⑯

17 And if Allāh touch thee with affliction, there is none to remove it but He. And if He touch thee with good, He is Possessor of power over all things.[761]

وَإِنْ يَمْسَسْكَ اللّٰهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَإِنْ يَمْسَسْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ⑰

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triumphant. Truth had always triumphed, they are told, and it would triumph even now.

760 The words *He has ordained mercy on Himself* imply that mercy is in fact His very nature. The evidence of Divine mercy is manifest in the physical world: He has created all things for the benefit of man. Would He not deal equally mercifully with man in his spiritual needs and send a revelation to guide him?

761 I.e. Allāh, being All-powerful, will bring good to you.

18 And He is the Supreme, above His servants. And He is the Wise, the Aware.

وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهٖ ۚ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيْمُ الْخَبِيْرُ ﴿١٨﴾

19 Say: What thing is the weightiest in testimony? Say: Allāh is witness between you and me. And this Qur'ān has been revealed to me that with it I may warn you and whomsoever it reaches.[762] Do you really bear witness that there are other gods with Allāh? Say: I bear not witness. Say: He is only One God, and surely I am innocent of that which you set up (with Him).

قُلْ اَيُّ شَيْءٍ اَكْبَرُ شَهَادَةً ۖ قُلِ اللّٰهُ ۙ شَهِيْدٌۢ بَيْنِيْ وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۚ وَاُوْحِيَ اِلَيَّ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنُ لِاُنْذِرَكُمْ بِهٖ وَمَنْۢ بَلَغَ ۭ اَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَشْهَدُوْنَ اَنَّ مَعَ اللّٰهِ اٰلِهَةً اُخْرٰى ۭ قُلْ لَّآ اَشْهَدُ ۚ قُلْ اِنَّمَا هُوَ اِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ وَّاِنَّنِيْ بَرِيْٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 Those whom We have given the Book recognize him as they recognize their sons.[763] Those who have lost their souls — they will not believe.

اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ يَعْرِفُوْنَهٗ كَمَا يَعْرِفُوْنَ اَبْنَآءَهُمْ ۘ اَلَّذِيْنَ خَسِرُوْٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٢٠﴾

SECTION 3: **Polytheists' Witness against Themselves**

21 And who is more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allāh or gives the lie to His messages? Surely the wrongdoers will not be successful.

وَمَنْ اَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا اَوْ كَذَّبَ بِاٰيٰتِهٖ ۭ اِنَّهٗ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 And on the day We gather them all together, then We shall say to those who set up gods (with Allāh): Where are your associate-gods whom you asserted?

وَيَوْمَ نَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيْعًا ثُمَّ نَقُوْلُ لِلَّذِيْنَ اَشْرَكُوْٓا اَيْنَ شُرَكَاۗؤُكُمُ الَّذِيْنَ كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُوْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 Then their excuse[764] would be nothing but that they would say: By Allāh, our Lord! we were not polytheists.

ثُمَّ لَمْ تَكُنْ فِتْنَتُهُمْ اِلَّآ اَنْ قَالُوْا وَاللّٰهِ رَبِّنَا مَا كُنَّا مُشْرِكِيْنَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 See how they lie against their own souls, and that which they forged shall fail them!

اُنْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَذَبُوْا عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَّا كَانُوْا يَفْتَرُوْنَ ﴿٢٤﴾

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762 The Holy Prophet was thus a warner, not for the Arabs only, but for all people whom the Qur'ān may reach, i.e. for the whole world.

763 For *as they recognize their sons*, see 190.

764 *Fitnah*, according to IJ, means here either *answer* or *excuse*, the answer or the excuse being so called because of its being *a lie*.

25 And of them is he who hearkens to thee and We have cast veils over their hearts so that they understand it not and a deafness into their ears. And (even) if they see every sign they will not believe in it.[765] So much so that when they come to thee they only dispute with thee — those who disbelieve say: This is naught but stories of the ancients.

وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَسْتَمِعُ إِلَيْكَ ۚ وَجَعَلْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَن يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِيٓ ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا ۚ وَإِن يَرَوْا كُلَّ ءَايَةٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَا ۚ حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءُوكَ يُجَادِلُونَكَ يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّآ أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 And they forbid (others) from it, and they keep away from it; and they ruin none but their own souls while they perceive not.

وَهُمْ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ وَيَنْـَٔوْنَ عَنْهُ ۚ وَإِن يُهْلِكُونَ إِلَّآ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And if thou couldst see when they are made to stand before the Fire, and say: Would that we were sent back! We would not reject the messages of our Lord but would be of the believers.

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذْ وُقِفُوا عَلَى النَّارِ فَقَالُوا يَٰلَيْتَنَا نُرَدُّ وَلَا نُكَذِّبَ بِـَٔايَٰتِ رَبِّنَا وَنَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 Nay, that which they concealed before will become manifest to them. And if they were sent back, they would certainly go back to that which they are forbidden, and surely they are liars.[766]

بَلْ بَدَا لَهُم مَّا كَانُوا يُخْفُونَ مِن قَبْلُ ۖ وَلَوْ رُدُّوا لَعَادُوا لِمَا نُهُوا عَنْهُ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 And they say: There is nothing but our life of this world and we shall not be raised again.

وَقَالُوٓا إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَبْعُوثِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 And if thou couldst see when they are made to stand before their Lord! He will say: Is not this the truth? They will say: Yea, by our Lord! He will say: Taste then the chastisement because you disbelieved.

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰٓ إِذْ وُقِفُوا عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ قَالَ أَلَيْسَ هَٰذَا بِالْحَقِّ ۚ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ وَرَبِّنَا ۚ قَالَ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

765 Veils were cast over their hearts because they would not believe even if they saw all the signs. As the words that follow show, they came to the Prophet, not for the purpose of listening to and pondering over what he said, but to dispute with him. The veils were due to their own actions; see 24.

766 The evil consequences of their deeds were hidden in this life, but they

SECTION 4 : Rejection of the Truth

31. They are losers indeed who reject the meeting with Allāh, until when the hour[767] comes upon them suddenly, they will say: O our grief for our neglecting it! And they bear their burdens on their backs. Now surely evil is that which they bear!

قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِلِقَآءِ اللّٰهِ ؕ حَتّٰۤى إِذَا جَآءَتْهُمُ السَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً قَالُوْا يٰحَسْرَتَنَا عَلٰى مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِيْهَا ۙ وَهُمْ يَحْمِلُوْنَ أَوْزَارَهُمْ عَلٰى ظُهُوْرِهِمْ ؕ أَلَا سَآءَ مَا يَزِرُوْنَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 And this world's life is naught but a play and an idle sport. And certainly the abode of the Hereafter is better for those who keep their duty. Do you not then understand?

وَمَا الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَآ إِلَّا لَعِبٌ وَّلَهْوٌ ؕ وَلَلدَّارُ الْاٰخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِيْنَ يَتَّقُوْنَ ؕ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 We know indeed that what they say grieves thee, for surely they give not thee the lie, but the wrongdoers give the lie to Allāh's messages.[769]

قَدْ نَعْلَمُ إِنَّهٗ لَيَحْزُنُكَ الَّذِيْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يُكَذِّبُوْنَكَ وَلٰكِنَّ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ يَجْحَدُوْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 And messengers indeed were rejected before thee, but they were patient when rejected and persecuted, until Our help came to them. And there is none to change the words of Allāh.[770] And there has already come to thee some information about the messengers.

وَلَقَدْ كُذِّبَتْ رُسُلٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ فَصَبَرُوْا عَلٰى مَا كُذِّبُوْا وَأُوْذُوْا حَتّٰۤى أَتٰىهُمْ نَصْرُنَا ۚ وَلَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمٰتِ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَكَ مِنْ نَّبَإِى الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ ﴿٣٤﴾

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will become manifest in the life after death. And since, if they were sent back, the evil consequences of evil deeds would again be hidden from the physical eye they would revert to evil deeds.

767 By the *hour* is meant their *doom,* as well as the hour of *final judgment.*

769 The Prophet was known among them as *al-Amīn,* i.e., *the Faithful* or *the Truthful one.* His worst enemies at the height of their enmity admitted that he had never told a lie (B. 1 : 1). It was after he received the Divine revelation that he was called a liar, and hence it was really a denial of the Divine revelation, not a denial as to the Prophet's truthfulness.

770 The context shows clearly that by *the words of Allāh* here are meant *the prophecies* foretelling the triumph of Truth and the overthrow of all opposition. As help came to messengers before the Holy Prophet, so would help come to him, and this was a prophecy which none could change and whose fulfilment was sure.

35 And if their turning away is hard on thee, then, if thou canst, seek an opening into the earth or a ladder to heaven, to bring them a sign![771] And if Allāh pleased, He would certainly have gathered them all to guidance, so be not of the ignorant.

وَإِنْ كَانَ كَبُرَ عَلَيْكَ إِعْرَاضُهُمْ فَإِنِ اسْتَطَعْتَ أَنْ تَبْتَغِيَ نَفَقًا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَوْ سُلَّمًا فِي السَّمَاءِ فَتَأْتِيَهُمْ بِآيَةٍ ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَمَعَهُمْ عَلَى الْهُدَىٰ ۚ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 Only those accept who listen. And as for the dead, Allāh will raise them, then to Him they will be returned.[772]

إِنَّمَا يَسْتَجِيبُ الَّذِينَ يَسْمَعُونَ ۘ وَالْمَوْتَىٰ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 And they say: Why has not a sign been sent down to him from his Lord? Say: Surely Allāh is Able to send down a sign, but most of them know not.[773]

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ ۚ قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَادِرٌ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يُنَزِّلَ آيَةً وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 And there is no animal in the earth, nor a bird that flies on its two wings, but (they are) communities like yourselves. We have not neglected anything in the Book. Then to their Lord will they be gathered.[774]

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَمٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ ۚ مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 And those who reject Our messages are deaf and dumb, in darkness. Whom Allāh pleases He leaves in error. And whom He pleases He places on the right way.

وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا صُمٌّ وَبُكْمٌ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ ۗ مَنْ يَشَإِ اللَّهُ يُضْلِلْهُ وَمَنْ يَشَأْ يَجْعَلْهُ عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 Say: See, if the chastisement of Allāh overtake you or the hour come upon you, will you call on others than Allāh, if you are truthful?

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتَكُمْ إِنْ أَتَاكُمْ عَذَابُ اللَّهِ أَوْ أَتَتْكُمُ السَّاعَةُ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ تَدْعُونَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

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771 By *sign* is meant a sign that should bring all to guidance, as shown by what follows. Their doom was pronounced, and that word must be fulfilled, as affirmed in the previous verse; but the demand of the people to be overawed into an immediate submission to the Prophet by a sign was not in accordance with the Divine Law.

772 Those addressed by the Prophet are here divided into two classes: (1) those who listen: they accept the Prophet and become believers; (2) those who are spiritually dead and pay no heed to the Prophet's warning. Even the latter are not to be despaired of, for Allāh will raise them too to spiritual life. Their being returned to Allāh stands here for their submission to God and ultimate acceptance of the Truth.

773, 774, see next page.

41 Nay, Him you call upon, so He removes that for which you pray, if He pleases, and you forget what you set up (with Him).[775]

بَلْ إِيَّاهُ تَدْعُونَ فَيَكْشِفُ مَا تَدْعُونَ
إِلَيْهِ إِنْ شَاءَ وَتَنْسَوْنَ مَا تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

SECTION 5 : **Consequences of Rejection**

42 And indeed We sent (messengers) to nations before thee then We seized them with distress and affliction that they might humble themselves.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمَمٍ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ
فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِالْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَضَرَّعُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 Yet why did they not, when Our punishment came to them, humble themselves ? But their hearts hardened and the devil made all that they did seem fair to them.

فَلَوْلَا إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا وَلَٰكِنْ
قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ مَا
كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 Then, when they neglected that with which they had been admonished, We opened for them the gates of all things. Until, when they rejoiced in that which they were given, We seized them suddenly ; then lo ! they were in utter despair.[776]

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ
أَبْوَابَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَرِحُوا بِمَا أُوتُوا
أَخَذْنَاهُمْ بَغْتَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْلِسُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 So the roots of the people who did wrong were cut off. And praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds.[777]

فَقُطِعَ دَابِرُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ۚ
وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

773 The sign spoken of here is the sign asked for in v. 35. Allāh did send the very sign demanded, as we find the Arabs submitting to the Holy Prophet almost in a body after the conquest of Makkah.

774 Other creatures are all provided for by Allāh as men are, so far as physical needs are concerned, and therefore man must obey the laws of nature as other animals do. But man's nature aspires to something higher, and it is to satisfy that spiritual craving that prophets are sent. This verse, moreover, points, as it were, to two classes of men — those who, like beasts, are wholly bent on earth and cannot rise, and those who rise like birds, soaring upward to the higher spiritual regions. The concluding words of the verse — *then to their Lord they will be gathered* — are in reference to mankind and, as compared with other animals, point to the Higher life, the life eternal in God. There is no mention here or anywhere else in the Holy Qur'ān of the lower animals being raised to a new life for Judgment.

775 In dire distress and affliction even the polytheist finds nobody to call upon but God. This shows that a belief in the Divine existence and Unity of God is inherent in human nature.

776 By *opening the gates of all things* is meant that all comforts of life were made accessible to them.

777 By cutting off the *roots* is meant the destruction of the ringleaders in particular.

46 Say : Have you considered that if Allāh should take away your hearing and your sight and seal your hearts, who is the god besides Allāh that can bring it to you ? See how We repeat the messages yet they turn away !

قُلْ اَرَءَيْتُمْ اِنْ اَخَذَ اللّٰهُ سَمْعَكُمْ وَ
اَبْصَارَكُمْ وَخَتَمَ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِكُمْ مَّنْ اِلٰهٌ
غَيْرُ اللّٰهِ يَاْتِيْكُمْ بِهٖ ؕ اُنْظُرْ كَيْفَ
نُصَرِّفُ الْاٰيٰتِ ثُمَّ هُمْ يَصْدِفُوْنَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 Say : See, if the chastisement of Allāh should overtake you suddenly or openly, will any be destroyed but the wrongdoing people ?

قُلْ اَرَءَيْتَكُمْ اِنْ اَتٰىكُمْ عَذَابُ اللّٰهِ
بَغْتَةً اَوْ جَهْرَةً هَلْ يُهْلَكُ اِلَّا
الْقَوْمُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And We send not messengers but as bearers of good news and warners ; then whoever believes and acts aright, they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve.

وَمَا نُرْسِلُ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ اِلَّا مُبَشِّرِيْنَ
وَمُنْذِرِيْنَ ۚ فَمَنْ اٰمَنَ وَاَصْلَحَ فَلَا
خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 And as for those who reject Our messages, chastisement will afflict them because they transgressed.

وَالَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا يَمَسُّهُمُ الْعَذَابُ
بِمَا كَانُوْا يَفْسُقُوْنَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 Say : I say not to you, I have with me the treasures of Allāh, nor do I know the unseen, nor do I say to you that I am an angel ; I follow only that which is revealed to me. Say : Are the blind and the seeing alike ? Do you not then reflect ?[778]

قُلْ لَّاۤ اَقُوْلُ لَكُمْ عِنْدِيْ خَزَآئِنُ اللّٰهِ
وَلَاۤ اَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ وَلَاۤ اَقُوْلُ لَكُمْ اِنِّيْ
مَلَكٌ ۚ اِنْ اَتَّبِعُ اِلَّا مَا يُوْحٰٓى اِلَيَّ ؕ قُلْ هَلْ
يَسْتَوِي الْاَعْمٰى وَالْبَصِيْرُ ؕ اَفَلَا تَتَفَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٥٠﴾

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778 Never did a prophet talk in plainer language and with a greater modesty to his people. Appearing among a superstitious and ignorant people, he could have claimed any supernatural powers for himself, and the people would willingly have accepted him. But he told them plainly that he was but a man ; he had no treasures, nor did he lay claim for himself as a man to know the secrets of the future, nor did he profess to be any more than a mortal. What distinguished him from the rest of mankind was that Allāh revealed His will to him, and he faithfully followed and translated into practice everything that he received from on High. And as he himself was, so he wanted others to be. It was not his object to make his followers possessors of treasures, or wonder-workers, or fortune-tellers, but *men* first and last — men true to themselves and true followers of the high principles of life which had been revealed to him. He plainly told the people what was wanted of them, and it is for his plain speaking that he is frequently called in the Holy Qur'ān *a plain warner*.

"Here he declares himself unacquainted with the secrets of God" is the remark which the noble words of the above verse draw from a Christian annotator, and the grotesque conclusion is immediately drawn that "he confesses he does not possess the gift of prophecy". What is meant by the verse is that, as a man,

SECTION 6 : **Reward of Believers**

51 And warn with it those who fear that they will be gathered to their Lord — there is no protector for them, nor any intercessor besides Him — so that they may keep their duty.

وَأَنذِرْ بِهِ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَن يُحْشَرُوا إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ لَيْسَ لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِ وَلِيٌّ وَلَا شَفِيعٌ لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ٥١

52 And drive not away those who call upon their Lord, morning and evening, desiring only His pleasure. Neither art thou accountable for them in aught, nor are they accountable for thee in aught, that thou shouldst drive them away and thus be of the wrongdoers.[779]

وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ ۖ مَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِم مِّن شَيْءٍ وَمَا مِنْ حِسَابِكَ عَلَيْهِم مِّن شَيْءٍ فَتَطْرُدَهُمْ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ٥٢

53 And thus do We try some of them by others so that they say : Are these they upon whom Allāh has conferred benefit from among us ?[780] Does not Allāh best know the grateful ?

وَكَذَٰلِكَ فَتَنَّا بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ لِّيَقُولُوا أَهَٰؤُلَاءِ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّن بَيْنِنَا ۗ أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِالشَّاكِرِينَ ٥٣

54 And when those who believe in Our messages come to thee, say: Peace be to you, your Lord has ordained mercy on Himself, (so) that if any one of you does evil in ignorance, then turns after that and acts aright, then He is Forgiving, Merciful.

وَإِذَا جَاءَكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِنَا فَقُلْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ ۖ أَنَّهُ مَنْ عَمِلَ مِنكُمْ سُوءًا بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابَ مِن بَعْدِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَنَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ٥٤

Muhammad was like other men, i.e., he did not know the unseen, etc., but, as a prophet, he knew and followed everything revealed to him by Allāh. The unique greatness and nobleness of the Prophet lie in the fact that he never tried to put himself before people as superhuman.

779 The commentators agree that this verse was revealed when some leading Quraish expressed their willingness to accept the Prophet if the poorer Muslims were not allowed to remain in his company at the time. The poor and the rich are here brought to the same level ; they are all men, they have equal claims to learn and practise the truth. Nay, those who accepted the truth had a prior claim on the Prophet's attention. Truth is equally accessible to all ; to the religion of Islām, no aristocracy is known. Before the Great Master the differences of rank, wealth and colour sink into insignificance, and therefore before Allāh's Messenger, as before Allāh Himself, they must all stand upon one level. *Every one is answerable for what he does* is the golden principle preached by Islām.

780 The simple and decisive answer given above no doubt wounded the pride of the wealthy Quraish, who were required to sit along with the poor slaves whom they never treated as human beings, and thus they were tried.

55 And thus do We make distinct the messages and so that the way of the guilty may become clear.

وَكَذٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْاٰيٰتِ وَلِتَسْتَبِيْنَ
سَبِيْلُ الْمُجْرِمِيْنَ ۝٥٥

SECTION 7 : **Divine Judgment**

56 Say : I am forbidden to serve those whom you call upon besides Allāh. Say : I follow not your low desires, for then indeed I should go astray and should not be of the guided ones.

قُلْ اِنِّيْ نُهِيْتُ اَنْ اَعْبُدَ الَّذِيْنَ تَدْعُوْنَ
مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ قُلْ لَّاۤ اَتَّبِعُ اَهْوَآءَكُمْ ۙ قَدْ
ضَلَلْتُ اِذًا وَّمَاۤ اَنَا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِيْنَ ۝٥٦

57 Say : Surely I have manifest proof from my Lord and you call it a lie. I have not with me that which you would hasten. The judgment is only Allāh's. He relates the truth and He is the Best of deciders.

قُلْ اِنِّيْ عَلٰى بَيِّنَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّيْ وَكَذَّبْتُمْ
بِهٖ ؕ مَا عِنْدِيْ مَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوْنَ بِهٖ ؕ اِنِ
الْحُكْمُ اِلَّا لِلّٰهِ ؕ يَقُصُّ الْحَقَّ وَهُوَ
خَيْرُ الْفٰصِلِيْنَ ۝٥٧

58 Say : If that which you would hasten were with me, the matter would have certainly been decided between you and me. And Allāh best knows the wrongdoers.

قُلْ لَّوْ اَنَّ عِنْدِيْ مَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوْنَ بِهٖ
لَقُضِيَ الْاَمْرُ بَيْنِيْ وَبَيْنَكُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ
اَعْلَمُ بِالظّٰلِمِيْنَ ۝٥٨

59 And with Him are the treasures[781] of the unseen — none knows them but He. And He knows what is in the land and the sea. And there falls not a leaf but He knows it, nor is there a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything green or dry, but (it is all) in a clear book.[782]

وَعِنْدَهٗ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَاۤ اِلَّا
هُوَ ؕ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ ؕ وَمَا
تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَّرَقَةٍ اِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٍ
فِيْ ظُلُمٰتِ الْاَرْضِ وَلَا رَطْبٍ وَّلَا يَابِسٍ
اِلَّا فِيْ كِتٰبٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ۝٥٩

60 And He it is Who takes your souls at night, and He knows what you earn by day, then He raises you up therein that an appointed term may be fulfilled. Then to Him is your return, then He will inform you of what you did.

وَهُوَ الَّذِيْ يَتَوَفّٰىكُمْ بِالَّيْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا
جَرَحْتُمْ بِالنَّهَارِ ثُمَّ يَبْعَثُكُمْ فِيْهِ
لِيُقْضٰۤى اَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى ۚ ثُمَّ اِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ
ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝٦٠

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781 The word *mafātiḥ* is plural of *miftāḥ* as well as of *maftaḥ*, the former meaning *key* and the latter *repository* or *a treasure* (LL). Hence both significances are admissible.

782 The clear book is the great law of cause and effect. The falling of the leaf indicates that its power to draw nourishment has come to an end ; thus do

SECTION 8: **Divine Judgment**

61 And He is the Supreme above His servants, and He sends keepers over you; until when death comes to one of you, Our messengers cause him to die, and they are not remiss.[783]

وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَفَظَةً ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُفَرِّطُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

62 Then are they sent back to Allāh, their Master, the True one. Now surely His is the judgment and He is Swiftest in taking account.

ثُمَّ رُدُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ مَوْلَاهُمُ الْحَقِّ ۚ أَلَا لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَهُوَ أَسْرَعُ الْحَاسِبِينَ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 Say: Who is it that delivers you from the calamities[784] of the land and the sea? (when) you call upon Him, in humility and in secret: If He deliver us from this, we will certainly be of the grateful ones.

قُلْ مَنْ يُنَجِّيكُمْ مِنْ ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ تَدْعُونَهُ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً لَئِنْ أَنْجَانَا مِنْ هَٰذِهِ لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 Say: Allāh delivers you from this and from every distress, yet you set up others (with Him).

قُلِ اللَّهُ يُنَجِّيكُمْ مِنْهَا وَمِنْ كُلِّ كَرْبٍ ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

65 Say: He has the power to send on you a chastisement from above you or from beneath your feet, or to throw you into confusion, (making you) of different parties, and make some of you taste the violence of others. See how We repeat the messages that they may understand![785]

قُلْ هُوَ الْقَادِرُ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابًا مِنْ فَوْقِكُمْ أَوْ مِنْ تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِكُمْ أَوْ يَلْبِسَكُمْ شِيَعًا وَيُذِيقَ بَعْضَكُمْ بَأْسَ بَعْضٍ ۗ انْظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

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individuals and nations fall. The grain in the darkness of the earth stands for the mission of the Prophet, for that grain was destined to sprout forth, growing into a tree of exceptional proportions. The "green" indicates those people that prosper and the "dry" those that must fall off.

783 The allusion seems to be to the ultimate sweeping away of all opposition. The next verse makes it clear. The *ḥafaẓah* are the guardian angels, for which see 1269.

784 *Ẓulumāt* (plural of *ẓulmat,* lit., *darkness*) means the *troubles, afflictions, calamities* or *hardships* (of the sea). Also a *day of much evil* or *a day in which one finds hardship or difficulty* (LL).

785 The three forms of punishment were witnessed by the Prophet's opponents later on. *A punishment from above* took the form of a storm, witnessed in the well-known battle of *the Allies,* when an army of between ten and twenty thousand strong, which could easily have destroyed the small body of entrenched Muslims, took to flight merely on account of a great storm; *a punishment from*

66 And thy people call it a lie and it is the Truth. Say: I am not put in charge of you.[786]

وَكَذَّبَ بِهِ قَوْمُكَ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ ۚ قُل لَّسْتُ عَلَيْكُم بِوَكِيلٍ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 For every prophecy is a term, and you will soon come to know (it).[787]

لِّكُلِّ نَبَإٍ مُّسْتَقَرٌّ ۚ وَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 And when thou seest those who talk nonsense about Our messages, withdraw from them until they enter into some other discourse. And if the devil cause thee to forget, then sit not after recollection with the unjust people.

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ يَخُوضُونَ فِي آيَاتِنَا فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ ۚ وَإِمَّا يُنسِيَنَّكَ الشَّيْطَانُ فَلَا تَقْعُدْ بَعْدَ الذِّكْرَىٰ مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 And those who keep their duty are not accountable for them in aught but (theirs) is only to remind; haply they may guard against evil.

وَمَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِم مِّن شَيْءٍ وَلَٰكِن ذِكْرَىٰ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 And leave those who take their religion for a play and an idle sport, and whom this world's life has deceived, and remind (men) hereby lest a soul be destroyed for what it has

وَذَرِ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَهُمْ لَعِبًا وَلَهْوًا وَغَرَّتْهُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَذَكِّرْ بِهِ أَن تُبْسَلَ نَفْسٌ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ لَيْسَ لَهَا

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beneath took the form of a drought which brought great affliction upon the people of Makkah for seven years; while they were made to taste the violence at the hands of the Muslims in the battles which they themselves started and which brought about the final disruption of the power of the Quraish. By the two first, some understand a punishment at the hands of the leaders and a punishment at the hands of the servants (I'Ab-Rz); in other words, the tyranny of the bourgeois and the tyranny of the proletariate. It should be noted that these three forms of punishment are meant as well for the later opponents of the Prophet. The material civilization of the West has in fact produced the very evils which are spoken of in this verse as being the punishment of those who pay no heed to the spiritual or higher values of life. The capitalists at first had the upper hand and they tyrannized labour; and socialism, or bolshevism, is now wreaking vengeance on the capitalist countries. To these two punishments is now added a third. The whole world is now divided into parties which aim at each other's destruction and the violence of man against man has reached a peak unthought of by the world. Whole cities with their millions of residents are turned into graves in the twinkling of an eye, and this wholesale destruction of man by man is considered as the greatest feat of material civilization. Perhaps man was never so savage as he is to-day.

786 The concluding phrase may also be translated as *I am not a disposer of your affairs*. The significance in both cases is the same.

787 The meaning adopted here is the one given by LL in explaining the meaning of *mustaqarr*, which means *the place* or *time beyond which a thing does not pass*, hence its *term*. *Naba'* means *information* and hence *prophecy, which*

earned. It has besides Allāh no friend nor intercessor, and though it offer every compensation, it will not be accepted from it. Those are they who are destroyed for what they earn. For them is a drink of boiling water and a painful chastisement, because they disbelieved.

مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلِيٌّ وَّلَا شَفِيْعٌ ۚ وَاِنْ تَعْدِلْ كُلَّ عَدْلٍ لَّا يُؤْخَذْ مِنْهَا ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ اُبْسِلُوْا بِمَا كَسَبُوْا ۚ لَهُمْ شَرَابٌ مِّنْ حَمِيْمٍ وَّعَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌۢ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْفُرُوْنَ ۝

SECTION 9 : **Abraham's Argument for Divine Unity**

71 Say : Shall we call, besides Allāh, on that which profits us not nor harms us, and shall we be turned back on our heels after Allāh has guided us ? Like one whom the devils cause to follow his low desires, in bewilderment in the earth,[788] — he has companions who call him to the right way (saying), Come to us. Say : Surely the guidance of Allāh, that is the (true) guidance. And we are commanded to submit to the Lord of the worlds :

قُلْ اَنَدْعُوْا مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُنَا وَلَا يَضُرُّنَا وَنُرَدُّ عَلٰٓى اَعْقَابِنَا بَعْدَ اِذْ هَدٰىنَا اللّٰهُ كَالَّذِى اسْتَهْوَتْهُ الشَّيٰطِيْنُ فِى الْاَرْضِ حَيْرَانَ ۖ لَهٗٓ اَصْحٰبٌ يَّدْعُوْنَهٗٓ اِلَى الْهُدَى ائْتِنَا ؕ قُلْ اِنَّ هُدَى اللّٰهِ هُوَ الْهُدٰى ؕ وَاُمِرْنَا لِنُسْلِمَ لِرَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ۝

72 And that you should keep up prayer and keep your duty to Him. And He it is to Whom you shall be gathered.

وَاَنْ اَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاتَّقُوْهُ ؕ وَهُوَ الَّذِىْٓ اِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُوْنَ ۝

gives information concerning the future. According to R it means ***an announcement*** *of great utility.*

The prophecy of the vanquishment of the powerful opponents of Islām is declared with even greater emphasis than in the earlier stage of the Prophet's mission, notwithstanding the apparent triumph of opposition to his cause which had succeeded in scattering the few men who accepted Islām.

788 *Istahwat-hu* from the root *hawā* (*desire,* or *low desire*) is explained by R as meaning *ḥamalat-hu 'alā ittibā'-il-hawā,* i.e., *he caused him to follow his low desire.* Others explain the word as meaning ***he made him fall down*** (Rz). The man who follows only his low desires finds himself ultimately in bewilderment, and he is unable to find the way, though his companions call him to the right way. Submission to God, on the other hand, makes a man have a set purpose of life before him, and makes him apply his whole energy to the attainment of that purpose and thus makes him attain success in life. Abraham is therefore spoken of in the verses that follow as an example of a man who submitted himself completely to God.

73 And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth with truth. And when He says, Be, it is.[788a]

وَهُوَ الَّذِىْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ ؕ وَيَوْمَ يَقُوْلُ كُنْ فَيَكُوْنُ ؕ

74 His word is the truth and His is the kingdom on the day when the trumpet is blown.[789] The Knower of the unseen and the seen; and He is the Wise, the Aware.

قَوْلُهُ الْحَقُّ ؕ وَلَهُ الْمُلْكُ يَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِى الصُّوْرِ ؕ عٰلِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ ؕ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيْمُ الْخَبِيْرُ ﴿۷۳﴾

75 And when Abraham said to his sire, Āzar:[790] Takest thou idols for gods? Surely I see thee and thy people in manifest error.

وَاِذْ قَالَ اِبْرٰهِيْمُ لِاَبِيْهِ اٰزَرَ اَتَتَّخِذُ اَصْنَامًا اٰلِهَةً ۚ اِنِّىْۤ اَرٰىكَ وَقَوْمَكَ فِىْ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿۷۴﴾

76 And thus did We show Abraham the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and that he might be of those having certainty.[791]

وَكَذٰلِكَ نُرِىْۤ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ مَلَكُوْتَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَلِيَكُوْنَ مِنَ الْمُوْقِنِيْنَ ﴿۷۵﴾

77 So when the night overshadowed him, he saw a star. He said: Is this my Lord?[792] So when it set, he said: I love not the setting ones.

فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ الَّيْلُ رَاٰ كَوْكَبًا ۚ قَالَ هٰذَا رَبِّىْ ۚ فَلَمَّاۤ اَفَلَ قَالَ لَاۤ اُحِبُّ الْاٰفِلِيْنَ ﴿۷۶﴾

788a These words are generally used when the bringing about of a great change — a change which seems to be impossible to men — is meant.

789 *Ṣūr* carries two significances. It means the *trumpet*, and the trumpet is generally blown to gather men together. Thus it indicates the taking place of a great revolution. The reference may be either to the Resurrection when men will be raised to be brought to judgment, or the great spiritual resurrection which was to be brought about through the Prophet when the whole of Arabia was destined to receive a new life, the life spiritual, or perhaps to the still greater spiritual resurrection when the whole of humanity was destined to receive a new life through the triumph of Islām. The Kingdom of God, we are told, will be established on earth on that day. But *ṣūr* is said by some to be the plural of *ṣūrat*, meaning *a form* (S, LL). The meaning is either that *forms will become realities by being breathed into*, or, as LL has it on the authority of S, L, and T, *when the souls shall be blown into the forms of the dead*. The reference in this case too may be either to the Resurrection day or to the spiritual resurrection which was to be brought about by the Prophet.

790 Whether Āzar was the father of Abraham, or his grandfather or uncle, is a much disputed point. The word *ab* means *a father* as well as *an ancestor* (M, LL), and in 2:133 it is applied to *an uncle* because there Ishmael is spoken of as an *ab* of Jacob. The difficulty arises from two points. In the first place Zj says that the *nassābs* agree that Abraham's father's name was *Tāraḥ*, which is the same as *Terah*, the name given to Abraham's father in Genesis, and Zurqānī also gives *Tāraḥ* as Abraham's father's name. But it may be noted that Eusebius speaks of Tāraḥ as Āthar, which is about the same as Āzar. The second difficulty is that Abraham's father (Ar. *wālid*) is spoken of in 14:41 as a believer, while the sire (Ar. *ab*) is elsewhere spoken of as having stuck to idolatry till his death (9:114). Hence I prefer *sire* as the significance of the word. Some commentators consider *Āzar* as being the name of an idol, while still others think that it is not a proper name at all and means *mukhṭī*, i.e., *erring* (Rz).

791 Showing Abraham the kingdom of the heavens and the earth signifies

792, see next page.

78 Then when he saw the moon rising, he said: Is this my Lord? So when it set, he said: If my Lord had not guided me, I should certainly be of the erring people.

فَلَمَّا رَاَ الْقَمَرَ بَازِغًا قَالَ هٰذَا رَبِّيْ ۚ
فَلَمَّآ اَفَلَ قَالَ لَئِنْ لَّمْ يَهْدِنِيْ رَبِّيْ
لَاَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الضَّآلِّيْنَ ○

79 Then when he saw the sun rising, he said: Is this my Lord? Is this the greatest? So when it set, he said: O my people, I am clear of what you set up (with Allāh).

فَلَمَّا رَاَ الشَّمْسَ بَازِغَةً قَالَ هٰذَا رَبِّيْ
هٰذَآ اَكْبَرُ ۚ فَلَمَّآ اَفَلَتْ قَالَ يٰقَوْمِ
اِنِّيْ بَرِيْٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُوْنَ ○

80 Surely I have turned myself, being upright, wholly to Him Who originated the heavens and the earth, and I am not of the polytheists.

اِنِّيْ وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِيْ فَطَرَ السَّمٰوٰتِ
وَالْاَرْضَ حَنِيْفًا وَّمَآ اَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ○

81 And his people disputed with him. He said: Do you dispute with me respecting Allāh and He has guided me indeed? And I fear not in any way those that you set up with Him, unless my Lord please. My Lord comprehends all things in His knowledge. Will you not then mind?

وَحَآجَّهٗ قَوْمُهٗ ۗ قَالَ اَتُحَآجُّوْٓنِّيْ فِي اللّٰهِ
وَقَدْ هَدٰىنِ ۗ وَلَآ اَخَافُ مَا تُشْرِكُوْنَ
بِهٖٓ اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّشَآءَ رَبِّيْ شَيْـًٔا ۗ وَسِعَ رَبِّيْ
كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا ۗ اَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُوْنَ ○

82 And how should I fear what you have set up (with Him), while you fear not to set up with Allāh that for which He has sent down to you no authority. Which then of the two parties is surer of security, if you know?

وَكَيْفَ اَخَافُ مَآ اَشْرَكْتُمْ وَلَا تَخَافُوْنَ
اَنَّكُمْ اَشْرَكْتُمْ بِاللّٰهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهٖ
عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطٰنًا ۗ فَاَيُّ الْفَرِيْقَيْنِ اَحَقُّ
بِالْاَمْنِ ۚ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ○

83 Those who believe and mix not up their faith with iniquity — for them is security and they go aright.

اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوْٓا اِيْمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ
اُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ الْاَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُّهْتَدُوْنَ ○

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granting him an insight into the Divine laws of nature working in the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. This insight had convinced him that Allāh was the real controller of the universe and Supreme above all, while the sun, the moon, the stars and other heavenly bodies, which the Sabeans worshipped, were only His creation and subject to His laws.

792 The words *hādhā rabbī*, literally *this is my Lord*, do not contain Abraham's conviction. As shown in the previous verse, he was a believer in Divine

SECTION 10 : **Prophets among Abraham's Descendants**

84 And this was Our argument which We gave to Abraham against his people. We exalt in degrees whom We please. Surely thy Lord is Wise, Knowing.

وَتِلْكَ حُجَّتُنَآ اٰتَيْنٰهَآ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ عَلٰى قَوْمِهٖ ؕ نَرْفَعُ دَرَجٰتٍ مَّنْ نَّشَآءُ ؕ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيْمٌ عَلِيْمٌ ۝

85 And We gave him Isaac and Jacob. Each did We guide ; and Noah did We guide before, and of his descendants,[793] David and Solomon and Job and Joseph and Moses and Aaron. And thus do We reward those who do good (to others) :

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهٗٓ اِسْحٰقَ وَيَعْقُوْبَ ؕ كُلًّا هَدَيْنَا ۚ وَنُوْحًا هَدَيْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِهٖ دَاوٗدَ وَسُلَيْمٰنَ وَاَيُّوْبَ وَيُوْسُفَ وَمُوْسٰى وَهٰرُوْنَ ؕ وَكَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِى الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ۝

86 And Zacharias and John and Jesus and Elias ; each one (of them) was of the righteous,

وَزَكَرِيَّا وَيَحْيٰى وَعِيْسٰى وَاِلْيَاسَ ؕ كُلٌّ مِّنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ۝

87 And Ishmael and Elisha and Jonah and Lot ; and each one (of them) We made to excel the people ;

وَاِسْمٰعِيْلَ وَالْيَسَعَ وَيُوْنُسَ وَلُوْطًا ؕ وَكُلًّا فَضَّلْنَا عَلَى الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ۝

Unity. The words are either uttered by way of surprise, as referring to his people's belief, who are then made to realize their error by showing that what they call a god disappears at times, and therefore does not deserve to be worshipped — these people were not only idolaters, but also worshippers of the heavenly bodies. Or, the phrase may be interrogatory, *alif*, the letter of interrogation, being omitted, and interrogation expresses disapproval (Rz). I prefer the second interpretation.

It should be borne in mind that Abraham never worshipped idols or the heavenly bodies like his people. He has already been spoken of in v. 75 as denouncing the idol-worship of his people, and in v. 76 as possessing certainty of faith in One God. Reading further on, we find it clearly stated in v. 84 that what is related here was an argument by which Abraham tried to convince his people that they worshipped false deities: " And this was Our argument which We gave to Abraham against his people ". Abraham's own certainty and strong conviction in God is placed beyond all doubt by vv. 75, 76 ; and in the verses that follow he is shown as giving arguments to convince his people that they were wrong in worshipping the heavenly bodies, which were themselves subject to Divine laws.

793 All the prophets named are the descendants of Abraham, who was a descendant of Noah, and therefore " his descendants " might mean either Abraham's or Noah's descendants. The only difficulty in the former case is with reference to Lot, who was a nephew and not an actual descendant of Abraham, but as in 2:133 an uncle is called a father, a nephew might be included among descendants.

Eighteen prophets are named here. They are not mentioned in chronological order. (See the next chapter, where the histories of several great prophets are mentioned in exact chronological order.) There are some peculiar aspects of life regarding which the prophets referred to here are mentioned in different groups, and this is the reason why the concluding words of each of the three verses speaking of the three groups are different.

88 And some of their fathers and their descendants and their brethren.[793a] And We chose them and guided them to the right way.

وَمِنْ اٰبَآئِهِمْ وَذُرِّيّٰتِهِمْ وَاِخْوَانِهِمْ ۚ وَاجْتَبَيْنٰهُمْ وَهَدَيْنٰهُمْ اِلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ○

89 This is Allāh's guidance wherewith He guides whom He pleases of His servants. And if they had associated others (with Him), all that they did would have been vain.[794]

ذٰلِكَ هُدَى اللّٰهِ يَهْدِيْ بِهٖ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهٖ ۗ وَلَوْ اَشْرَكُوْا لَحَبِطَ عَنْهُمْ مَّا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ○

90 These are they to whom We gave the Book and authority and prophecy.[795] Therefore if these disbelieve in it, We have indeed entrusted it to a people who are not disbelievers in it.

اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ ۚ فَاِنْ يَّكْفُرْ بِهَا هٰٓؤُلَآءِ فَقَدْ وَكَّلْنَا بِهَا قَوْمًا لَّيْسُوْا بِهَا بِكٰفِرِيْنَ ○

91 These are they whom Allāh guided, so follow their guidance. Say: I ask you not for any reward for it. It is naught but a Reminder to the nations.[796]

اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ هَدَى اللّٰهُ فَبِهُدٰىهُمُ اقْتَدِهْ ۗ قُلْ لَّآ اَسْئَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ اَجْرًا ۗ اِنْ هُوَ اِلَّا ذِكْرٰى لِلْعٰلَمِيْنَ ○

793a Not only the prophets named in the above verses were made to excel the people of their time, but some of their fathers and their brethren and their descendants were granted such excellence, though they were not prophets.

794 Had they associated others with God, their deeds would have borne no fruit, and thus their mission would have been unsuccessful. This shows that no prophet was guilty of *shirk* at any time in his life.

795 Each one of the prophets was given three things. The first was the *Kitāb, the Book,* or the Divine revelation which the prophet was granted, the messages he received from on high, to guide people aright. The second is called *ḥukm,* which means *authority to judge.* This shows that every prophet received authority directly from God, and it was by Divine authority that he judged his people. The third is *nubuwwat,* which means *prophethood* or *the gift of prophecy.* The Book contains directions for guidance of the people and *nubuwwat* is the prophetical part which is meant to strengthen the faith. Thus the Holy Prophet Muḥammad was granted the gift of prophecy long before he was granted the Book which began with the words, *Read in the name of thy Lord* (96:1). Further there is a vast number of his prophecies which are contained in the Ḥadīth and which do not form a part of the Book, the Qur'ān. A prophet without a book is as meaningless as a messenger without a message.

796 The Prophet is told to follow the guidance of all the earlier prophets, because his message was for all the nations to whom previous prophets had separately come. Hence the Holy Qur'ān is called a Reminder in the concluding words, showing that it was meant for all the nations, to whom it was a reminder of what they had received before. The Prophet is, in fact, here told that he was now the representative of all the prophets that had gone before him, and therefore possessed all the excellences which were granted to those prophets separately.

SECTION 11 : **Truth of Divine Revelation**

92 And they honour not Allāh with the honour due to Him, when they say : Allāh has not revealed anything to a mortal.[797] Say : Who revealed the Book which Moses brought, a light and a guidance to men — you make it into (scattered) papers,[798] which you show and you conceal much ? And you are taught that which neither you nor your fathers knew. Say : Allāh. Then leave them sporting in their idle talk.

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهٖٓ اِذْ قَالُوْا
مَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى بَشَرٍ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ ۗ قُلْ
مَنْ اَنْزَلَ الْكِتٰبَ الَّذِيْ جَآءَ بِهٖ مُوْسٰى
نُوْرًا وَّهُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ تَجْعَلُوْنَهٗ قَرَاطِيْسَ
تُبْدُوْنَهَا وَتُخْفُوْنَ كَثِيْرًا ۚ وَعُلِّمْتُمْ مَّا لَمْ
تَعْلَمُوْٓا اَنْتُمْ وَلَآ اٰبَآؤُكُمْ ۗ قُلِ اللّٰهُ ۙ
ثُمَّ ذَرْهُمْ فِيْ خَوْضِهِمْ يَلْعَبُوْنَ ○

93 And this is a Blessed Book We have revealed, verifying that which is before it, and that thou mayest warn the mother of the towns[799] and those around her. And those who believe in the Hereafter believe in it, and they keep a watch over their prayers.

وَهٰذَا كِتٰبٌ اَنْزَلْنٰهُ مُبٰرَكٌ مُّصَدِّقُ
الَّذِيْ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَلِتُنْذِرَ اُمَّ الْقُرٰى
وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا ۗ وَالَّذِيْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ
يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِهٖ وَهُمْ عَلٰى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُوْنَ ○

94 And who is more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allāh, or says, Revelation has been granted to me ; while nothing has been revealed to

وَمَنْ اَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا
اَوْ قَالَ اُوْحِيَ اِلَيَّ وَلَمْ يُوْحَ اِلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ
وَّمَنْ قَالَ سَاُنْزِلُ مِثْلَ مَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ ۗ

797 The word *qadr* has a variety of meanings. I'Ab interprets the words as meaning *they honour not Allāh with the honour due to Him ;* Abu-l-'Āliyah as *they assign not to Allāh the attributes due to Him* ; and Akhfash as *they know not Allāh as they ought to have known Him* (Rz). The words *Allāh has not revealed anything to a mortal* may mean a total denial of God revealing Himself to man or simply a denial of revelation to the Prophet, who is again and again referred to in the Holy Qur'ān as a *bashar* or *a mortal*. The reply to their allegation takes first the case of the people who believed in a previous revelation like the Jews and the Christians. They are told that the same God Who revealed a book to Moses, containing a clear prophecy of a *prophet like him,* has now in fulfilment of that prophecy sent the like of Moses who, both the Jews and the Christians believed, had not appeared till then. Their only answer to that clear prophecy was that they would not mention it or talk of it at all — *and you conceal much.* But even the deniers of Divine revelation *in toto,* as the idolaters of Arabia were, could not explain away the striking resemblance of the two. They are, however, further told that the proof of revelation was in the *knowledge* which it gave — *you are taught that which you knew not, what even your fathers knew not.*

798 *Qarāṭīs* is plural of *qirṭās,* which means *a paper.* What is implied is that it is written down on scattered papers, some parts being shown, while others are concealed. The book was not *kept intact* hence its description as *scattered papers.*

799 *Umm al Qurā,* lit., *the mother of the towns,* is the title by which Makkah is known. The reason why Makkah is called *umm al-qurā* is not only that it was both the political and the spiritual centre of Arabia, but also because it was destined to be the universal spiritual centre — the real mother of the whole world.

him; and he who says: I can reveal the like of that which Allāh has revealed?[800] And if thou couldst see when the wrongdoers are in the agonies of death and the angels stretch forth their hands, (saying): Yield up your souls. This day you are awarded a chastisement of disgrace because you spoke against Allāh other than truth, and (because) you scorned His messages.

وَلَوْ تَرٰٓى اِذِ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ فِىْ غَمَرٰتِ الْمَوْتِ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ بَاسِطُوْٓا اَيْدِيْهِمْۚ اَخْرِجُوْٓا اَنْفُسَكُمْؕ اَلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُوْنِ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَقُوْلُوْنَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَكُنْتُمْ عَنْ اٰيٰتِهٖ تَسْتَكْبِرُوْنَ ○

95 And certainly you have come to Us one by one as We created you at first, and you have left behind your backs what We gave you. And We see not with you your intercessors about whom you asserted that they were (Allāh's) associates in respect to you. Certainly the ties between you are now cut off and that which you asserted has failed you.[801]

وَلَقَدْ جِئْتُمُوْنَا فُرَادٰى كَمَا خَلَقْنٰكُمْ اَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَّتَرَكْتُمْ مَّا خَوَّلْنٰكُمْ وَرَآءَ ظُهُوْرِكُمْۚ وَمَا نَرٰى مَعَكُمْ شُفَعَآءَكُمُ الَّذِيْنَ زَعَمْتُمْ اَنَّهُمْ فِيْكُمْ شُرَكٰٓؤُاؕ لَقَدْ تَّقَطَّعَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَضَلَّ عَنْكُمْ مَّا كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُوْنَ ○

SECTION 12: **Ultimate Triumph of the Truth**

96 Surely Allāh causes the grain and the date-stone to germinate. He brings forth the living from the dead and He is the bringer forth of the dead from the living. That is Allāh. How are you then turned away![802]

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ فَالِقُ الْحَبِّ وَالنَّوٰىؕ يُخْرِجُ الْحَىَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَمُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتِ مِنَ الْحَىِّؕ ذٰلِكُمُ اللّٰهُ فَاَنّٰى تُؤْفَكُوْنَ ○

800 There is nothing in the words of this verse to show that it refers to the false prophets, who set up claims towards the close of the Holy Prophet's career, and that it was therefore revealed late at Madīnah. The verse expresses only in another form the truth expressed in this chapter in vv. 21, 145, 158, and in 39:32. It is to declare the Prophet free of having forged a lie against Allāh; the words "or says, Revelation has been granted to me, while nothing has been revealed to him", only explain those that precede, viz., "Who forges a lie against Allāh"; while the words "I can reveal the like of that which Allāh has revealed", are the words of those who refuse to believe in the truth of Divine revelation, or "reject" the Divine revelation, as is elsewhere said.

801 That is, those whom you asserted to be associates with Allāh will not be able to help you in any way.

802 The preaching of the Prophet is likened to the sowing of the seed which, though to all appearance it is lost in the earth, soon springs forth into a large tree. The bringing forth the living from the dead is the bringing forth

97 He is the Cleaver of the day-break ; and He has made the night for rest, and the sun and the moon for reckoning. That is the measuring of the Mighty, the Knowing.[803]

فَالِقُ الْإِصْبَاحِ ۚ وَجَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ سَكَنًا وَالشَّمْسَ
وَالْقَمَرَ حُسْبَانًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ ○

98 And He it is Who has made the stars for you that you might follow the right way thereby in the darkness of the land and the sea. Indeed We have made plain the signs for a people who know.[804]

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ النُّجُومَ لِتَهْتَدُوا
بِهَا فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ ۗ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا
الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ○

99 And He it is Who has brought you into being from a single soul, then there is (for you) a resting-place and a repository. Indeed We have made plain the signs for a people who understand.[805]

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ
فَمُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمُسْتَوْدَعٌ ۗ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ
لِقَوْمٍ يَفْقَهُونَ ○

100 And He it is Who sends down water from the clouds, then We bring forth with it buds of all (plants), then We bring forth from it green (foliage), from which We produce clustered grain; and of the date-palm, of the sheaths of it, come forth clusters (of dates) within reach; and gardens of grapes and the olive and the pomegranate, alike and unlike. Look at the fruit of it when it bears fruit and the ripening of it. Surely there are signs in this for a people who believe !

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا
بِهِ نَبَاتَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهُ خَضِرًا
نُخْرِجُ مِنْهُ حَبًّا مُتَرَاكِبًا ۚ وَمِنَ النَّخْلِ
مِنْ طَلْعِهَا قِنْوَانٌ دَانِيَةٌ وَجَنَّاتٍ مِنْ
أَعْنَابٍ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالرُّمَّانَ مُشْتَبِهًا
وَغَيْرَ مُتَشَابِهٍ ۗ انْظُرُوا إِلَىٰ ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ
وَيَنْعِهِ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكُمْ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

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a living people from the spiritually dead Arabs, and the bringing forth the dead from the living alludes to the spiritual death of those who had been previously granted spiritual life through Divine revelation.

803 The darkness prevailing in the earth would soon be dispelled, and would give place to light, even as, with the break of the morning, darkness gives place to light.

804 In religious literature the stars represent the lesser lights which guide the people. The Prophet is likened to the sun, and those who receive light from him and transmit it to others are likened to the stars. Thus in a saying of the Holy Prophet we have: "My companions are as stars ; whomsoever of them you follow you follow the right course" (Msh. 27:12). The analogy is that He Who makes light to guide you physically could not have neglected your spiritual guidance.

805 *Mustaqarr* (Ar. for *resting-place*) (from *qarra he* or *it settled, remained*

101 And they regard the jinn to be partners with Allāh, and He created them, and they falsely attribute to Him sons and daughters without knowledge. Glory be to Him, and highly exalted is He above what they ascribe (to Him)![806]

وَجَعَلُوْا لِلّٰهِ شُرَكَآءَ الْجِنَّ وَخَلَقَهُمْ وَخَرَقُوْا لَهٗ بَنِيْنَ وَبَنٰتٍۭ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ؕ سُبْحٰنَهٗ وَتَعٰلٰى عَمَّا يَصِفُوْنَ ۟

SECTION 13 : **Gradual Progress**

102 Wonderful Originator of the heavens and the earth! How could He have a son when He has no consort? And He created everything, and He is the Knower of all things.[807]

بَدِيْعُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ؕ اَنّٰى يَكُوْنُ لَهٗ وَلَدٌ وَّلَمْ تَكُنْ لَّهٗ صَاحِبَةٌ ؕ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ۚ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ۝

103 That is Allāh, your Lord. There is no god but He; the Creator of all things; therefore serve Him, and He has charge of all things.

ذٰلِكُمُ اللّٰهُ رَبُّكُمْ ۚ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۚ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَاعْبُدُوْهُ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَّكِيْلٌ ۝

104 Vision comprehends Him not, and He comprehends (all) vision; and He is the Subtile, the Aware.[808]

لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْاَبْصَارُ ؗ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْاَبْصَارَ ۚ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيْفُ الْخَبِيْرُ ۝

105 Clear proofs have indeed come to you from your Lord; so whoever sees, it is for his own good; and whoever is blind, it is to his own harm. And I am not a keeper over you.

قَدْ جَآءَكُمْ بَصَآئِرُ مِنْ رَّبِّكُمْ ۚ فَمَنْ اَبْصَرَ فَلِنَفْسِهٖ ۚ وَمَنْ عَمِيَ فَعَلَيْهَا ؕ وَمَآ اَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِحَفِيْظٍ ۝

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in a place, rested — *istaqarra* means the same) and *mustauda'* (Ar. for *repository*) (from *wadu'a, he* or *it became quiet* — *istauda'a, he entrusted him* with property for safe custody) are explained variously as meaning, respectively, *the loins of the father and the womb of the mother,* as standing for the *male* and the *female* (AH), or, the resting-place is *this life* and the repository is *the grave,* so that the meaning is that some live and others die; or the resting-place is *the final abode of bliss* and the repository *the temporary residence in this world.* Or it is an infinitive noun meaning there is *abiding,* and *entrustment,* the *abiding* being in this life, and the *entrustment* the return to the Divine Master (AH).

806 The reference is either to the dualistic doctrine of the Magi, who thought that while Allāh was the creator of good, the devil was the creator of evil, or to the Arab belief that the *jinn* had a hand in the transaction of their affairs, or in bringing them good fortune or ill luck. Thus the word *jinn* stands here either for the devil or for the genii.

807 This verse and those that follow describe the transcendental Unity of the Divine Being. To attribute a son to Him is to acknowledge that He had a

808, see next page.

106 And thus do We repeat the messages, and that they may say, Thou hast studied; and that We may make it clear to a people who know.

وَكَذٰلِكَ نُصَرِّفُ الْاٰيٰتِ وَلِيَقُوْلُوْا دَرَسْتَ وَلِنُبَيِّنَهٗ لِقَوْمٍ يَّعْلَمُوْنَ ○

107 Follow that which is revealed to thee from thy Lord — there is no god but He; and turn away from the polytheists.

اِتَّبِعْ مَآ اُوْحِيَ اِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ ۚ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَاَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ○

108 And if Allāh had pleased, they would not have set up others (with Him). And We have not appointed thee a keeper over them, and thou art not placed in charge of them.

وَلَوْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ مَآ اَشْرَكُوْا ۗ وَمَا جَعَلْنٰكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيْظًا ۚ وَمَآ اَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِوَكِيْلٍ ○

109 And abuse not those whom they call upon besides Allāh, lest, exceeding the limits, they abuse Allāh through ignorance. Thus to every people have We made their deeds fair-seeming; then to their Lord is their return so He will inform them of what they did.[809]

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللّٰهَ عَدْوًاۢ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۗ كَذٰلِكَ زَيَّنَّا لِكُلِّ اُمَّةٍ عَمَلَهُمْ ۠ ثُمَّ اِلٰى رَبِّهِمْ مَّرْجِعُهُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ○

110 And they swear their strongest oaths by Allāh that if a sign come to them they would certainly believe in it. Say: Signs are with Allāh. And what should make you know that when they come they believe not?[810]

وَاَقْسَمُوْا بِاللّٰهِ جَهْدَ اَيْمَانِهِمْ لَئِنْ جَآءَتْهُمْ اٰيَةٌ لَّيُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهَا ۗ قُلْ اِنَّمَا الْاٰيٰتُ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ وَمَا يُشْعِرُكُمْ ۙ اَنَّهَآ اِذَا جَآءَتْ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ○

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consort; otherwise the word *son* will have to be taken simply as a metaphor; see 161.

808 The physical vision of man, working as it does only within narrow limits and being able only to see bodies, cannot comprehend the *Infinite One*. He is the all-pervading Spirit, and can be seen only with the spiritual eye.

809 Here the Muslims are forbidden to abuse even the idols of other people, though their worship is condemned in the strongest terms. It may be added that the clearing of the Ka'bah of idols when Makkah fell into the hands of the Holy Prophet, does not in any way contradict this verse, for to abolish the worship of idols and to abuse them are not the same.

The *deeds* which are described as having been made fair-seeming to men are the *good deeds* which are shown by conscience and reason to be fair, not such deeds as appear only under some delusion to be fair, while they are not really so; see v. 43 and v. 138.

810 Many signs of the Prophet's truth had appeared while the Prophet was still at Makkah but they still went on demanding signs. The demand referred to here seems to relate to a particular sign, the sign of the overthrow of their power. The reply to this demand is that signs are with Allāh. These words clearly mean that the sign which they demanded would be shown and that Allāh

111 And We turn their hearts and their sights, even as they did not believe in it the first time; and We leave them in their inordinacy, blindly wandering on.[811]

وَنُقَلِّبُ أَفْئِدَتَهُمْ وَأَبْصَارَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ
يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَنَذَرُهُمْ فِي
طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ۝

PART VIII

SECTION 14 : **Polytheists' Opposition**

112 And even if We send down to them the angels and the dead speak to them and We bring together all things before them, they would not believe unless Allāh please, but most of them are ignorant.[812]

وَلَوْ أَنَّنَا نَزَّلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ وَكَلَّمَهُمُ
الْمَوْتٰى وَحَشَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ قُبُلًا مَّا
كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوٓا إِلَّآ أَنْ يَّشَآءَ اللّٰهُ وَلٰكِنَّ
أَكْثَرَهُمْ يَجْهَلُونَ ۝

113 And thus did We make for every prophet an enemy, the devils from among men and jinn,[813] some of them inspiring others with gilded speech to deceive (them). And if thy Lord pleased, they would not do it, so leave them alone with what they forge —

وَكَذٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيٰطِينَ
الْإِنْسِ وَالْجِنِّ يُوحِي بَعْضُهُمْ إِلٰى بَعْضٍ
زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا ۚ وَلَوْ شَآءَ رَبُّكَ
مَا فَعَلُوهُ فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُونَ ۝

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had the power to show all kinds of signs. But even then they would not believe. The first sign of the overthrow of the power of the Quraish appeared in the battle of Badr, but they did not believe even then.

811 The *turning of their hearts and sights* is *Allāh's leaving them in their inordinacy,* as explained by the verse itself. And even this is due to their own action in rejecting the truth when it first came to them. When truth is not accepted and an attitude of enmity is assumed towards it, the heart becomes estranged from it, and this growing estrangement is termed the turning away of the heart from it.

812 The subject of v. 111 is continued here. There are always some men who assume such an attitude of hostility towards Truth that they turn a deaf ear to every argument, and it is of such leaders of evil that this verse speaks; see next verse. The coming of the angels stands for the execution of the decree of their punishment. The speaking of the dead refers either to the raising of the spiritually dead to life (see v. 123), or to the evidence of those who had passed away before the Prophet, being given through their writings. And lastly, by the bringing together of all things is meant the bringing together of things relating to their punishment. The meaning is that some of the opponents are so blind that the clearest of signs or proofs would not convince them.

813 By the men and the jinn here are apparently meant the ordinary men and the leaders, suggesting to each other varnished tales of falsehood. See 822 for a fuller discussion of the word jinn.

114 And that the hearts of those who believe not in the Hereafter may incline thereto, and that they may be pleased with it, and that they may earn what they are earning.

وَلِتَصۡغٰۤى اِلَيۡهِ اَفۡـِٕدَةُ الَّذِيۡنَ لَا يُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ بِالۡاٰخِرَةِ وَلِيَرۡضَوۡهُ وَلِيَقۡتَرِفُوۡا مَا هُمۡ مُّقۡتَرِفُوۡنَ ۝

115 Shall I then seek a judge other than Allāh, when He it is Who has sent down to you the Book fully explained. And those whom We have given the Book know that it is revealed by thy Lord with truth, so be not thou of the disputers.

اَفَغَيۡرَ اللّٰهِ اَبۡتَغِىۡ حَكَمًا وَّهُوَ الَّذِىۡۤ اَنۡزَلَ اِلَيۡكُمُ الۡكِتٰبَ مُفَصَّلًا ؕ وَالَّذِيۡنَ اٰتَيۡنٰهُمُ الۡكِتٰبَ يَعۡلَمُوۡنَ اَنَّهٗ مُنَزَّلٌ مِّنۡ رَّبِّكَ بِالۡحَقِّ فَلَا تَكُوۡنَنَّ مِنَ الۡمُمۡتَرِيۡنَ ۝

116 And the word of thy Lord has been accomplished truly and justly. There is none who can change His words; and He is the Hearer, the Knower.[814]

وَتَمَّتۡ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ صِدۡقًا وَّعَدۡلًا ؕ لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمٰتِهٖ ۚ وَهُوَ السَّمِيۡعُ الۡعَلِيۡمُ ۝

117 And if thou obey most of those in the earth, they will lead thee astray from Allāh's way. They follow naught but conjecture, and they only lie.

وَاِنۡ تُطِعۡ اَكۡثَرَ مَنۡ فِى الۡاَرۡضِ يُضِلُّوۡكَ عَنۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنۡ يَّتَّبِعُوۡنَ اِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَاِنۡ هُمۡ اِلَّا يَخۡرُصُوۡنَ ۝

118. Surely thy Lord — He knows best who goes astray from His way, and He knows best the guided ones.

اِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ اَعۡلَمُ مَنۡ يَّضِلُّ عَنۡ سَبِيۡلِهٖ ۚ وَهُوَ اَعۡلَمُ بِالۡمُهۡتَدِيۡنَ ۝

119 Eat, then, of that on which Allāh's name has been mentioned, if you are believers in His messages.[815]

فَكُلُوۡا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسۡمُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيۡهِ اِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ بِاٰيٰتِهٖ مُؤۡمِنِيۡنَ ۝

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814 The *word* signifies the prophetic word; see 770.

815 The establishment of the doctrine of Divine Unity, which is the object of this chapter, required the abolition of all idolatrous practices, among which was the practice of slaughtering animals in the names of idols, and vv. 119-122 deal with this subject which is introduced by an order to eat only such animals as have been slaughtered in the name of Allāh. Thus it is allowed to Muslims to slaughter animals for food, but the condition is here laid down that Allāh's name must be mentioned when the animal is slaughtered. There is no doubt that the taking of a life, even though it be the life of an animal, bespeaks a kind of disregard for life, and it is allowed by God, only because the full physical development of man requires the use of the flesh of animals. It is, however, allowed subject to the condition that Allāh's name be mentioned at the time of the slaughter, and this is a reminder to man that this act is made lawful only by Divine permission, for the attainment of a necessary purpose. Thus, if aiming

120 And what reason have you that you should not eat of that on which Allāh's name is mentioned, when He has already made plain to you what He has forbidden to you — excepting that which you are compelled to.[815a] And surely many lead (people) astray by their low desires through ignorance. Surely thy Lord — He best knows the transgressors.

وَمَا لَكُمْ اَلَّا تَاْكُلُوْا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْهِ وَقَدْ فَصَّلَ لَكُمْ مَّا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ اِلَّا مَا اضْطُرِرْتُمْ اِلَيْهِ ؕ وَ اِنَّ كَثِيْرًا لَّيُضِلُّوْنَ بِاَهْوَآئِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ؕ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِالْمُعْتَدِيْنَ ○

121 And avoid open sins and secret ones. Surely they who earn sin will be rewarded for what they have earned.[815b]

وَذَرُوْا ظَاهِرَ الْاِثْمِ وَ بَاطِنَهٗ ؕ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَكْسِبُوْنَ الْاِثْمَ سَيُجْزَوْنَ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَقْتَرِفُوْنَ ○

122 And eat not of that on which Allāh's name has not been mentioned, and that is surely a transgression.[816] And certainly the devils inspire their friends to contend with you; and if you obey them, you will surely be polytheists.

وَلَا تَاْكُلُوْا مِمَّا لَمْ يُذْكَرِ اسْمُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْهِ وَ اِنَّهٗ لَفِسْقٌ ؕ وَ اِنَّ الشَّيٰطِيْنَ لَيُوْحُوْنَ اِلٰٓى اَوْلِيٰٓـئِهِمْ لِيُجَادِلُوْكُمْ ۚ وَاِنْ اَطَعْتُمُوْهُمْ اِنَّكُمْ لَمُشْرِكُوْنَ ○ ع

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at the abolition of idolatrous practices, the order is based on moral grounds, and as a safeguard against the development of habits of disregard for human life itself, which is a sad aspect of the development of the material civilization of our day.

815a The reference in these words is to what is said in an earlier revelation, regarding the prohibition of carrion and blood and the flesh of swine and animals slaughtered in the name of others than Allāh; see 16:115. The same subject is again referred to in v. 146 in this chapter, as also in 2:173 and in greater detail in 5:3, both of these being Madīnah revelations.

815b It is a very low view of morals which considers only sins against society to be hateful. The Muslim is here commanded to consider *open* and *secret* sins to be equally hateful. In fact there are very few people who commit open sins as compared with those who are guilty of secret sins.

816 According to this verse a Muslim is allowed only to eat of the flesh of an animal slaughtered in the name of Allāh. But 5:5 allows to Muslims the *food of the People of the Book,* by which is meant according to the ḥadīth, an animal slaughtered by the People of the Book. The only condition added is that "if the slaughterer was heard uttering a name other than that of Allāh, the flesh was not to be eaten, but if he was not so heard, then it was lawful for the Muslims to eat it" (B. 72:22). Therefore the words under discussion are explained by the majority as containing only a prohibition against the eating of that which is slaughtered in the name of others than Allāh. See further 666.

SECTION 15 : **The Chief Opponents**

123 Is he who was dead, then We raised him to life and made for him a light by which he walks among the people, like him whose likeness is that of one in darkness whence he cannot come forth ?[817] Thus their doings are made fair-seeming to the disbelievers.

أَوَمَنْ كَانَ مَيْتًا فَأَحْيَيْنٰهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ
نُورًا يَّمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَنْ مَّثَلُهُ
فِي الظُّلُمٰتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِّنْهَا ۚ كَذٰلِكَ
زُيِّنَ لِلْكٰفِرِينَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ○

124 And thus have We made in every town the leaders of its guilty ones, that they may make plans therein. And they plan not but against themselves, and they perceive not.

وَكَذٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا فِي كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ أَكٰبِرَ
مُجْرِمِيهَا لِيَمْكُرُوا فِيهَا ۚ وَمَا يَمْكُرُونَ
إِلَّا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ○

125 And when a message comes to them they say: We will not believe till we are given the like of that which Allāh's messengers are given. Allāh best knows where to place His message.[819] Humiliation from Allāh and severe chastisement will surely befall the guilty for their planning.

وَإِذَا جَآءَتْهُمْ اٰيَةٌ قَالُوا لَنْ نُّؤْمِنَ
حَتّٰى نُؤْتٰى مِثْلَ مَآ أُوتِيَ رُسُلُ اللّٰهِ ۘ اَللّٰهُ
أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسٰلَتَهُ ۗ سَيُصِيبُ
الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا صَغَارٌ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ وَعَذَابٌ
شَدِيدٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَمْكُرُونَ ○

126 So whomsoever Allāh intends to guide, He expands his breast for Islām, and whomsoever He intends to leave in error, he makes his breast *strait (and) narrow as though he were ascending upwards. Thus does Allāh lay uncleanness on those who believe not.[821]

فَمَنْ يُّرِدِ اللّٰهُ أَنْ يَّهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ
لِلْإِسْلَامِ ۚ وَمَنْ يُّرِدْ أَنْ يُّضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ
صَدْرَهُ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا كَأَنَّمَا يَصَّعَّدُ فِي
السَّمَآءِ ۚ كَذٰلِكَ يَجْعَلُ اللّٰهُ الرِّجْسَ
عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

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817 These words throw a flood of light on many of the verses which speak of the raising of the dead to life through the prophets. The reference here is to the great transformation which was already being brought about through the Holy Qur'ān. Not only were the dead raised to life, but they had now with them the light by which they showed the way to others. The concluding words show that, notwithstanding the great transformation which was being worked before their eyes, the leaders of mischief went on opposing the Truth as if it were a good deed.

819 If Allāh really meant to reveal His message, the disbelievers said, why was it not revealed directly to every one of them ? The answer is that everyone is not fit to communicate with the Divine Being, and Allāh revealed His message only to a man who was fit to receive it.

821 The concluding words of the verse show that uncleanness of the heart,

127 And this is the path of thy Lord, (a) straight (path). Indeed We have made the messages clear for a people who mind.

وَهٰذَا صِرَاطُ رَبِّكَ مُسْتَقِيْمًا ۭ قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْاٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَّذَّكَّرُوْنَ ○

128 Theirs is the abode of peace with their Lord, and He is their Friend because of what they do.

لَهُمْ دَارُ السَّلٰمِ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ○

129 And on the day when He will gather them all together: O assembly of jinn,[822] you took away a great part of men. And their friends from among men will say: Our Lord, some of us profited by others and we have reached our appointed term which Thou didst appoint for us. He will say: The Fire is your abode — you shall abide therein, except as Allāh please. Surely thy Lord is Wise, Knowing.[823]

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيْعًا ۚ يٰمَعْشَرَ الْجِنِّ قَدِ اسْتَكْثَرْتُمْ مِّنَ الْاِنْسِ وَقَالَ اَوْلِيٰٓؤُهُمْ مِّنَ الْاِنْسِ رَبَّنَا اسْتَمْتَعَ بَعْضُنَا بِبَعْضٍ وَّبَلَغْنَآ اَجَلَنَا الَّذِيْٓ اَجَّلْتَ لَنَا ۭ قَالَ النَّارُ مَثْوٰىكُمْ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَآ اِلَّا مَا شَآءَ اللّٰهُ ۭ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيْمٌ عَلِيْمٌ ○

130 And thus do We make some of the iniquitous to befriend others on account of what they earn.

وَكَذٰلِكَ نُوَلِّيْ بَعْضَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ بَعْضًا بِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْسِبُوْنَ ○

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which makes a man's *breast strait and narrow*, as though *he were ascending upwards*, is the result of a man's own disbelief and rejection of the truth.

822 The word jinn is derived from *janna*, meaning *he covered* or *concealed* or *hid* or *protected*. The class of beings that goes under this name stands in the Holy Qur'ān for the spirits of evil or the beings that invite man to evil, as opposed to the angels, who invite him to good, both being alike invisible to the human eye. But there is a wider use of the word in Arabic literature as well as in the Qur'ān. One signification of the word is explained in 2580, and I would refer the reader to that footnote. But the word is also applied in the Qur'ān to great potentates or powerful leaders who, through their importance and detachment from the masses, do not mix freely with them, so they remain distant or "hidden from their eyes". In Arabic literature such a use was permitted. A verse of Mūsā Ibn Jābir in which the word *jinn* occurs, is thus explained by LL on the authority of Tabrezī on Ḥam: "*And my companions, who were like the jinn, did not flee* when I came to them and informed them", where the word *jinn* is translated as meaning *companions who were like the jinn*. And Tabrezī says further that *the Arabs liken a man who is sharp and clever in affairs to a jinnī and a shaiṭān*, and hence they say, *nafarat jinnu-hū* (literally, *his jinn fled away*), meaning *he became weak and abject*. Therefore a man's companion, without whose help he would be weak and abject, was called a *jinnī*.

What is meant by the assembly of *jinn* here and by *jinn* in v. 131? This is made clear if we read this verse with those following. In this verse *jinn* are spoken of as *friends of men*, and v. 130, which continues the subject, speaks of the iniquitous as befriending one another, while in v. 131 men and jinn are spoken of as a single *ma'shar* or assembly, for which see 824.

823, see next page.

SECTION 16 : **Evils of Idolatry**

131 O community of jinn and men, did there not come to you messengers from among you, relating to you My messages and warning you of the meeting of this day of yours?[824] They will say: We bear witness against ourselves. And this world's life deceived them, and they will bear witness against themselves that they were disbelievers.

يٰمَعْشَرَ الْجِنِّ وَالْاِنْسِ اَلَمْ يَاْتِكُمْ
رُسُلٌ مِّنْكُمْ يَقُصُّوْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ اٰيٰتِيْ
وَيُنْذِرُوْنَكُمْ لِقَآءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هٰذَا ؕ قَالُوْا
شَهِدْنَا عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِنَا وَغَرَّتْهُمُ الْحَيٰوةُ
الدُّنْيَا وَشَهِدُوْا عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ اَنَّهُمْ
كَانُوْا كٰفِرِيْنَ ○

132 This is because thy Lord would not destroy towns unjustly while their people are negligent.[825]

ذٰلِكَ اَنْ لَّمْ يَكُنْ رَّبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ الْقُرٰى
بِظُلْمٍ وَّ اَهْلُهَا غٰفِلُوْنَ ○

133 And for all are degrees according to their doings. And thy Lord is not heedless of what they do.

وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجٰتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوْا ؕ وَمَا رَبُّكَ
بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ○

134 And thy Lord is the Self-sufficient One, the Lord of mercy. If He please, He may remove you, and make whom He pleases successors after you, even as He raised you up from the seed of other people.

وَرَبُّكَ الْغَنِيُّ ذُو الرَّحْمَةِ ؕ اِنْ يَّشَاْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ
وَيَسْتَخْلِفْ مِنْ بَعْدِكُمْ مَّا يَشَآءُ كَمَآ
اَنْشَاَكُمْ مِّنْ ذُرِّيَّةِ قَوْمٍ اٰخَرِيْنَ ○

Again in v. 132, those very jinn are spoken of as being no others than dwellers of the cities which were destroyed on account of their sins, and we know that the *jinn* who dwell in cities are only *men*. The context thus makes it clear that by the *jinn* here are meant the leaders of evil, just as by *shayāṭīn* (devils) in 2:14 are meant *leaders*, for which see 26.

823 The words *except as Allāh please* indicate that those in hell shall after all be delivered from it. For a full discussion on this point, see 1201.

824 *Ma'shar* means *a community whose affair is one and the same — jamā'at-un amru-hum wāḥid-un* — thus you say *ma'shar al-Muslimīn*, which means the community of the Muslims (L). Thus by calling the jinn and men as a single community, the Holy Qur'ān has made it clear that the jinn and the men spoken of here are not two different classes of beings. Again, the jinn and the men are told that messengers had come to them *from among them*, i.e. from among jinn and men. But as the only messengers spoken of in the Qur'ān and other reliable histories of prophets are those who belong to mankind, it follows that the jinn spoken of here belong to mankind, and not to any other class of creation.

825 That is, while the reminder and the warning had not yet come to them. Or, the words mean that it is not for negligence that nations are destroyed; it is only when they become iniquitous and spread mischief in the world that they are overtaken by punishment in this life.

135 Surely that which you are promised will come to pass, and you cannot escape (it).[825a]

إِنَّ مَا تُوعَدُونَ لَآتٍ ۙ وَّمَآ أَنْتُمْ
بِمُعْجِزِينَ ۝

136 Say: O my people, act according to your ability, I too am acting; so you will soon come to know for whom is the (good) end of the abode. Surely the wrongdoers will not succeed.

قُلْ يٰقَوْمِ اعْمَلُوْا عَلٰى مَكَانَتِكُمْ إِنِّيْ
عَامِلٌ ۚ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ۙ مَنْ تَكُوْنُ لَهٗ
عَاقِبَةُ الدَّارِ ۭ إِنَّهٗ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ۝

137 And they set apart a portion for Allāh out of what He has created of tilth and cattle, and say: This is for Allāh — so they assert — and this for our associate-gods. Then that which is for their associate-gods reaches not Allāh, and that which is for Allāh reaches their associate-gods. Evil is what they judge.[826]

وَجَعَلُوْا لِلّٰهِ مِمَّا ذَرَاَ مِنَ الْحَرْثِ وَالْاَنْعَامِ
نَصِيْبًا فَقَالُوْا هٰذَا لِلّٰهِ بِزَعْمِهِمْ وَهٰذَا
لِشُرَكَآئِنَا ۚ فَمَا كَانَ لِشُرَكَآئِهِمْ فَلَا يَصِلُ
إِلَى اللّٰهِ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ لِلّٰهِ فَهُوَ يَصِلُ إِلٰى
شُرَكَآئِهِمْ ۭ سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُوْنَ ۝

138 And thus their associate-gods have made fair-seeming to many polytheists the killing of their children,[828] that they may cause them to perish and obscure for them their religion.[829] And if Allāh had pleased, they would not have done it, so leave them alone with that which they forge.

وَكَذٰلِكَ زَيَّنَ لِكَثِيْرٍ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ
قَتْلَ اَوْلَادِهِمْ شُرَكَآؤُهُمْ لِيُرْدُوْهُمْ
وَلِيَلْبِسُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ دِيْنَهُمْ ۭ وَلَوْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ مَا
فَعَلُوْهُ فَذَرْهُمْ وَمَا يَفْتَرُوْنَ ۝

139 And they say: Such and such cattle and crops are prohibited — none shall eat them except such as we

وَقَالُوْا هٰذِهٖٓ اَنْعَامٌ وَّحَرْثٌ حِجْرٌ ۖ لَّا
يَطْعَمُهَآ إِلَّا مَنْ نَّشَآءُ بِزَعْمِهِمْ وَاَنْعَامٌ

825a Mark again the certainty with which the idolatrous Quraish are told — and through them all the proud opponents of Truth — in this verse and the one preceding, that their authority in their country would cease to exist and another people would be raised in their stead.

826 It was a custom among the Arab idolaters to set apart certain portions of the produce of their fields and their cattle, one portion for Allāh and another portion for the idols. The portion for idols was always applied to their use, but the portion set apart for Allāh, though ordinarily spent to feed the poor and the needy, was in certain cases — for instance, when the portion of the idols was somehow or other destroyed — diverted to the use of the idols (I'Ab-Rz). The portion for the idols was handed over to the priests.

828 This refers to the practice of slaying or burying alive the female children (Rz), and also to the human sacrifices to idols, as they sometimes vowed that, if they had a number of sons, they would sacrifice one of them to an idol (Kf).

829 By introducing these superstitious and evil customs they were making confused and obscure the true religion — the religion of the service of One God.

please[830] — so they assert — and cattle whose backs are forbidden,[831] and cattle on which they would not mention Allāh's name[832] — forging a lie against Him. He will requite them for what they forge.

حُرِّمَتْ ظُهُورُهَا وَأَنْعَامٌ لَّا يَذْكُرُونَ اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا افْتِرَاءً عَلَيْهِ ۚ سَيَجْزِيهِم بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ○

140 And they say: That which is in the wombs of such and such cattle is reserved for our males, and forbidden to our wives, and if it be still-born, they are partners in it. He will reward them for their (false) attribution. Surely He is Wise, Knowing.

وَقَالُوا مَا فِي بُطُونِ هَٰذِهِ الْأَنْعَامِ خَالِصَةٌ لِّذُكُورِنَا وَمُحَرَّمٌ عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِنَا ۖ وَإِن يَكُن مَّيْتَةً فَهُمْ فِيهِ شُرَكَاءُ ۚ سَيَجْزِيهِمْ وَصْفَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ○

141 They are losers indeed who kill their children foolishly without knowledge, and forbid that which Allāh has provided for them, forging a lie against Allāh. They indeed go astray, and are not guided.

قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِينَ قَتَلُوا أَوْلَادَهُمْ سَفَهًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَحَرَّمُوا مَا رَزَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ افْتِرَاءً عَلَى اللَّهِ ۚ قَدْ ضَلُّوا وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ ○

SECTION 17 : **Idolaters' Self-imposed Prohibitions**

142 And He it is Who produces gardens, trellised and untrellised, and palms and seed-produce of which the fruits[833] are of various sorts, and olives and pomegranates, like and unlike. Eat of its fruit when it bears fruit, and pay the due of it on the day of its reaping, and be not prodigal. Surely He loves not the prodigals;

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنشَأَ جَنَّاتٍ مَّعْرُوشَاتٍ وَغَيْرَ مَعْرُوشَاتٍ وَالنَّخْلَ وَالزَّرْعَ مُخْتَلِفًا أُكُلُهُ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالرُّمَّانَ مُتَشَابِهًا وَغَيْرَ مُتَشَابِهٍ ۚ كُلُوا مِن ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ وَآتُوا حَقَّهُ يَوْمَ حَصَادِهِ ۖ وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ ○

830 Only devotees of idols and males could eat them, and not females.

831 Such animals are meant as the *baḥīrah*, the *sā'ibah*, etc. See 742.

832 That is, such as were sacrificed in the name of idols. All these along with what is said in the next two verses are denounced as being idolatrous practices.

833 The word *ukul* here, as well as in 2:265 and 13:35, is equivalent to *thamar* (TA), and means *fruit*.

143 And of the cattle (He has created) some for burden and some for slaughter.[834] Eat of that which Allāh has given you and follow not the foot-steps of the devil. Surely he is your open enemy —

وَمِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ حَمُولَةً وَّفَرْشًا ۚ كُلُوْا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوْا خُطُوٰتِ الشَّيْطٰنِ ۚ إِنَّهٗ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِيْنٌ ۝

144 Eight in pairs — of the sheep two and of the goats two. Say: Has He forbidden the two males or the two females or that which the wombs of the two females contain? Inform me with knowledge, if you are truthful;[835]

ثَمٰنِيَةَ أَزْوَاجٍ ۚ مِنَ الضَّأْنِ اثْنَيْنِ وَمِنَ الْمَعْزِ اثْنَيْنِ ۚ قُلْ ءٰٓالذَّكَرَيْنِ حَرَّمَ أَمِ الْأُنْثَيَيْنِ أَمَّا اشْتَمَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ أَرْحَامُ الْأُنْثَيَيْنِ ۚ نَبِّـُٔوْنِيْ بِعِلْمٍ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ۝

145 And of the camels two and of the cows two. Say: Has He forbidden the two males or the two females or that which the wombs of the two females contain? Or were you witnesses when Allāh enjoined you this? Who is then more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allāh to lead men astray without knowledge? Surely Allāh guides not the iniquitous people.

وَمِنَ الْإِبِلِ اثْنَيْنِ وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ اثْنَيْنِ ۚ قُلْ ءٰٓالذَّكَرَيْنِ حَرَّمَ أَمِ الْأُنْثَيَيْنِ أَمَّا اشْتَمَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ أَرْحَامُ الْأُنْثَيَيْنِ ۚ أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَآءَ إِذْ وَصّٰىكُمُ اللّٰهُ بِهٰذَا ۚ فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا لِّيُضِلَّ النَّاسَ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ۝

SECTION 18 : **Prohibited Foods**

146 Say, I find not in that which is revealed to me aught forbidden for an eater to eat thereof, except that it be what dies of itself, or blood poured forth, or flesh of swine — for that

قُلْ لَّآ أَجِدُ فِيْ مَآ أُوْحِيَ إِلَيَّ مُحَرَّمًا عَلٰى طَاعِمٍ يَّطْعَمُهٗٓ إِلَّآ أَنْ يَّكُوْنَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ دَمًا مَّسْفُوْحًا أَوْ لَحْمَ خِنْزِيْرٍ فَإِنَّهٗ

834 *Farsh* (from *farasha,* i.e. *he spread* it) means *what is spread,* but here, according to lexicologists as well as commentators, it signifies *animals fit for slaughter,* because they are thrown down for slaughter (T, LL). The *ḥamūlah* (from *ḥaml, bearing of burden*) means *beasts of burden.* The *farsh* are not fit for carrying burden, hence the distinction; but the *ḥamūlah* serve both purposes. This is shown by the words that follow — *eat of that which Allāh has given you.*

835 The cattle spoken of in the previous verse are eight in pairs, i.e. counting the male and the female separately, and these are enumerated in vv. 144 and 145. The Arabs considered those animals which were otherwise lawful for them to be unlawful in particular cases. These practices, which were all superstitious, resulting from idol-worship, are here condemned.

رِجْسٌ أَوْ فِسْقًا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ ۚ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ○

surely is unclean — or what is a transgression, other than (the name of) Allāh having been invoked on it. But whoever is driven to necessity, not desiring nor exceeding the limit, then surely thy Lord is Forgiving, Merciful.[836]

وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَّمْنَا كُلَّ ذِي ظُفُرٍ ۖ وَمِنَ الْبَقَرِ وَالْغَنَمِ حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ شُحُومَهُمَا إِلَّا مَا حَمَلَتْ ظُهُورُهُمَا أَوِ الْحَوَايَا أَوْ مَا اخْتَلَطَ بِعَظْمٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ جَزَيْنَاهُم بِبَغْيِهِمْ ۖ وَإِنَّا لَصَادِقُونَ ○

147 And to those who are Jews We forbade every animal having claws,[837] and of oxen and sheep We forbade them the fat thereof,[838] except such as was on their backs or the entrails or what was mixed with bones. This was a punishment We gave them on account of their rebellion, and We are surely Truthful.

فَإِن كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُل رَّبُّكُمْ ذُو رَحْمَةٍ وَاسِعَةٍ ۖ وَلَا يُرَدُّ بَأْسُهُ عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ○

148 But if they give thee the lie, then say : Your Lord is the Lord of all-encompassing mercy ; and His punishment cannot be averted from the guilty people.[839]

سَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا أَشْرَكْنَا وَلَا آبَاؤُنَا وَلَا حَرَّمْنَا مِن شَيْءٍ

149 Those who are polytheists say : If Allāh pleased we would not have set up (aught with Him) nor our

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836 For the prohibition made known here reasons are also given, the reason for the prohibition of what dies of itself and blood and swine's flesh being that these things are *unclean,* while the reason for the prohibition of animals on which other than Allāh's name is invoked is different, viz., *fisq,* or a transgression of the Divine commandment, which requires all things to be avoided which are in any way associated with idolatry. The uncleanness in the case of the first three consists in their pernicious effect upon the intellectual, the physical, and the moral systems respectively, while the transgression in the case of the last affects the spiritual conditions.

837 According to I'Ab it means only *the camel,* or *the camel and the ostrich.* Rz is of opinion that by *ẓufr* here is meant *talons* and *claws.* According to Mjd and Qt the *dhi-ẓufr* means *every beast and bird that has not divided toes, as the camel, ostrich, goose,* and *duck* (T, LL). The prohibition of using the camel for food, though a punishment for the rebellion of the Jews as stated further on, was a blessing to them. On account of their disobedience to Moses they had to remain in the wilderness for a long time, where the camel was of great service to them in their journeys from place to place.

838 "You shall eat no manner of fat, of ox, or of sheep, or of goat" (Lev. 7 : 23).

839 The all-encompassing mercy of Allāh is mentioned even in speaking of those who rejected the Holy Prophet. It was because of the mercy of Allāh that the disbelievers were not destroyed immediately ; but as punishing the "guilty" is in itself a mercy towards the weak and the oppressed, they are warned that they will not escape punishment if they persist in their evil ways.

fathers, nor would we have made anything unlawful. Thus did those before them reject (the truth) until they tasted Our punishment. Say: Have you any knowledge so you would bring it forth to us? You only follow a conjecture and you only tell lies.

كَذٰلِكَ كَذَّبَ الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ حَتّٰى ذَاقُوْا بَأْسَنَا ؕ قُلْ هَلْ عِنْدَكُمْ مِّنْ عِلْمٍ فَتُخْرِجُوْهُ لَنَا ؕ اِنْ تَتَّبِعُوْنَ اِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَ اِنْ اَنْتُمْ اِلَّا تَخْرُصُوْنَ ۝

150 Say: Then Allāh's is the conclusive argument; so if He had pleased, He would have guided you all.[840]

قُلْ فَلِلّٰهِ الْحُجَّةُ الْبَالِغَةُ ۚ فَلَوْ شَآءَ لَهَدٰىكُمْ اَجْمَعِيْنَ ۝

151 Say: Bring your witnesses who bear witness that Allāh forbade this. If they bear witness, then do not thou bear witness with them. And follow not the low desires of those who reject Our messages and those who believe not in the Hereafter, and they make (others) equal with their Lord.

قُلْ هَلُمَّ شُهَدَآءَكُمُ الَّذِيْنَ يَشْهَدُوْنَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ حَرَّمَ هٰذَا ۚ فَاِنْ شَهِدُوْا فَلَا تَشْهَدْ مَعَهُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ اَهْوَآءَ الَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا وَالَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ وَهُمْ بِرَبِّهِمْ يَعْدِلُوْنَ ۝

SECTION 19: **Guiding Rules of Life**

152 Say: Come! I will recite what your Lord has forbidden to you: Associate naught with Him and do good to parents and slay not your children for (fear of) poverty — We provide for you and for them — and draw not nigh to indecencies, open or secret, and kill not the soul which Allāh has made sacred except in the course of justice. This He enjoins upon you that you may understand.

قُلْ تَعَالَوْا اَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ اَلَّا تُشْرِكُوْا بِهٖ شَيْـًٔا وَّبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ اِحْسَانًا ۚ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوْٓا اَوْلَادَكُمْ مِّنْ اِمْلَاقٍ ؕ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ وَاِيَّاهُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ ۚ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِيْ حَرَّمَ اللّٰهُ اِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ؕ ذٰلِكُمْ وَصّٰىكُمْ بِهٖ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُوْنَ ۝

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840 The previous verse records the statement of the disbelievers: "If Allāh pleased, we would not have associated aught with Him". The reply is that Allāh reveals His will through His chosen messengers, so bring forth any Divine revelation that you possess sanctioning idolatry. The argument is here carried on further. Allāh does not mislead men, but, on the other hand, sends His prophets to guide them into the right path. His pleasure is therefore that all men should walk in the right path and serve only one Master. Is not that a conclusive

153 And approach not the property of the orphan except in the best manner,[841] until he attains his maturity. And give full measure and weight with equity — We impose not on any soul a duty except to the extent of its ability. And when you speak, be just, though it be (against) a relative.[842] And fulfil Allāh's covenant. This He enjoins on you that you may be mindful ;

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ أَشُدَّهُ ۚ وَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ لَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۚ وَإِذَا قُلْتُمْ فَاعْدِلُوا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ ۚ وَبِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ أَوْفُوا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٥٢﴾

154 And (know) that this is My path, the right one, so follow it, and follow not (other) ways, for they will lead you away from His way. This He enjoins on you that you may keep your duty.

وَأَنَّ هَٰذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ ۚ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٥٣﴾

155 Again, We gave the Book to Moses to complete (Our blessings) on him who would do good, and making plain all things[843] and a guidance and a mercy, so that they might believe in the meeting with their Lord.

ثُمَّ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ تَمَامًا عَلَى الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ وَتَفْصِيلًا لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لَعَلَّهُمْ بِلِقَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٥٤﴾

SECTION 20 : **The Goal for the Faithful**

156 And this is a Book We have revealed, full of blessings ; so follow it and keep your duty that mercy may be shown to you,[844]

وَهَٰذَا كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكٌ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿١٥٥﴾

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argument against the false assertion of the idolaters ? The guidance of Allāh is, moreover, brought through prophets, and men are never compelled to accept the right way ; much less could they be compelled to follow the wrong course, as the idolaters thought. Man was created with a will free within certain limits to act as he pleases.

841 That is, unless you do it with the object of improving it or making it profitable. Wages of the guardian may be paid from it, for which see 4:6 and 543.

842 Islām requires a man to be so upright as not to be led away by the ties of relationship. Truth is not to be sacrificed to any interest but every interest must be sacrificed to truth.

843 By *all things* are meant all those things needed for the guidance of the Israelites.

844 It should be noted that as the Qur'ān is mentioned along with the previous revelations, the word *mubārak* is added as signifying *the continuance for ever of*

157 Lest you should say that the Book was revealed only to two parties before us and we were truly unaware of what they read,[845]

أَنْ تَقُولُوٓا إِنَّمَآ أُنْزِلَ الْكِتٰبُ عَلٰى طَآئِفَتَيْنِ
مِنْ قَبْلِنَا ۖ وَإِنْ كُنَّا عَنْ دِرَاسَتِهِمْ لَغٰفِلِينَ ۝

158 Or, lest you should say : If the Book had been revealed to us, we would have been better guided than they. So indeed there has come to you clear proof from your Lord, and guidance and mercy. Who is then more unjust than he who rejects Allāh's messages and turns away from them ? We reward those who turn away from Our messages with an evil chastisement because they turned away.

أَوْ تَقُولُوا لَوْ أَنَّآ أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا الْكِتٰبُ لَكُنَّآ
أَهْدٰى مِنْهُمْ ۚ فَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ بَيِّنَةٌ مِّنْ
رَّبِّكُمْ وَهُدًى وَّرَحْمَةٌ ۚ فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ
مِمَّنْ كَذَّبَ بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَصَدَفَ عَنْهَا ۗ
سَنَجْزِي الَّذِينَ يَصْدِفُونَ عَنْ اٰيٰتِنَا
سُوٓءَ الْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْدِفُونَ ۝

159 They wait not aught but that the angels should come to them, or that thy Lord should come,[846] or that some of the signs of thy Lord should come.[847] On the day when some of the signs of thy Lord come, its faith will not profit a soul which believed not before, nor earned good through its faith. Say : Wait ; we too are waiting.

هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّآ أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ
أَوْ يَأْتِيَ رَبُّكَ أَوْ يَأْتِيَ بَعْضُ اٰيٰتِ رَبِّكَ ۗ
يَوْمَ يَأْتِي بَعْضُ اٰيٰتِ رَبِّكَ لَا يَنْفَعُ
نَفْسًا إِيمٰنُهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ اٰمَنَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ
أَوْ كَسَبَتْ فِيٓ إِيمٰنِهَا خَيْرًا ۗ قُلِ انْتَظِرُوٓا
إِنَّا مُنْتَظِرُونَ ۝

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the blessings which a thing possesses. The object is to show that, whereas the blessings of other books came to an end after a time, the Qur'ān shall for ever remain a source of blessings to its followers.

845 Because in Arabia there lived only the Jews and the Christians besides the idolaters, the Arabs spoke of only two parties to whom the Book was given.

846 For a similar expression see 2:210 and 268. Also see 812. Similar words occur also in 16:33: "They wait not aught but that the angels should come to them or thy Lord's command should come to pass". Here the words are *that thy Lord should come.* Thus the coming of the Lord carries the same significance as the coming to pass of His commandment, or the execution of His decree, i.e. the final doom of the opponents. The coming of the angels stands for the smaller visitations or distresses the opponents witnessed in the battles which they fought to annihilate Islām, in which the coming of angels is clearly spoken of ; see 3:124, 125 ; 8:9.

847 The execution of punishment having already been spoken of in the coming of angels and the coming of the Lord, what is meant by coming of "some of the signs of thy Lord"? According to a ḥadīth there is a reference here to the signs which would precede the day of Resurrection, such as the appearance of Anti-Christ and the advent of the Messiah and other connected signs. But

160 As for those who split up their religion and became sects, thou hast no concern with them. Their affair is only with Allāh,[848] then He will inform them of what they did.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيَعًا لَّسْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ ۚ إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ○

161 Whoever brings a good deed will have tenfold like it, and whoever brings an evil deed, will be recompensed only with the like of it, and they shall not be wronged.[849]

مَن جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا ۖ وَمَن جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَىٰ إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ○

162 Say : As for me, my Lord has guided me to the right path — a right religion, the faith of Abraham, the upright one, and he was not of the polytheists.

قُلْ إِنَّنِي هَدَانِي رَبِّي إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ۚ دِينًا قِيَمًا مِّلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۚ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ○

163 Say : My prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are surely for Allāh, the Lord of the worlds —[850]

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○

164 No associate has He. And this am I commanded, and I am the first of those who submit.

لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ۖ وَبِذَٰلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ○

165 Say : Shall I seek a Lord other than Allāh, while He is the Lord of all things ? And no soul earns (evil) but against itself. Nor does a bearer of

قُلْ أَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ أَبْغِي رَبًّا وَهُوَ رَبُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ۚ وَلَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ إِلَّا عَلَيْهَا ۚ

there is one difficulty in accepting this to be the interpretation of these words. The coming of the Messiah is according to all authorities a sign of a general spiritual awakening to be brought about in the world, which in other words is the prevalence of Islām, but here we are told that when some of the signs come, faith would not benefit a man. The only time when faith does not benefit a man is the approach of death, and hence I am of opinion that by " some of the signs of thy Lord " are meant clear signs of approach of death. A man's death is in one sense also his resurrection : " Whoever dies, his resurrection comes to pass " (Msh. 26 : 6).

848 This refers primarily to the Jews and the Christians, but includes sectarians of all religions who split up the unity of their religion and become divided into sects, each sect dissipating its energy in wrangling with others, instead of advancing the common cause.

849 No other sacred book gives such prominence to the preponderance of the quality of mercy in the Divine Being. While evil must have its evil consequence, it is only its like, but virtue brings a tenfold reward. According to a saying of the Holy Prophet, evil is pardoned or recompensed with its like, while good brings from a tenfold to a seven-hundredfold reward (B. 81 : 33). Thus the verse mentions only the maximum punishment of evil and the minimum reward of good.

850 The idea of entire submission to the Divine Being conveyed in the word

burden bear the burden of another.[851] Then to your Lord is your return, so He will inform you of that in which you differed.

وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِّزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُم مَّرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ○

166 And He it is Who has made you successors in the land[852] and exalted some of you in rank above others, that He may try you by what He has given you. Surely thy Lord is Quick in requiting (evil), and He is surely the Forgiving, the Merciful.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَائِفَ الْأَرْضِ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَكُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ سَرِيعُ الْعِقَابِ وَإِنَّهُ لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ○

Islām finds its perfect manifestation in the Holy Prophet, who is the first of the Muslims (v. 164). There are different motives, love of one's self, of one's wife and children, of one's friends and relatives, of one's country or nation, which prompt a man to action; and there is no doubt that the grander, the purer, and the more selfless the object, the nobler is the deed done; but above even the noblest object that a man can set for himself stands the love of the Divine Being. The deed done may be for the welfare of one's self, or of those dearest to one, or of one's country or nation, but the mainspring of that action must be the love of the Divine Being, for then only is it that perfect disinterestedness combined with absolute justice to all creatures can be achieved. It is the highest goal of human life, and every Muslim is taught to set that goal before himself. He is taught to pray in the words of this verse when he begins his daily prayers, the only difference being that the concluding words of this prayer are *wa ana min al-Muslimīn*, i.e., I am *one of those* who submit, while v. 164, giving a description of the Prophet, ends with the words, I am the *first of those* who submit.

851 "Nor does a bearer of burden bear the burden of another" are the words in which the Christian doctrine of atonement is rejected by the Holy Qur'ān. Elsewhere we have: "That no bearer of burden bears the burden of another, and that man shall have nothing but what he strives for" (53:38, 39). Every man that is born is called *a bearer of burden*, not because he is a sinner, but because he starts life with certain responsibilities of his own. It is groundless to assert that Jesus Christ entered into life without any responsibilities of his own. The study of his life shows him as feeling his own responsibilities and as caring for them.

852 With the highest goal of life before them, the Muslims are now told that they were going to be made rulers in the land. Their exaltation above others, however, was not due to their wealth or to their great political power but simply to the fact that they submitted themselves to God, that their prayers and their sacrifices were not for their nation or their country but for God, Who was the *Rabb*, the Nourisher unto perfection, of the whole of humanity. Hence they were a people who had the betterment of the whole of humanity in view. But even they are told, in the concluding words of the verse, that if they fall off and follow evil ways they will be requited, though the forgiveness and mercy of the Divine Being will ultimately take them by the hand.



CHAPTER 7

Al-A'rāf : THE ELEVATED PLACES

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 24 *sections*; 206 *verses*)

The title of this chapter is taken from the mention of *Al-A'rāf* or *The Elevated Places* on which stand those righteous servants of Allāh who walk perfectly in the ways of truth and goodness.

The prominent theme of this chapter is the truth of Divine revelation, there being occasional references to the doctrine of Divine Unity; hence the references to the histories of previous prophets.

The chapter opens with a statement of the truth of the Divine revelation as granted to the Holy Prophet, and its truth is emphasized by a prophetic reference to the doom of those who oppose the propagation of the truth contained therein. The second section shows that opposition to the Prophet is similar to the devil's opposition to the righteous servants of God, whose prototype is Adam; and is followed in the third section by a warning to all men against the insinuations of the devil. The next four sections are devoted to general statements regarding the advent of prophets, the fate of those who reject and ill-treat them, and the ultimate triumph of the righteous. These are followed by four other sections containing illustrations of these general statements as drawn from the histories of five prophets, whose names, and the prominent incidents of whose lives, were known to the Arabs, viz., Noah, Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, Lot, and Shu'aib. All these prophets, though belonging to different nations and different countries, are mentioned in the chronological order of their appearance. These histories are followed in the twelfth section by a warning to the opponents of the Holy Prophet that if they did not mend their ways they would meet with the same fate as overtook the former opponents of the Truth.

The remaining half of the chapter, with the exception of the last three sections, is taken up entirely with the history of Moses and the Israelites, importance being attached to that history on account of the close resemblance of the Prophet of Arabia to the great Israelite prophet, and on account of the clear prophecies of Moses regarding the appearance of a prophet from among the Ishmaelites, or the Arab nation. This is the reason that towards the end of that history mention is specially made of the prophecies contained in the Torah and the Gospel. The last three sections are again of a general nature, referring first to the impress of Divine Unity upon man's nature, thus adducing evidence of the truth of revelation; then to the coming of the doom, closing with a final word, containing, as it were, the essence of the two chapters.

The last chapter deals chiefly with the doctrine of Divine Unity, while this deals with the truth of revelation, and as the two subjects are closely inter-related, this chapter complements the last one. Even as the closing section of that chapter deals with the revelation of the Qur'ān, this one fittingly opens with an assertion relating to the Divine source of the revelation contained in the Holy Qur'ān.

Internal as well as external evidence shows this chapter to have been revealed at about the same time as the last chapter. Hence the date of its revelation may be placed at a period just prior to the Flight. The best opinion among the earliest commentators is that the whole of it was revealed at Makkah.

SECTION 1: **Opponents' Doom**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 I, Allāh, am the best Knower, the Truthful.[853]

الٓمّٓصٓ ①

2 A Book revealed to thee — so let there be no straitness in thy breast concerning it[854] — that thou mayest warn thereby, and a Reminder[855] to the believers.

كِتٰبٌ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكَ فَلَا يَكُنْ فِيْ صَدْرِكَ حَرَجٌ مِّنْهُ لِتُنْذِرَ بِهٖ وَذِكْرٰى لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ②

3 Follow what has been revealed to you from your Lord and follow not besides Him any guardians; little do you mind!

اِتَّبِعُوْا مَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكُمْ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوْا مِنْ دُوْنِهٖٓ اَوْلِيَآءَ ۗ قَلِيْلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ③

4 And how many a town have We destroyed! So Our punishment came to it by night or while they slept at midday.[856]

وَكَمْ مِّنْ قَرْيَةٍ اَهْلَكْنٰهَا فَجَآءَهَا بَاْسُنَا بَيَاتًا اَوْ هُمْ قَآئِلُوْنَ ④

5 Yet their cry, when Our punishment came to them, was nothing but that they said: Surely we were wrongdoers.

فَمَا كَانَ دَعْوٰىهُمْ اِذْ جَآءَهُمْ بَاْسُنَآ اِلَّآ اَنْ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّا كُنَّا ظٰلِمِيْنَ ⑤

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853 Of the four letters *alif, lām, mīm,* and *ṣād,* the first three are the same as at the commencement of ch. 2, for which see 11; while *ṣād* stands for *Ṣādiq,* meaning *Truthful,* Whose promise would not fail (AH), or for *Afṣal,* i.e., *the best Decider* (I'Ab-AH), or for *Ṣabūr,* meaning *the Patient* or *Long-suffering* God Who gives a respite to the wicked and makes His righteous servants to suffer persecution and hardships at their hands for a time.

854 *Ḥaraj* signifies *straitness,* and the parenthetical passage, *so let there be no straitness in thy breast concerning it,* is introduced to console the Prophet, who at this time was encountering the greatest opposition and was surrounded by difficulties on all sides, and whose mission so far had made very little progress.

855 The Qur'ān is very often called *dhikr* or *dhikrā,* i.e., *a reminder,* because, being in consonance with human nature, it is a reminder of what is imprinted on human nature. Or *dhikrā* has here the meaning of *dhikr,* i.e., an honour or eminence, as in 43:44: "Surely it is an honour to thee and to thy people" (T, LL), and in 38:1: "By the Qur'ān possessed of eminence" (S, LL).

856 The Prophet's opponents are here warned of a doom similar to the doom of the opponents of truth before them. Truth must be established, be it by the destruction of its opponents or the overthrow of their power, or their ultimate surrender.

6 Then certainly We shall question those to whom messengers were sent, and We shall question the messengers,[857]

فَلَنَسْـَٔلَنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اُرْسِلَ اِلَيْهِمْ وَ لَنَسْـَٔلَنَّ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ ﴿۶﴾

7 Then surely We shall relate to them with knowledge, and We are never absent.[858]

فَلَنَقُصَّنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ بِعِلْمٍ وَّمَا كُنَّا غَآئِبِيْنَ ﴿۷﴾

8 And the judging on that day will be just; so as for those whose good deeds are heavy, they are the successful.[859]

وَالْوَزْنُ يَوْمَئِذِ ۣالْحَقُّ ۚ فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِيْنُهٗ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿۸﴾

9 And as for those whose good deeds are light, those are they who ruined their souls because they disbelieved in Our messages.[860]

وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِيْنُهٗ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ خَسِرُوْٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا يَظْلِمُوْنَ ﴿۹﴾

10 And certainly We established you in the earth and made therein means of livelihood for you; little it is that you give thanks!

وَلَقَدْ مَكَّنّٰكُمْ فِي الْاَرْضِ وَجَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ فِيْهَا مَعَايِشَ ؕ قَلِيْلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿۱۰﴾

SECTION 2: **The Devil's Opposition to Man**

11 And We indeed created you, then We fashioned you, then We said to the angels: Make submission to Adam.[861] So they submitted, except

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنٰكُمْ ثُمَّ صَوَّرْنٰكُمْ ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اسْجُدُوْا لِاٰدَمَ ۖ فَسَجَدُوْٓا اِلَّآ

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857 Those to whom messengers were sent will be questioned as to how they treated the messengers, and the latter as to how they were received.

858 Allāh, being the Knower of all things, will declare to them what they had done; in other words, the consequences of their actions will become manifest.

859 *Wazn* means *the knowing of the measure of a thing* (R). And referring to the opening words of this verse, it is added the *allusion is to justice in the reckoning of men*. Mjd says *wazn* here means *qaḍā*, or *judging* (IJ).

The word *mawāzīn* occurring in the latter part of the verse is plural of *mauzūn* meaning *what is weighed* and *mīzān* meaning *that by which things are weighed* or a *balance*. In the first case *mawāzīn* means *good deeds* or *virtues*, because only *good deeds* are weighed — accepted by Mjd; in the second case, the words would be translated as *the scales being heavy* or *light*, but the heaviness or lightness of the scales is meaningless, unless it means the heaviness or lightness of the good deeds which one has to his credit.

860 *Ẓulm*, when made transitive by means of *bā*, has the meaning of *kufr*, Thus, explaining *ẓalamū bi-hā* in v. 103, LL says: "It is also made transitive by means of *bā*, as in the phrase in the Qur'ān (7:103 and 17:59), because the meaning is *kafarū*."

861 That what is stated here of Adam is true of all men is made clear by the words of this verse. Men are created first, then fashioned, then the order is

Iblīs; he was not of those who submitted.

إِبْلِيسَ لَمْ يَكُن مِّنَ السَّاجِدِينَ ﴿١١﴾

12 He said: What hindered thee that thou didst not submit when I commanded thee? He said: I am better than he; Thou hast created me of fire, while him Thou didst create of dust.[862]

قَالَ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَلَّا تَسْجُدَ إِذْ أَمَرْتُكَ ۖ قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِي مِن نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِن طِينٍ ﴿١٢﴾

13 He said: Then get forth from this (state), for it is not for thee to behave proudly therein. Go forth, therefore, surely thou art of the abject ones.[863]

قَالَ فَاهْبِطْ مِنْهَا فَمَا يَكُونُ لَكَ أَن تَتَكَبَّرَ فِيهَا فَاخْرُجْ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الصَّاغِرِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

14 He said: Respite me till the day when they are raised.[864]

قَالَ أَنظِرْنِي إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 He said: Thou art surely of the respited ones.

قَالَ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنظَرِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

16 He said: As Thou hast adjudged me to be erring, I will certainly lie in wait for them in Thy straight path,[865]

قَالَ فَبِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي لَأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَاطَكَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿١٦﴾

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given to the angels to make obeisance to Adam, who in this sense typifies man, the verse speaking of men generally in the opening words. Thus the angels are really required to make submission to every man; see 56-58.

862 The creation of man from dust is frequently referred to in the Holy Qur'ān. Not only is Adam created from dust, but all men are spoken of as being similarly created; see 443. As a contrast to man's creation from dust, the devil claims to have been created from fire. The meaning may be that the preponderating element in the creation of man is earth, while in that of the devil it is fire. There may be a reference here to the nature of the temperaments of the two classes, men and devils. The Holy Qur'ān says elsewhere: "Man is created of haste" (21:37), which means that he is *hasty*. In like manner the devil's creation of fire may mean that he is made of a fiery temperament, while the perfect man is humble and meek, being created of dust, which stands for humility and meekness. Thus the description given here may stand for the prominent characteristics of the temperaments of the two classes of beings. Elsewhere it is stated that the jinn were created of fire (15:27), and also that Iblīs was of the jinn (18:50).

863 Degradation has always been the punishment of those who oppose the prophets of God. He abases those who consider themselves mighty.

864 The devil's grip continues only so long as man is not spiritually raised to life. The raising here stands for the spiritual resurrection of man. If the Resurrection is meant, the significance would be that the devil would mislead man so long as man lives on this earth.

865 *Aghwā-hu* (from *ghawā, he erred*) ordinarily signifies ***he caused him to err***, but sometimes also indicates ***punishing for error***. Thus ***yughwiya-kum*** in 11:34 is said to mean if Allāh desire to ***punish you for erring*** (LL); or, according to T, it means *yaḥkuma 'alai-kum bi-ghayyi-kum* or ***adjudge you to be erring***. According to Rz, the meaning is that *He should cause you to perish*. But *ghawā* (of which *aghwā* is the causative form) means also *khāba* (T, LA), i.e. ***he was***

17 Then I shall certainly come upon them from before them and from behind them, and from their right and from their left ; and Thou wilt not find most of them thankful.

ثُمَّ لَآتِيَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ أَيْمَانِهِمْ وَعَنْ شَمَائِلِهِمْ ۖ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَاكِرِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 He said : Get out of it, despised, driven away. Whoever of them will follow thee, I will certainly fill hell with you all.

قَالَ اخْرُجْ مِنْهَا مَذْءُومًا مَدْحُورًا ۖ لَمَنْ تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنْكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

19 And (We said) : O Adam, dwell thou and thy wife in the garden, so eat from whence you desire, but go not near this tree, lest you become of the unjust.[865a]

وَيَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ فَكُلَا مِنْ حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَٰذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 But the devil made an evil suggestion to them that he might make manifest to them that which had been hidden from them of their shame,[866] and he said : Your Lord has forbidden you this tree, lest you become angels or become of the immortals.

فَوَسْوَسَ لَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ لِيُبْدِيَ لَهُمَا مَا وُورِيَ عَنْهُمَا مِنْ سَوْآتِهِمَا وَقَالَ مَا نَهَاكُمَا رَبُّكُمَا عَنْ هَٰذِهِ الشَّجَرَةِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَا مَلَكَيْنِ أَوْ تَكُونَا مِنَ الْخَالِدِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 And he swore to them both : Surely I am a sincere adviser to you —

وَقَاسَمَهُمَا إِنِّي لَكُمَا لَمِنَ النَّاصِحِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 Thus he caused them to fall by deceit. So when they had tasted of the tree, their shame became manifest to them, and they both began to cover themselves with the leaves of the garden.[867] And their Lord called to them : Did I not forbid you that tree, and say to you that the devil is surely your open enemy ?

فَدَلَّاهُمَا بِغُرُورٍ ۚ فَلَمَّا ذَاقَا الشَّجَرَةَ بَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْآتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِنْ وَرَقِ الْجَنَّةِ ۖ وَنَادَاهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا أَلَمْ أَنْهَكُمَا عَنْ تِلْكُمَا الشَّجَرَةِ وَأَقُلْ لَكُمَا إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمَا عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

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disappointed or *failed to attain his desire,* and also *fasada 'alai-hi 'aishu-hū* (LA), i.e. *his life became evil to him* (which is the correct significance of *ghawā* in 20:121). Therefore the words may also be interpreted as meaning *Thou hast made life evil to me,* or *Thou hast caused me to remain disappointed.*

865a See 62 for the significance of the tree.

866 *Sau'at* signifies *shame* or *parts of the body which it is necessary to cover,* and also *any saying* or *action of which one is ashamed when exposed to view,* or *any evil, abominable* or *unseemly property, quality, custom,* or *practice* (T, LL). The devil's suggestions always lead man to the disclosure of his shame.

867 The consciousness of having done something unworthy of oneself is

23 They said: Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves; and if Thou forgive us not, and have (not) mercy on us, we shall certainly be of the losers.

قَالَا رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَآ أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِينَ ٢٣

24 He said: Go forth — some of you, the enemies of others. And there is for you in the earth an abode and a provision for a time.

قَالَ اهْبِطُوْا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَّمَتَاعٌ إِلٰى حِينٍ ٢٤

25 He said: Therein shall you live, and therein shall you die, and therefrom shall you be raised.[868]

قَالَ فِيهَا تَحْيَوْنَ وَفِيهَا تَمُوتُونَ وَمِنْهَا تُخْرَجُونَ ٢٥

SECTION 3: **Warning against the Devil's Insinuations**

26 O children of Adam, We have indeed sent down to you clothing to cover your shame, and (clothing) for beauty;[869] and clothing that guards against evil—that is the best.[870] This is of the messages of Allāh that they may be mindful.

يٰبَنِيٓ اٰدَمَ قَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ لِبَاسًا يُّوَارِي سَوْاٰتِكُمْ وَرِيشًا ۖ وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوٰى ذٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ۚ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ٢٦

27 O children of Adam, let not the devil seduce you, as he expelled your parents from the garden, pulling off

يٰبَنِيٓ اٰدَمَ لَا يَفْتِنَنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ كَمَآ أَخْرَجَ أَبَوَيْكُمْ مِّنَ الْجَنَّةِ يَنْزِعُ عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا

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the surest way to the attainment of perfection. The covering with the leaves of the garden is the desire to make up by human effort any fault that may have been committed. The clothing that guards against evil, which is spoken of in v. 26 as being *the best clothing*, explains the meaning of *covering* here. Divine revelation points out to man the true way, enabling him to cover himself or guard himself against evil. And, further, the statement in v. 27, *pulling off from them both their clothing that he might show them their shame* shows that covering with the leaves of the garden is an allegorical statement; see **871**. The Qur'ān gives directions regarding the physical requirements of man, too, yet there is even in these an underlying idea of the spiritual elevation of man.

868 This verse proves conclusively that every man must live and die upon this earth Jesus could not be an exception to this rule.

869 *Rīsh* means originally *feathers* or *plumage*, constituting the clothing and ornament of birds, and is then applied to *superb* or *excellent clothing*, or *ornament* and *beauty* (LL).

870 Clothing at first simply served to cover shame; with further progress men sought to embellish their persons with it; but there is yet a third kind of clothing, says the Qur'ān, which is the best, and that is *libās al-taqwā*, or *the clothing of piety*, literally *the clothing that guards one against evil*. It indicates a

from them their clothing[871] that he might show them their shame. He surely sees you, he as well as his host, from whence you see them not. Surely We have made the devils to be the friends of those who believe not.[872]

لِيُرِيَهُمَا سَوْءَاتِهِمَا ۚ إِنَّهُ يَرَاكُمْ هُوَ وَقَبِيلُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا تَرَوْنَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا الشَّيَاطِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 And when they commit an indecency they say: We found our fathers doing this, and Allāh has enjoined it on us. Say: Surely Allāh enjoins not indecency. Do you say of Allāh what you know not?[873]

وَإِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً قَالُوا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهَا آبَاءَنَا وَاللَّهُ أَمَرَنَا بِهَا ۗ قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَأْمُرُ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ ۖ أَتَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 Say: My Lord enjoins justice.[874] And set upright your faces at every time of prayer and call on Him, being sincere to Him in obedience. As He brought you into being, so shall you return.

قُلْ أَمَرَ رَبِّي بِالْقِسْطِ ۖ وَأَقِيمُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ ۚ كَمَا بَدَأَكُمْ تَعُودُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 A party has He guided, and another party — perdition is justly their due.[876] Surely they took the devils for friends instead of Allāh, and they think that they are rightly guided.

فَرِيقًا هَدَىٰ وَفَرِيقًا حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الضَّلَالَةُ ۗ إِنَّهُمُ اتَّخَذُوا الشَّيَاطِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

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further step in the progress of man, for virtue is an embellishment of the mind, and when man has seen the good of embellishing his person, he will soon be aware of the necessity of embellishing his mind.

871 That the clothing for the body is not meant here is clear from the fact that all men are warned against a similar attack of the devil. As to the clothing of which Adam was divested, there remains no doubt, when it is seen that the devil tries to divest every child of Adam of the same clothing. Mjd says: *It is the clothing that guards against evil, and by their sau'at is meant the evil that afflicted them on account of their disobedience* (AH).

872 It is because they do not believe in the Truth that the devils are made their friends; those who sever their connection with the Source of purity must fall into impurity.

873 The indecency here referred to is considered by some their going naked round the Ka'bah (Mjd-IJ). But the statement is general, and need not be limited.

874 The word *qist* is variously explained as meaning *Divine Unity*; *what is good and right*; *truth* (AH). All these are really included in the literal meaning of the word *qist*, which signifies *justice* in its broadest sense.

876 *Ḥaqqa 'alai-hi kadhā* means *wajaba* or *thabata* (T) and, according to LL, the significance in such cases is that *a certain thing has become necessary as*

31 O children of Adam, attend to your adornment at every time of prayer, and eat and drink and be not prodigal; surely He loves not the prodigals.[877]

يٰبَنِيْٓ اٰدَمَ خُذُوْا زِيْنَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَّكُلُوْا وَاشْرَبُوْا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوْا ۚ اِنَّهٗ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِيْنَ ﴿٣١﴾

SECTION 4: **Messengers sent for Uplift of Humanity**

32 Say: Who has forbidden the adornment of Allāh,[878] which He has brought forth for His servants, and the good provisions? Say: These are for the believers in the life of this world, purely (theirs) on the Resurrection day.[879] Thus do We make the messages clear for a people who know.

قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِيْنَةَ اللّٰهِ الَّتِيْٓ اَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهٖ وَالطَّيِّبٰتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ ۗ قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةً يَّوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۗ كَذٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْاٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَّعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 Say: My Lord forbids only indecencies, such of them as are apparent and such as are concealed, and sin and unjust rebellion, and that you associate

قُلْ اِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ وَالْاِثْمَ وَالْبَغْيَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَاَنْ تُشْرِكُوْا بِاللّٰهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ

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suited to the requirements of justice in his case. And *ḍalālah* sometimes signifies the *punishment for ḍalālah* (R), or *a state of perdition* (LL). Or, the meaning is that *going astray* or *remaining in error* is suitable to the requirements of justice in their case. In fact, the words explain themselves: *Error is justly their due because they have taken the devils for their friends.* Whoever continues to follow the devil must surely remain in error.

877 *Zīnat* or *adornment* is here generally understood to mean *apparel,* with reference to the practice of going naked round the Ka'bah, but the word itself has a wider significance. According to R, *real adornment is that which does not disgrace or render unseemly a man in any one of his conditions either in the present life* or *in that which is to come.* Attending to one's adornment, therefore, carries a double significance here. It requires adorning oneself physically, i.e. a man must have his clothes on when he offers a prayer to God. In congregational prayers, in the vast gatherings on Fridays and 'Īd, the Muslims are required to have a bath before coming to the Mosque, to put their best clothes on and to use scent. But what is specially aimed at is adornment in a spiritual sense. A Muslim must attend to inner beautification, for prayer is really meant as an aid to the beauty of the soul. He must come to prayer with a heart free from all impurities and full of the highest aspirations and noblest sentiments.

878 By the *adornment of Allāh* is meant *the adornment which Allāh has made lawful for men to avail themselves of.*

879 The meaning is that in the life of this world the believer and the disbeliever equally profit by the good things, but in the life after death all good shall be exclusively for those who have accepted and acted on the right principles.

with Allāh that for which He has sent down no authority, and that you say of Allāh what you know not.

بِهٖ سُلْطٰنًا وَّاَنْ تَقُوْلُوْا عَلَى اللّٰهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۳۳﴾

34 And every nation has a term ;[880] so when its term comes, they cannot remain behind the least while, nor can they precede (it).

وَلِكُلِّ اُمَّةٍ اَجَلٌ ۚ فَاِذَا جَآءَ اَجَلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَاْخِرُوْنَ سَاعَةً وَّلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُوْنَ ﴿۳۴﴾

35 O children of Adam, if messengers come to you from among you relating to you My messages, then whosoever guards against evil and acts aright — they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve.

يٰبَنِيْٓ اٰدَمَ اِمَّا يَاْتِيَنَّكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنْكُمْ يَقُصُّوْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ اٰيٰتِيْ ۙ فَمَنِ اتَّقٰى وَاَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ ﴿۳۵﴾

36 And those who reject **Our** messages and turn away from them haughtily — these are the companions of the Fire ; they shall abide in it.

وَالَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوْا عَنْهَآ اُولٰٓئِكَ اَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ ۚ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿۳۶﴾

37 Who is then more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allāh or rejects His messages ? These — their portion of the Book[883] shall reach them ; until when Our messengers come to them causing them to die, they say : Where is that which you used to call upon besides Allāh ? They would say : They are gone away from us. And they shall bear witness against themselves that they were disbelievers.

فَمَنْ اَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا اَوْ كَذَّبَ بِاٰيٰتِهٖ ۭ اُولٰٓئِكَ يَنَالُهُمْ نَصِيْبُهُمْ مِّنَ الْكِتٰبِ ۭ حَتّٰٓى اِذَا جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا يَتَوَفَّوْنَهُمْ ۙ قَالُوْٓا اَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ ۭ قَالُوْا ضَلُّوْا عَنَّا وَشَهِدُوْا عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ اَنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا كٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿۳۷﴾

38 He will say : Enter into the Fire among the nations that have passed away before you from among the jinn and men. Every time a nation enters, it curses its sister ;[884] until when they all follow one another

قَالَ ادْخُلُوْا فِيْٓ اُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْاِنْسِ فِي النَّارِ ۭ كُلَّمَا دَخَلَتْ اُمَّةٌ لَّعَنَتْ اُخْتَهَا ۭ حَتّٰٓى اِذَا ادَّارَكُوْا

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880 The term of a nation is the time when it is destroyed or punished for its evil deeds. The verse really speaks in general terms of the doom awaiting the opponents of Islām.

883 That is, the punishment promised in the Book will overtake them.

884 By the sister nation is meant the nation which resembles it in its deeds.

into it, the last of them will say with regard to the first of them:[885] Our Lord, these led us astray, so give them a double chastisement of the Fire. He will say: Each one has double but you know not.[886]

فِيهَا جَمِيعًا قَالَتْ أُخْرَىٰهُمْ لِأُولَىٰهُمْ رَبَّنَا
هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ أَضَلُّونَا فَـَٔاتِهِمْ عَذَابًا ضِعْفًا مِّنَ النَّارِ
قَالَ لِكُلٍّ ضِعْفٌ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تَعْلَمُونَ ۝٣٨

39 And the first of them will say to the last of them: You have no preference over us, so taste the chastisement for what you earned.

وَقَالَتْ أُولَىٰهُمْ لِأُخْرَىٰهُمْ فَمَا كَانَ لَكُمْ
عَلَيْنَا مِن فَضْلٍ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا
كُنتُمْ تَكْسِبُونَ ۝٣٩

SECTION 5: **Those who accept the Message**

40 Those who reject Our messages and turn away from them haughtily, the doors of heaven will not be opened for them, nor will they enter the Garden until the camel pass through the eye of the needle. And thus do We reward the guilty.[887]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا
عَنْهَا لَا تُفَتَّحُ لَهُمْ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ وَلَا
يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّىٰ يَلِجَ الْجَمَلُ فِي
سَمِّ الْخِيَاطِ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُجْرِمِينَ ۝٤٠

41 They shall have a bed of hell and over them coverings (of it). And thus do We requite the wrongdoers.

لَهُم مِّن جَهَنَّمَ مِهَادٌ وَمِن فَوْقِهِمْ
غَوَاشٍ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الظَّالِمِينَ ۝٤١

42 And as for those who believe and do good — We impose not on any soul a duty beyond its scope — they are the owners of the Garden; therein they abide.

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَا نُكَلِّفُ
نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ
هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ۝٤٢

43 And We shall remove whatever of ill-feeling is in their hearts — rivers

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِم مِّنْ غِلٍّ تَجْرِي

885 By the ***last*** and the ***first*** are meant here the common people and the leaders, because, though the words would bear both interpretations, i.e. the last and the first in time or the last and the first in position, the latter significance is corroborated by similar expressions in several other places, such as 2:166, 14:21, 34:31-33, 40:47, etc.

886 The common people would desire that the leaders should suffer a double torment, for their own sins as well as for having misled others. They are told that if the leaders were guilty of misleading them, they themselves deserved a double chastisement for having blindly followed the leaders.

887 That is, they cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven, nor can they rise

flow beneath them. And they say: All praise is due to Allāh, Who guided us to this! And we would not have found the way if Allāh had not guided us. Certainly the messengers of our Lord brought the truth. And it will be cried out to them: This is the Garden which you are made to inherit for what you did.

مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهٰرُ ۚ وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ
الَّذِيْ هَدٰىنَا لِهٰذَا ۖ وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْ
لَآ أَنْ هَدٰىنَا اللّٰهُ ۚ لَقَدْ جَآءَتْ رُسُلُ
رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ ۗ وَنُوْدُوْٓا أَنْ تِلْكُمُ الْجَنَّةُ
أُوْرِثْتُمُوْهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 And the owners of the Garden call out to the companions of the Fire: We have found that which our Lord promised us to be true; have you, too, found that which your Lord promised to be true? They will say: Yes. Then a crier will cry out among them: The curse of Allāh is on the wrongdoers,

وَنَادٰٓى أَصْحٰبُ الْجَنَّةِ أَصْحٰبَ النَّارِ أَنْ
قَدْ وَجَدْنَا مَا وَعَدَنَا رَبُّنَا حَقًّا فَهَلْ
وَجَدْتُّمْ مَّا وَعَدَ رَبُّكُمْ حَقًّا ۖ قَالُوْا نَعَمْ ۚ
فَأَذَّنَ مُؤَذِّنٌۢ بَيْنَهُمْ أَنْ لَّعْنَةُ اللّٰهِ
عَلَى الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 Who hinder (men) from Allāh's way and seek to make it crooked, and they are disbelievers in the Hereafter.[888]

الَّذِيْنَ يَصُدُّوْنَ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَيَبْغُوْنَهَا
عِوَجًا ۚ وَهُمْ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ كٰفِرُوْنَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 And between them is a veil.[889] And on the Elevated Places[890] are men who know all by their marks. And

وَبَيْنَهُمَا حِجَابٌ ۚ وَعَلَى الْأَعْرَافِ رِجَالٌ
يَّعْرِفُوْنَ كُلًّاۢ بِسِيْمٰهُمْ ۚ وَنَادَوْا أَصْحٰبَ

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above the low earthly desires, soaring upward to the higher regions of spiritual life.

888 By seeking to make Allāh's way crooked is meant that they suggest doubts regarding the Truth.

889 The veil which here separates the wicked from the righteous and on account of which the former fail to see the bliss which the latter enjoy will assume a perceptible form in the next life. Thus it is not distance that separates heaven from hell but only a veil, and they hear and even see one another.

890 *A'rāf* is plural of *'arf*, meaning literally *an elevated place*, and hence *al-a'rāf* means *the elevated places*. There has been much discussion as to what *a'rāf* is. The majority of commentators say that it is the *ḥijāb* or *veil* spoken of in the previous verse, or the *sūr* or *wall* spoken of in 57:13; while others, among whom are Ḥasan and Zj, hold that *'ala-l-a'rāf* is only equivalent to *'alā ma'rifati ahl al-Jannat wa-l-Nār*, i.e. *knowing the inmates of Paradise and the inmates of Hell* (Rz). I have already explained the nature of the veil mentioned in v. 46. And the *wall* in 57:13 is mentioned in connection with the bringing about of a separation between the sincere believers and the hypocrites. Hence the two verses lend no support to the idea that *A'rāf* is a particular place midway between paradise and hell. The men spoken of here as being on the elevated places are the same righteous servants of Allāh who are distinctly mentioned in 56:10, 11: "And the foremost are the foremost; these are they who are drawn nigh to Allāh".

they call out to the owners of the Garden : Peace be to you ! They have not yet entered it, though they hope.[891]

الْجَنَّةِ أَنْ سَلٰمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ لَمْ يَدْخُلُوهَا
وَهُمْ يَطْمَعُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And when their eyes are turned towards the companions of the Fire, they say : Our Lord, place us not with the unjust people.[891a]

وَإِذَا صُرِفَتْ أَبْصَارُهُمْ تِلْقَاءَ أَصْحٰبِ النَّارِ ۙ
قَالُوا رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

SECTION 6 : **Helplessness of Opponents**

48 And the owners of the Elevated Places call out to men whom they recognize by their marks saying : Of no avail were to you your amassings and your arrogance.[892]

وَنَادٰى أَصْحٰبُ الْأَعْرَافِ رِجَالًا يَعْرِفُونَهُمْ
بِسِيمٰهُمْ قَالُوا مَا أَغْنٰى عَنْكُمْ جَمْعُكُمْ
وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 Are these they about whom you swore that Allāh would not bestow mercy on them ? Enter the Garden ; you have no fear, nor shall you grieve.

أَهٰؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَقْسَمْتُمْ لَا يَنَالُهُمُ اللّٰهُ
بِرَحْمَةٍ ۭ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْكُمْ
وَلَا أَنْتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 And the companions of the Fire call out to the owners of the Garden : Pour on us some water or some of that which Allāh has provided for you. They say : Surely Allāh has forbidden them both to the disbelievers,

وَنَادٰى أَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ أَصْحٰبَ الْجَنَّةِ أَنْ
أَفِيضُوا عَلَيْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ أَوْ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ
اللّٰهُ ۭ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللّٰهَ حَرَّمَهُمَا عَلَى الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 Who take their religion for an idle sport and a play, and this world's life deceives them. So this day We shall forsake them, as they neglected the meeting of this day of theirs, and as they denied Our messages.[893]

الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَهُمْ لَهْوًا وَلَعِبًا وَ
غَرَّتْهُمُ الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا ۚ فَالْيَوْمَ نَنْسٰىهُمْ
كَمَا نَسُوا لِقَاءَ يَوْمِهِمْ هٰذَا ۙ وَمَا
كَانُوا بِاٰيٰتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

Besides this, the prophets are again and again spoken of as a class by themselves, being witnesses over their people.

891 They are, as it were, standing at the door of the Garden, ready to enter it.

891a Thus do pray those who hope to enter paradise.

892 The word *jam'u-kum* may mean either *your amassing worldly wealth*, or it may mean *your multitude* or *strength in numbers*.

893 The use of *nisyān* is not limited to *forgetting* ; the word applies as well to *dismissing a thing from the mind intentionally* (R). And when the word is used about Allāh, it means *His forsaking them to show His contempt for them* (R).

52 And certainly We have brought them a Book which We make clear with knowledge, a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe.

وَلَقَدْ جِئْنَٰهُم بِكِتَٰبٍ فَصَّلْنَٰهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ هُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 Do they wait for aught but its final sequel?[894] On the day when its final sequel comes, those who neglected it before will say: Indeed the messengers of our Lord brought the truth. Are there any intercessors on our behalf so that they should intercede for us? Or could we be sent back so that we should do (deeds) other than those which we did? Indeed they have lost their souls, and that which they forged has failed them.

هَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا تَأْوِيلَهُۥ ۚ يَوْمَ يَأْتِى تَأْوِيلُهُۥ يَقُولُ ٱلَّذِينَ نَسُوهُ مِن قَبْلُ قَدْ جَآءَتْ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ فَهَل لَّنَا مِن شُفَعَآءَ فَيَشْفَعُوا۟ لَنَآ أَوْ نُرَدُّ فَنَعْمَلَ غَيْرَ ٱلَّذِى كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ ۚ قَدْ خَسِرُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

SECTION 7: **The Righteous will prosper**

54 Surely your Lord is Allāh, Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods,[894a] and He is established on the Throne of Power.[895] He makes the night cover the day, which it pursues incessantly. And (He created) the sun and the moon and the stars, made subservient by His command. Surely His is the creation and the command. Blessed is Allāh, the Lord of the worlds!

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ فِى سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى ٱلْعَرْشِ يُغْشِى ٱلَّيْلَ ٱلنَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُۥ حَثِيثًا وَٱلشَّمْسَ وَٱلْقَمَرَ وَٱلنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَٰتٍۭ بِأَمْرِهِۦٓ ۗ أَلَا لَهُ ٱلْخَلْقُ وَٱلْأَمْرُ ۗ تَبَارَكَ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

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894 By *final sequel* is meant the *ultimate state* of the perfect manifestation of truth by the fulfilment of the prophecies, *the end* or *the ultimate consequence*; see 594.

894a For *yaum* as meaning a *period, whatever period it may be*, see 8. The six periods of time in which the heavens and the earth are created refer in fact to the six stages in which they have grown to their present condition. In the case of the earth these six stages are detailed in 41:9, 10; see 2199.

895 *'Arsh* literally means *a thing constructed for shade* (LL), or *anything roofed* (R). According to the latter authority *the court* or *sitting-place of the king* is called *'arsh* on account of its eminence. And he adds: It is used to indicate *might* or *power* and *authority* and *dominion*. LL accepts the interpretation of R, who says that "the *'arsh* of God is one of the things which mankind know not in reality but only by name, and it is not as the imaginations of the vulgar hold it to be". In fact, both the words *'arsh* and *kursī* have been misunderstood as meaning resting-places for Allāh. The latter has already been explained as meaning *knowledge* (340), and the true significance of the former is *power* or *control of the creation*.

55 Call on your Lord humbly and in secret. Surely He loves not the transgressors.

ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

56 And make not mischief in the earth after its reformation, and call on Him, fearing and hoping. Surely the mercy of Allāh is nigh to the doers of good.[896]

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا ۚ إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

Istawā signifies, when followed by *'alā*, *he had the mastery* or *control of a thing* or *ascendancy over it*, being synonymous with *istaulā* (LL), or *he was* or *became firm* (LL).

Thumma, as already shown in 45, has often the same significance as *wāw* and means *and*.

The phrase *Istawā 'ala-l-'arsh* is used in the Holy Qur'ān here and on six other occasions, viz., in 10:3, 13:2, 20:5, 25:59, 32:4 and 57:4. A reference to all these places will show that it is invariably used after mentioning the creation of the heavens and the earth and in relation to the Divine control of His creation and the law and order to which the universe is made to submit by its great Author, as shown by the words that follow here, *His is the creation and the command*. The two things mentioned are, in the opening words, *creation* and *'arsh*, and in the concluding words, *creation* and *command*. Similarly in 10:3 where *'arsh* is spoken of after the creation of the heavens and the earth, it is followed by the explanatory words *yudabbiru-l-amr*, i.e., *He regularizes the affair*. What is, therefore, aimed at is that after creating the universe, God has not left it to run its course independently of Him, but He it is Whose command holds sway and Who regulates the affairs as He has planned them. There are many people in this age of scientific advancement who think that, though the conclusion cannot be avoided that there is a God Who created this universe, Whom they call the First or Primal Cause, yet after its creation it runs its course according to certain immutable laws, and God — or the First Cause — has no concern with its affairs. The Holy Qur'ān does not accept this view and hence, when it speaks of the creation of the heavens and the earth, it speaks also of the *'arsh* which stands for God's control of the universe, as shown above. To make it further clear, the verse is made to end with the words *tabārak Allāhu Rabbu-l-'ālamīn*, i.e., blessed is Allāh, the Nourisher of the worlds unto perfection. These words show that the world is still in the process of growth, and according to the Divine plan, it is advancing from one stage to another to attain its perfection. God has not only created it but He is also regulating its affairs to make it perfect.

In the words *Rabb al-'ālamīn* there is also a deeper reference, as shown in 5, to the spiritual evolution of man which is being worked out under the Divine plan, and the *'arsh* is mentioned specially in this connection, as man's perfection does not consist in the working of the material laws which prevail in the universe but in the spiritual laws which are needed for his perfection. The *amr* (affair) whose regulation is so often mentioned in connection with *'arsh* is really the spiritual kingdom, what Jesus calls the kingdom of God. This is made clear in 32:5, see 1959. The spiritual perfection of man is specially mentioned in connection with *'arsh* in 40:15: "Exalter of degrees, Possessor of the *'arsh* — He makes the inspiration to light by His command on whom He pleases of His servants, that He may warn men of the day of Meeting." The *Possessor of the 'arsh* is thus clearly stated to be the *Sender of revelation* to man to bring about his spiritual perfection. Still more clearly in the same *sūrah*, the righteous servants of God who deliver the Divine messages to men are called the bearers of the *'arsh*. Speaking of the messages of the messengers of God and how the people give them the lie, it is added: "Those who bear the *'arsh* and those around it celebrate the praise of their Lord and believe in Him and ask protection for those who believe" (40:7). The bearers of the *'arsh* are, in fact, the bearers of the Divine message.

896 The feeling which should be entertained towards Allāh should be a com-

57 And He it is Who sends forth the winds bearing good news before His mercy;[897] till, when they bear a laden cloud, We drive it to a dead land, then We send down water on it, then bring forth thereby fruits of all kinds. Thus do We bring forth the dead that you may be mindful.[899]

وَهُوَ الَّذِيْ يُرْسِلُ الرِّيٰحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهٖ ۭ حَتّٰۤى اِذَاۤ اَقَلَّتْ سَحَابًا ثِقَالًا سُقْنٰهُ لِبَلَدٍ مَّيِّتٍ فَاَنْزَلْنَا بِهِ الْمَاۤءَ فَاَخْرَجْنَا بِهٖ مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرٰتِ ۭ كَذٰلِكَ نُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتٰى لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 And the good land — its vegetation comes forth (abundantly) by the permission of its Lord. And that which is inferior — (its herbage) comes forth but scantily. Thus do We repeat the messages for a people who give thanks.[900]

وَالْبَلَدُ الطَّيِّبُ يَخْرُجُ نَبَاتُهٗ بِاِذْنِ رَبِّهٖ ۚ وَالَّذِيْ خَبُثَ لَا يَخْرُجُ اِلَّا نَكِدًا ۭ كَذٰلِكَ نُصَرِّفُ الْاٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَّشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿٥٨﴾

SECTION 8 : **Noah**

59 Certainly We sent Noah to his people, so he said: O my people, serve Allāh, you have no god other than Him. Indeed I fear for you the chastisement of a grievous day.[901]

لَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَا نُوْحًا اِلٰى قَوْمِهٖ فَقَالَ يٰقَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ اِلٰهٍ غَيْرُهٗ ۭ اِنِّيْۤ اَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيْمٍ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 The chiefs of his people said: Surely we see thee in clear error.

قَالَ الْمَلَاُ مِنْ قَوْمِهٖۤ اِنَّا لَنَرٰىكَ فِيْ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿٦٠﴾

bination of fear and hope, of awe as well as love, because the fear of His displeasure ennobles the mind no less than the hope of His mercy.

897 His *mercy* represents the rain in the physical world.

899 The bringing forth of the spiritually dead to life through the revelation of the Qur'ān is always likened to the bringing of the dead earth to life by rain. The wind bearing the good news was the movement towards Islām, which was daily becoming more and more powerful.

900 Revelation is here likened to the rain and the good or bad nature of man to good or inferior land. If some men do not profit by the revelation, it is their own fault, not that of the revelation, just as, if some lands do not profit by rain, it is due to their own inferiority.

901 Having warned the opponents of the evil consequences of their opposition to the Holy Prophet, several illustrations are now given from sacred history, showing how those people were dealt with who refused to listen to the voice of the warners. It should be borne in mind in reading the histories of the prophets as given in

61 He said: O my people, there is no error in me, but I am a messenger from the Lord of the worlds.

قَالَ يٰقَوۡمِ لَيۡسَ بِیۡ ضَلٰلَةٌ وَّلٰكِنِّیۡ رَسُوۡلٌ
مِّنۡ رَّبِّ الۡعٰلَمِيۡنَ ﴿۶۱﴾

62 I deliver to you the messages of my Lord, and I offer you good advice, and I know from Allāh what you know not.

اُبَلِّغُكُمۡ رِسٰلٰتِ رَبِّیۡ وَاَنۡصَحُ لَكُمۡ وَ
اَعۡلَمُ مِنَ اللّٰهِ مَا لَا تَعۡلَمُوۡنَ ﴿۶۲﴾

63 Do you wonder that a reminder has come to you from your Lord through a man from among you, that he may warn you and that you may guard against evil, and that mercy may be shown to you?

اَوَعَجِبۡتُمۡ اَنۡ جَآءَكُمۡ ذِكۡرٌ مِّنۡ رَّبِّكُمۡ
عَلٰى رَجُلٍ مِّنۡكُمۡ لِيُنۡذِرَكُمۡ وَلِتَتَّقُوۡا
وَلَعَلَّكُمۡ تُرۡحَمُوۡنَ ﴿۶۳﴾

64 But they called him a liar, so We delivered him and those with him in the ark, and We drowned those who rejected Our messages. Surely they were a blind people![902]

فَكَذَّبُوۡهُ فَاَنۡجَيۡنٰهُ وَالَّذِيۡنَ مَعَهٗ فِى
الۡفُلۡكِ وَاَغۡرَقۡنَا الَّذِيۡنَ كَذَّبُوۡا بِاٰيٰتِنَا ؕ
اِنَّهُمۡ كَانُوۡا قَوۡمًا عَمِيۡنَ ﴿۶۴﴾

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the Holy Qur'ān that the object is not to narrate history as such, but to bring out common characteristics of the histories of different nations, to mention incidents which contain prophetical allusion to the Holy Prophet's life and to illustrate the general warnings made regarding the ultimate consequences attendant upon the rejection of Truth. The Qur'ān does not concern itself with the details of what messages a prophet delivered to his people and of how he was received; it simply contents itself with the broad facts that every prophet preached Divine Unity, every prophet laid stress on the doing of good, every prophet was received with severe opposition, and that every prophet ultimately succeeded in establishing the truth. This, with slight variations, is the sum and substance of the histories of the prophets that are recorded in the Holy Qur'ān. It is not, as stated by a Christian critic, "the experience of Muḥammad" that is recorded in the histories of prophets; it is the common experience of the prophets of different nations, containing a prophetical allusion to the ultimate triumph of the Prophet. This is clear from the fact that the histories of the prophets relating the destruction of their opponents are contained chiefly in Makkan revelations, whereas at Makkah the opponents of the Holy Prophet were at the zenith of their power, and the cause of the Prophet was to all appearances hopeless.

References to Noah and his history are contained in the following places in the Holy Qur'ān: 3:32; 6:85; 7:59-64; 10:71-73; 11:25-48; 14:9; 17:3; 21:76, 77; 23:23-29; 25:37; 26:105-122; 29:14, 15; 37:75-82; 51:46; 53:52; 54:9-16; 57:26; 66:10; 69:11-12; 71:1-28.

902 Fuller references to the deluge and the making of the ark are contained in 11:37-48 and 23:27-29. It may be noted here, however, that the Holy Qur'ān does not support the idea of a world deluge, for it plainly states here that Noah was sent only to *his* people, i.e. not to all nations. Only the people to whom Noah delivered his message called him a liar, and only those were drowned who rejected the message of Allāh delivered through Noah.

SECTION 9 : Hūd

65 And to 'Ād[903] (We sent) their brother[904] Hūd.[905] He said: O my people, serve Allāh, you have no god other than Him. Will you not then guard against evil?

وَإِلَىٰ عَادٍ أَخَاهُمْ هُودًا ۗ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ ۚ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 The chiefs of those who disbelieved from among his people said: Certainly we see thee in folly, and we certainly think thee to be of the liars.

قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن قَوْمِهِ إِنَّا لَنَرَاكَ فِي سَفَاهَةٍ وَإِنَّا لَنَظُنُّكَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 He said: O my people, there is no folly in me, but I am a messenger of the Lord of the worlds.

قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ لَيْسَ بِي سَفَاهَةٌ وَلَٰكِنِّي رَسُولٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 I deliver to you the messages of my Lord and I am a faithful adviser to you.

أُبَلِّغُكُمْ رِسَالَاتِ رَبِّي وَأَنَا لَكُمْ نَاصِحٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 Do you wonder that a reminder has come to you from your Lord through a man from among you that he may warn you? And remember when He made you successors after

أَوَعَجِبْتُمْ أَن جَاءَكُمْ ذِكْرٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ مِّنكُمْ لِيُنذِرَكُمْ ۚ وَاذْكُرُوا إِذْ جَعَلَكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ مِن بَعْدِ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ

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903 The tribe of 'Ād, with its prophet Hūd, is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān in the following places: 7:65-72; 11:50-60; 14:9; 25:38; 26:123-140; 29:38; 41:13-16; 46:21-26; 51:41, 42; 53:50; 54:18-21; 69:4; 69:6-8; 89:6-8.

'Ād was the grandson of Aram (mentioned in 89:7), who was a grandson of Noah, and the tribe of 'Ād spoken of here is called *the first 'Ād* (53:50), as distinguished from the tribe of Thamūd, which is called *the second 'Ād.* This tribe lived in the desert of al-Aḥqāf (46:21), which is marked on the maps of Arabia and extends from Oman to Ḥadramaut. Rodwell's view, that "the two tribes of 'Ād and Thamūd — the latter of whom is mentioned by Diod. Sic. and Ptolemy — lay to the north of Mecca", is wrong in respect of the tribe of 'Ād, though it is tolerably true so far as the tribe of Thamūd is concerned. Sale has the following account of this tribe in his Pr. Dis.: "'Ād was an ancient and potent tribe of Arabs and zealous idolaters. They chiefly worshipped four deities, Sāqiyah, Ḥāfiẓah, Rāziqah, and Sālimah, the first, as they imagined, supplying them with rain, the second preserving them from all dangers abroad, the third providing food for their sustenance, and the fourth restoring them to health when afflicted with sickness"

904 The male member of a tribe is generally spoken as as their brother: "Thus *ya akhā Bakr-in* means, O thou of the tribe of Bakr" (LL).

905 The prophet Hūd is the Eber of the Bible, because Hūd is said to be the grandson of Arphaxad, the grandson of Noah (Rz). Compare Gen. 10:24 for

Noah's people[906] and increased you in excellence of make.[907] So remember the bounties of Allāh, that you may be successful.

وَزَادَكُمْ فِي الْخَلْقِ بَصْطَةً ۚ فَاذْكُرُوا آلَاءَ اللَّهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 They said: Hast thou come to us that we may serve Allāh alone, and give up that which our fathers used to serve? Then bring to us what thou threatenest us with, if thou art of the truthful.

قَالُوا أَجِئْتَنَا لِنَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ وَحْدَهُ وَنَذَرَ مَا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا ۖ فَأْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَا إِن كُنتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾

71 He said: Indeed uncleanness and wrath from your Lord have lighted upon you.[908] Do you dispute with me about names which you and your fathers have named?[909] Allāh has not sent any authority for them. Wait, then; I too with you am of those who wait.

قَالَ قَدْ وَقَعَ عَلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ رِجْسٌ وَغَضَبٌ ۖ أَتُجَادِلُونَنِي فِي أَسْمَاءٍ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُم مَّا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِن سُلْطَانٍ ۚ فَانتَظِرُوا إِنِّي مَعَكُم مِّنَ الْمُنتَظِرِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

72 So We delivered him and those with him by mercy from Us, and We cut off the roots of those who rejected Our messages and were not believers.[910]

فَأَنجَيْنَاهُ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنَّا وَقَطَعْنَا دَابِرَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا ۖ وَمَا كَانُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾

Eber's genealogy. His son Joktan is said to have established a kingdom in Yūnān. There is no mention in the Bible that Hūd was a prophet for 'Ād.

906 By making the 'Ādites *khulafā'* or *successors* is meant that they were made a ruling nation and possessors of a vast kingdom.

907 Some commentators have related unfounded legends as to the incredible tallness of their stature. The words used in the Qur'ān signify only that they were a strong and powerful people.

908 Sticking to their idols and refusing to believe in Allāh is here spoken of as *uncleanness*. The wrath of Allāh was due to their evil deeds. There is also a secondary significance of the word *rijs*, i.e. *punishment*, and in that case the past tense would indicate the certainty of the event, because punishment was so sure to come that it could be spoken of as having *lighted* upon them.

909 The reference here is to their deities, for which see 903.

910 They were destroyed by a storm blowing on them continuously for eight days (69:7).

SECTION 10 : **Ṣāliḥ and Lot**

73 And to Thamūd[911] (We sent) their brother Ṣāliḥ.[912] He said : O my people, serve Allāh, you have no god other than Him. Clear proof has indeed come to you from your Lord. This is Allāh's she-camel — a sign for you[913] — so leave her alone to pasture in Allāh's earth, and do her no harm, lest painful chastisement overtake you.

وَإِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَٰلِحًا ۘ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ
اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُۥ ۖ قَدْ
جَاءَتْكُم بَيِّنَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ هَٰذِهِۦ نَاقَةُ
اللَّهِ لَكُمْ ءَايَةً ۖ فَذَرُوهَا تَأْكُلْ فِىٓ أَرْضِ
اللَّهِ ۖ وَلَا تَمَسُّوهَا بِسُوٓءٍ فَيَأْخُذَكُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 And remember when He made you successors after 'Ād and settled you in the land — you make mansions on its plains and hew out houses in the mountains.[914] So remember Allāh's bounties and act not corruptly in the land, making mischief.

وَاذْكُرُوٓا إِذْ جَعَلَكُمْ خُلَفَآءَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ عَادٍ
وَبَوَّأَكُمْ فِى الْأَرْضِ تَتَّخِذُونَ مِن سُهُولِهَا
قُصُورًا وَتَنْحِتُونَ الْجِبَالَ بُيُوتًا ۖ فَاذْكُرُوٓا
ءَالَآءَ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْثَوْا فِى الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

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911 The tribe of Thamūd is often mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān conjointly with the tribe of 'Ād. It is spoken of in the following places: 7:73-79; 11:61-68; 14:9; 15:80-84; 25:38; 26:141-159; 27:45-53; 29:38; 41:13, 14, 17, 18; 51:43-45; 53:51; 54:23-31; 69:4, 5; 89:9; 91:11-15.

'Ād and Thamūd, though two nearly related tribes, were separated both as regards time and place. Thamūd is known after a grandson of Aram, the grandson of Noah. Historical traces of it are met with in Ptolemy. The tribe flourished more than two hundred years after 'Ād, and occupied the territory known as al-Ḥijr (15:80), and the plain known by the name of Wādi-l-Qurā, which forms the southern boundary of Syria and the northern one of Arabia.

912 Ṣāliḥ was a descendant in the sixth generation after Thamūd.

913 Neither the Qur'ān nor any reliable saying of the Holy Prophet lends any support to the numerous legends regarding the miraculous appearance and prodigious size of the she-camel. It is called Allāh's she-camel because it was given as a sign from Allāh. It was an ordinary she-camel, which was given as a sign to a people. Their slaying of it was a sign that they would neither accept the truth, nor cease persecuting Ṣāliḥ and his followers.

It may be noted here that there is nothing strange that a camel should be given as a sign, when even now we can see that a roughly constructed house known as the Ka'bah is given as a sign to the whole world, so that whoever tries to destroy it will perish.

914 In his *Essays on the Life of Muḥammad,* Sir Syed Aḥmad Khān says: "They excavated various rocks, and after having hewn and carved them, took up their abode therein. These rocks are to this very day known by the name of *Athālib.* Almost every Arab, as well as several foreigners who have travelled in Arabia, can bear testimony to the existence of these rock habitations, which stand there at once to satisfy curiosity and to afford information respecting the nations

75 The arrogant chiefs of his people said to those who were weak, to those who believed from among them : Do you know that Ṣāliḥ is one sent by his Lord ? They said : Surely we are believers in that wherewith he has been sent.

قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا مِن قَوْمِهِ لِلَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا لِمَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُمْ أَتَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ صَالِحًا مُّرْسَلٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِ قَالُوا إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلَ بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 Those who were haughty said : Surely we are disbelievers in that which you believe

قَالَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا إِنَّا بِالَّذِي آمَنتُم بِهِ كَافِرُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 Then they hamstrung the she-camel and revolted against their Lord's commandment, and said : O Ṣāliḥ, bring us that with which thou threatenest us, if thou art of the messengers.

فَعَقَرُوا النَّاقَةَ وَعَتَوْا عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِمْ وَقَالُوا يَا صَالِحُ ائْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَا إِن كُنتَ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

78 So the earthquake seized them, and they were motionless bodies in their abodes.[915]

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دَارِهِمْ جَاثِمِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾

79 So he turned away from them and said : O my people, I delivered to you the message of my Lord and gave you good advice, but you love not good advisers.[916]

فَتَوَلَّىٰ عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَا قَوْمِ لَقَدْ أَبْلَغْتُكُمْ رِسَالَةَ رَبِّي وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ وَلَٰكِن لَّا تُحِبُّونَ النَّاصِحِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾

80 And (We sent) Lot, when he said to his people : Do you commit an abomination which no one in the world did before you ?[917]

وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مَا سَبَقَكُم بِهَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

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who made them. These habitations likewise corroborate and bear testimony to the truth of that portion of the history of the Thamūd tribe which is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān ".

915 The punishment which overtook Thamūd is described under different names. Here it is called *rajfah,* which means *earthquake.* The description of their abodes in 27 : 52 as *fallen down* also shows that they were destroyed by an earthquake. In 54 : 31 the same punishment is referred to as *ṣaiḥah,* i.e. *a cry* or *a shout,* and it evidently refers to the rumbling noise which precedes an earthquake. In 51 : 44 and elsewhere it is spoken of as *ṣā'iqah,* which means any *destructive punishment* (LL), carrying sometimes the same significance as *ṣaiḥah.* In 69 : 5, *Thamūd* is said to have been destroyed by means of *ṭāghiyah,* which means an *excessively severe punishment.* Both of these descriptions are applicable to an earthquake.

916 This evidently refers to the survivors from the great disaster.

917 In the chronological order which this chapter keeps in view, Abraham should have been mentioned next, but his name is here omitted for two reasons ; firstly, because only those prophets are mentioned whose enemies were destroyed before their eyes ; and, secondly, because Abraham's history has already been dealt with in the last chapter, to which this forms, as it were, a supplement. Hence, we come to Lot, Abraham's nephew. For other references to Lot in the

81 Surely you come to males with lust instead of females. Nay, you are a people exceeding bounds.

إِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِّن دُونِ النِّسَاءِ ۚ بَلْ أَنتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

82 And the answer of his people was no other than that they said: Turn them out of your town; surely they are a people who aspire to purity!

وَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَن قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوهُم مِّن قَرْيَتِكُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ أُنَاسٌ يَتَطَهَّرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

83 So We delivered him and his followers,[917a] except his wife — she was of those who remained behind.

فَأَنجَيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلَّا امْرَأَتَهُ كَانَتْ مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

84 And We rained upon them a rain.[918] See, then, what was the end of the guilty!

وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِم مَّطَرًا ۖ فَانظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٨٤﴾

Holy Qur'ān, see 6:87; 11:77-83; 15:61-74; 21:74, 75; 26:160-173; 27:54-58; 29:32-35; 37:133-136; 51:32-37; 53:53-54; 54:34-38; 66:10. Lot is one of those prophets who have been maligned not only in Rabbinical literature but also in the Bible. It is clear that Lot was considered a righteous servant by Abraham (Gen. 18:23), but a little further on we are told that Lot was guilty of incestuous intercourse with his daughters, which shows him to be extremely licentious. The record here has evidently been manipulated.

The question whether Lot was a prophet is answered in the affirmative by Sale, but Wherry denies it.

If Gen. 19:30-38 is a faithful record, Lot cannot take his place even among the righteous; whereas, his being saved in the destruction of Sodom is clear proof of his righteousness, when read along with Gen. 18:23. Sale has, however, produced the additional testimony of the apostle Peter, who says: "And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds)" (2 Pet. 2:7, 8). His vexing his soul with the wickedness of the people of Sodom, can only be true if he was a preacher of righteousness among those people. And again, why should Lot have gone, being a just man to settle among a wicked people, had he not been charged with the duty of reforming them?

917a The word *ahl* is here interpreted as meaning *those who believed in him* (Bd). It means in the first place a man's *family* or *near relatives*, being, in fact, the equivalent of *āl*, but with reference to root-meaning both have a wider significance, including all *those who bear a relation to a man, as members to a head* (from the root *āla*, meaning *he returned* or *bore a relation*. to a man) *by religion* or *persuasion* or *kindred*. There is, however, this difference between *āl* and *ahl*, that the former is used only in relation to eminent men while the latter may refer to men in general (R).

918 *Maṭr* or *maṭar* (lit. *raining*) is also used in the sense of *doing good* or *evil*, according to the object by which it is followed, but *amṭara* (which is the form used here) is only used in relation to punishment (T). The punishment which overtook the people of Lot is frequently called *maṭar* or *rain*, while in 11:82 and 15:74 stones are said to have been rained down upon them, and in 54:34 it is called a *ḥāṣib*, which primarily signifies a *thrower* or *pelter of stones*. It was a volcanic eruption combined with an earthquake.

SECTION 11 : Shu'aib

85 And to Midian (We sent) their brother Shu'aib. He said: O my people, serve Allāh, you have no god other than Him. Clear proof indeed has come to you from your Lord, so give full measure and weight and diminish not to men their things, and make not mischief in the land after its reform. This is better for you, if you are believers.[919]

وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا ۗ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ
اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُۥ ۖ
قَدْ جَآءَتْكُم بَيِّنَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ
فَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا
النَّاسَ أَشْيَآءَهُمْ وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ
بَعْدَ إِصْلَٰحِهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن
كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

86 And lie not in wait on every road, threatening and turning away from Allāh's way him who believes in Him and seeking to make it crooked. And remember when you were few, then He multiplied you, and see what was the end of the mischief-makers!

وَلَا تَقْعُدُوا بِكُلِّ صِرَٰطٍ تُوعِدُونَ
وَتَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ مَنْ ءَامَنَ
بِهِۦ وَتَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا ۚ وَاذْكُرُوا إِذْ كُنتُمْ
قَلِيلًا فَكَثَّرَكُمْ ۖ وَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ
عَٰقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾

87 And if there is a party of you who believe in that wherewith I am sent and another party who believe not, then wait patiently till Allāh judges between us; and He is the Best of Judges.

وَإِن كَانَ طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنكُمْ ءَامَنُوا بِالَّذِىٓ
أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِۦ وَطَآئِفَةٌ لَّمْ يُؤْمِنُوا فَاصْبِرُوا
حَتَّىٰ يَحْكُمَ اللَّهُ بَيْنَنَا ۚ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحَٰكِمِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

PART IX

88 The arrogant chiefs of his people said: We will certainly turn thee out, O Shu'aib, and those who believe with thee from our town, or you shall come back to our religion. He said: Even though we dislike (it)?

قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا مِن قَوْمِهِۦ
لَنُخْرِجَنَّكَ يَٰشُعَيْبُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَعَكَ
مِن قَرْيَتِنَآ أَوْ لَتَعُودُنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا ۚ قَالَ
أَوَلَوْ كُنَّا كَٰرِهِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾

919 References to Shu'aib are contained in the Holy Qur'ān here and in 11:84-95; 15:78, 79; 26:176-191, and 29:36, 37. Shu'aib was a descendant of Abraham in the fifth generation. Madyan or Midian was the name of Abraham's son by Keturah (Gen. 25:2), and a city of the same name grew up on the Red Sea, south-east of Mount Sinai, where his descendants settled, and is mentioned by Ptolemy as Modiana. Shu'aib is generally supposed to be another name for Jethro.

89 Indeed we should have forged a lie against Allāh, if we go back to your religion after Allāh has delivered us from it. And it is not for us to go back to it, unless Allāh our Lord please. Our Lord comprehends all things in His knowledge. In Allāh do we trust. Our Lord, decide between us and our people with truth, and Thou art the Best of Deciders.

قَدِ افْتَرَيْنَا عَلَى اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا اِنْ عُدْنَا فِيْ
مِلَّتِكُمْ بَعْدَ اِذْ نَجّٰنَا اللّٰهُ مِنْهَا ؕ وَمَا
يَكُوْنُ لَنَاۤ اَنْ نَّعُوْدَ فِيْهَاۤ اِلَّاۤ اَنْ يَّشَآءَ اللّٰهُ
رَبُّنَا ؕ وَسِعَ رَبُّنَا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا ؕ عَلَى اللّٰهِ
تَوَكَّلْنَا ؕ رَبَّنَا افْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ قَوْمِنَا
بِالْحَقِّ وَاَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْفٰتِحِيْنَ ﴿۸۹﴾

90 And the chiefs of his people, who disbelieved, said: If **you** follow Shu'aib, you are surely losers.

وَقَالَ الْمَلَاُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْ قَوْمِهٖ لَئِنِ
اتَّبَعْتُمْ شُعَيْبًا اِنَّكُمْ اِذًا لَّخٰسِرُوْنَ ﴿۹۰﴾

91 So the earthquake overtook them, and they were motionless bodies in their abode —[920]

فَاَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ فَاَصْبَحُوْا فِيْ
دَارِهِمْ جٰثِمِيْنَ ﴿۹۱﴾

92 Those who called Shu'aib a liar were as though they had never dwelt therein — those who called Shu'aib a liar, they were the losers.

الَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا شُعَيْبًا كَاَنْ لَّمْ يَغْنَوْا
فِيْهَا ۛۚ اَلَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا شُعَيْبًا كَانُوْا
هُمُ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ ﴿۹۲﴾

93 So he turned away from them and said: O my people, indeed I delivered to you the messages of my Lord and I gave you good advice; how, then, should I be sorry for a disbelieving people?[921]

فَتَوَلّٰى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يٰقَوْمِ لَقَدْ اَبْلَغْتُكُمْ
رِسٰلٰتِ رَبِّيْ وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ ۚ فَكَيْفَ
اٰسٰى عَلٰى قَوْمٍ كٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿۹۳﴾

SECTION 12: **Makkans warned of Punishment**

94 And We did not send a prophet to a town but We seized its people with distress and affliction that they might humble themselves.[922]

وَمَاۤ اَرْسَلْنَا فِيْ قَرْيَةٍ مِّنْ نَّبِيٍّ اِلَّاۤ اَخَذْنَاۤ
اَهْلَهَا بِالْبَاْسَآءِ وَالضَّرَّآءِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَضَّرَّعُوْنَ ﴿۹۴﴾

The injunction *diminish not to men their things* stands for not depriving or defrauding men of their rights, or not acting wrongfully towards men in respect of their things or dues.

920 This punishment is twice referred to as *rajfah,* or the *earthquake,* and once in 11:94 as *ṣaiḥah,* which also stands for earthquake.

921 He had fully warned his people, and it was their own fault that they did not benefit by his good advice.

922, see next page.

95 Then We changed the evil for good,[923] till they became affluent and said: Distress and happiness did indeed touch our fathers. So We took them by surprise while they perceived not.

ثُمَّ بَدَّلْنَا مَكَانَ السَّيِّئَةِ الْحَسَنَةَ حَتّٰى
عَفَوْا وَّقَالُوْا قَدْ مَسَّ اٰبَآءَنَا الضَّرَّآءُ
وَالسَّرَّآءُ فَاَخَذْنٰهُمْ بَغْتَةً وَّهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُوْنَ ﴿۹۵﴾

96 And if the people of the towns had believed and kept their duty, We would certainly have opened for them blessings from the heavens and the earth. But they rejected, so We seized them for what they earned.

وَلَوْ اَنَّ اَهْلَ الْقُرٰۤى اٰمَنُوْا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا
عَلَيْهِمْ بَرَكٰتٍ مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَلٰكِنْ
كَذَّبُوْا فَاَخَذْنٰهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْسِبُوْنَ ﴿۹۶﴾

97 Are the people of the towns, then, secure from Our punishment coming to them by night while they sleep?

اَفَاَمِنَ اَهْلُ الْقُرٰۤى اَنْ يَّاْتِيَهُمْ بَاْسُنَا
بَيَاتًا وَّهُمْ نَآئِمُوْنَ ﴿۹۷﴾

98 Or, are the people of the towns secure from Our punishment coming to them in the morning while they play?[924]

اَوَاَمِنَ اَهْلُ الْقُرٰۤى اَنْ يَّاْتِيَهُمْ بَاْسُنَا
ضُحًى وَّهُمْ يَلْعَبُوْنَ ﴿۹۸﴾

99 Are they secure from Allāh's plan? But none feels secure from Allāh's plan except the people who perish.

اَفَاَمِنُوْا مَكْرَ اللّٰهِ ۚ فَلَا يَاْمَنُ مَكْرَ
اللّٰهِ اِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخٰسِرُوْنَ ﴿۹۹﴾

SECTION 13: **Moses sent to Pharaoh with signs**

100 Is it not clear to those who inherit the earth after its (former) residents that, if We please, We would afflict them for their sins, and seal their hearts so they would not hear?

اَوَلَمْ يَهْدِ لِلَّذِيْنَ يَرِثُوْنَ الْاَرْضَ مِنْۢ
بَعْدِ اَهْلِهَآ اَنْ لَّوْ نَشَآءُ اَصَبْنٰهُمْ بِذُنُوْبِهِمْ ۚ
وَنَطْبَعُ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُوْنَ ﴿۱۰۰﴾

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922 That the histories of the nations are meant as a warning to all opponents of truth is evident. It is also plain that even afflictions and distress, when sent on a people, are meant for their spiritual betterment, *that they might humble themselves*.

923 By *good* and *evil* are meant here *ease* and *distress* respectively.

924 *Ḍuḥ-an*, which is here translated as *morning*, begins after sunrise, according to some when the sun is yet low, and according to others when it is somewhat high (LL). The *playing* may be taken either literally or it may indicate the worldly engagements in which they were occupied to the utter neglect of higher aspirations.

101 Such were the towns some of whose news We have related to thee. And certainly their messengers came to them with clear arguments, but they would not believe what they had rejected before. Thus does Allāh seal the hearts of the disbelievers.

تِلْكَ الْقُرٰى نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ اَنْۢبَآئِهَا ۚ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ ۚ فَمَا كَانُوْا لِيُؤْمِنُوْا بِمَا كَذَّبُوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ يَطْبَعُ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿۱۰۱﴾

102 And We found not in most of them (faithfulness to) covenant; and We found most of them to be transgressors.

وَمَا وَجَدْنَا لِاَكْثَرِهِمْ مِّنْ عَهْدٍ ۚ وَاِنْ وَّجَدْنَاۤ اَكْثَرَهُمْ لَفٰسِقِيْنَ ﴿۱۰۲﴾

103 Then, after them, We sent Moses with Our messages to Pharaoh and his chiefs, but they disbelieved them. See, then, what was the end of the mischief-makers![925a]

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنْۢ بَعْدِهِمْ مُّوْسٰى بِاٰيٰتِنَاۤ اِلٰى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَا۟ئِهٖ فَظَلَمُوْا بِهَا ۚ فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِيْنَ ﴿۱۰۳﴾

104 And Moses said: O Pharaoh, surely I am a messenger from the Lord of the worlds,

وَقَالَ مُوْسٰى يٰفِرْعَوْنُ اِنِّيْ رَسُوْلٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿۱۰۴﴾

105 Worthy of not saying anything about Allāh except the truth. I have come to you indeed with clear proof from your Lord, so let the Children of Israel go with me.

حَقِيْقٌ عَلٰۤى اَنْ لَّاۤ اَقُوْلَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ اِلَّا الْحَقَّ ؕ قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِبَيِّنَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ فَاَرْسِلْ مَعِيَ بَنِيْۤ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ ﴿۱۰۵﴾

106 He said: If thou hast come with a sign, produce it, if thou art truthful.

قَالَ اِنْ كُنْتَ جِئْتَ بِاٰيَةٍ فَاْتِ بِهَاۤ اِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿۱۰۶﴾

107 So he threw his rod, then lo! it was a serpent manifest,

فَاَلْقٰى عَصَاهُ فَاِذَا هِيَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿۱۰۷﴾

108 And he drew forth his hand, and lo! it was white to the beholders.[926]

وَّنَزَعَ يَدَهٗ فَاِذَا هِيَ بَيْضَآءُ لِلنّٰظِرِيْنَ ﴿۱۰۸﴾

925a The historv of Moses has already been briefly referred to in connection with the stubbornness of the Israelites, but here it is taken up in greater detail, and is continued from here to the end of the 21st section. The reason for this enlargement is to be found in the fact that the Holy Prophet had more in common with Moses than with any other prophet, and he is called the like of Moses in the Mosaic prophecies. References to Moses' history are contained in the following places in the Holy Qur'an: 2:49-71; 4:153; 5:20-26; 7:103-156, 7:159-160; 10:75-92; 11:96-99; 17:101-104; 18:60-82; 19:51-53; 20:9-98; 23:45-49; 26:10-68; 27:7-14; 28:3-44; 37:114-122; 40:23-54; 43:46-56; 44:17-33; 51:38-40; 61:5 and 79:15-26.

926 Here again we have an instance of the correctness of the Quranic statement where it differs with the Bible, showing the incompleteness of the Bible narrative. In the fourth chapter of Exodus it is clearly stated that two signs were given to Moses — that of his rod turning into a serpent and that of his hand becoming white when put into his bosom; and Exod. 4:8 clearly states that Moses

SECTION 14: **Pharaoh summons Enchanters**

109 The chiefs of Pharaoh's people said: Surely this is a skilful enchanter!

قَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِنْ قَوْمِ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّ هٰذَا لَسٰحِرٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٩﴾

110 He intends to turn you out of your land. What do you advise?[927]

يُّرِيدُ أَنْ يُّخْرِجَكُمْ مِّنْ أَرْضِكُمْ ۚ فَمَاذَا تَأْمُرُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

111 They said: Put him off and his brother, and send summoners into the cities,

قَالُوٓا أَرْجِهْ وَأَخَاهُ وَأَرْسِلْ فِي الْمَدَآئِنِ حٰشِرِينَ ﴿١١١﴾

112 To bring to thee every skilful enchanter.

يَأْتُوكَ بِكُلِّ سٰحِرٍ عَلِيمٍ ﴿١١٢﴾

113 And the enchanters came to Pharaoh, saying: We must surely have a reward if we prevail.[928]

وَجَآءَ السَّحَرَةُ فِرْعَوْنَ قَالُوٓا إِنَّ لَنَا لَأَجْرًا إِنْ كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْغٰلِبِينَ ﴿١١٣﴾

114 He said: Yes, and you shall certainly be of those who are near (to me).

قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ لَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾

115 They said: O Moses, wilt thou cast, or shall we (be the first to) cast?

قَالُوا يٰمُوسٰىٓ إِمَّآ أَنْ تُلْقِيَ وَإِمَّآ أَنْ نَّكُونَ نَحْنُ الْمُلْقِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾

116 He said: Cast. So when they cast, they deceived the people's eyes and overawed them, and they produced a mighty enchantment.

قَالَ أَلْقُوا ۚ فَلَمَّآ أَلْقَوْا سَحَرُوٓا أَعْيُنَ النَّاسِ وَاسْتَرْهَبُوهُمْ وَجَآءُو بِسِحْرٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١١٦﴾

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was commanded to show both these signs to Pharaoh. But when we read ch. 7, where the performance of those miracles before Pharaoh is recorded, we find mention only of the miracle of the rod.

Another question worth considering here is as to the nature of these miracles. As is stated elsewhere in the Holy Qur'ān, Moses' rod was an ordinary staff: "I recline on it, and I beat the leaves with it to make them fall for my sheep, and I have other uses for it" (20:18). It is nowhere stated that whenever he threw it down his rod turned into a serpent. Even when the Israelites were in the greatest danger, Moses made no use of it. Only on two occasions the rod is stated to have turned into a serpent, viz. (1) when Moses held communion with God before going to Pharaoh; (2) when he first came before Pharaoh, or when Pharaoh summoned the enchanters to his help.

Now on the first of these occasions it is certain that the rod was seen turning into a serpent by Moses alone, when he was in a state of vision — a state in which a person is temporarily transported to a spiritual sphere. This is the state in which the prophets and other righteous men receive Divine revelation; and while it is certainly not a state of sleep, it is equally certain that it is a state in which the mind rises above the limitations of physical environment, beholding things which are invisible to the physical eye, and hearing things which the physical ear cannot hear. It is therefore certain that on the first occasion Moses observed the change whilst in the same state of temporary transportation in which he received revelation. The miracle took place on the latter occasion when others besides Moses witnessed the change. But it is a fact that the effect of inspired vision is sometimes

927, 928, see next page.

117 And We revealed to Moses: Cast thy rod. Then lo! it swallowed up their lies.[929]

وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ۚ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾

118 So the truth was established, and that which they did became null.

فَوَقَعَ الْحَقُّ وَبَطَلَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١١٨﴾

119 There they were vanquished, and they went back abased.

فَغُلِبُوا هُنَالِكَ وَانْقَلَبُوا صٰغِرِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾

120 And the enchanters fell down prostrate —

وَأُلْقِيَ السَّحَرَةُ سٰجِدِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

121 They said: We believe in the Lord of the worlds,

قَالُوٓا اٰمَنَّا بِرَبِّ الْعٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٢١﴾

122 The Lord of Moses and Aaron.

رَبِّ مُوسٰى وَهٰرُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

123 Pharaoh said: You believe in Him before I give you permission! Surely this is a plot which you have plotted in the city, to turn out of it its people, but you shall know!

قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ اٰمَنْتُمْ بِهٖ قَبْلَ أَنْ اٰذَنَ لَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ هٰذَا لَمَكْرٌ مَّكَرْتُمُوهُ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ لِتُخْرِجُوا مِنْهَآ أَهْلَهَا ۚ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

124 I shall certainly cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides, then I shall crucify you all together!

لَأُقَطِّعَنَّ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ مِّنْ خِلَافٍ ثُمَّ لَأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

125 They said: Surely to our Lord do we return.

قَالُوٓا إِنَّآ إِلٰى رَبِّنَا مُنْقَلِبُونَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

126 And thou takest revenge on us only because we believed in the messages of our Lord when they came to us. Our Lord, pour out on us patience and cause us to die in submission (to Thee)![930]

وَمَا تَنْقِمُ مِنَّآ إِلَّآ أَنْ اٰمَنَّا بِاٰيٰتِ رَبِّنَا لَمَّا جَآءَتْنَا ۚ رَبَّنَآ أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَّتَوَفَّنَا مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٢٦﴾

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so strong that others besides the seer partake in it.

Yet, whatever their real nature, these miracles of Moses were not mere play. The great truth underlying the *'aṣā* or the rod turning into a serpent, was that the followers of Moses, as represented by his rod, would prevail over their enemies; and the significance underlying the whitening of Moses' hand was that his arguments would shine forth with clearness.

For these interpretations of the two occurrences, see 1581 and 1582.

927 *Amr* here carries the significance of *advising* or *counselling*. One says *mur-nī* meaning *counsel me, advise me* (LL). The words are apparently Pharaoh's.

928 Compare Exod. 7:11: "Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers".

929 Compare Exod. 7:12: "For they cast every man his rod and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods". The enchanters' show is here spoken of as *the lies they told*.

930 The Bible does not speak of the magicians as believing in the Divine

SECTION 15 : **Israelites' Persecution continues**

127 And the chiefs of Pharaoh's people said: Wilt thou leave Moses and his people to make mischief in the land and forsake thee and thy gods? He said: We will slay their sons and spare their women, and surely we are dominant over them.[931]

وَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِنْ قَوْمِ فِرْعَوْنَ أَتَذَرُ مُوسَىٰ
وَقَوْمَهُ لِيُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَيَذَرَكَ
وَآلِهَتَكَ ۚ قَالَ سَنُقَتِّلُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَنَسْتَحْيِي
نِسَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّا فَوْقَهُمْ قَاهِرُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

128 Moses said to his people: Ask help from Allāh and be patient. Surely the land is Allāh's — He gives it for an inheritance to such of His servants as He pleases. And the end is for those who keep their duty.

قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ اسْتَعِينُوا بِاللَّهِ
وَاصْبِرُوا ۖ إِنَّ الْأَرْضَ لِلَّهِ يُورِثُهَا مَنْ
يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ۖ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

129 They said: We were persecuted before thou camest to us and since thou hast come to us. He said: It may be that your Lord will destroy your enemy and make you rulers in the land, then He will see how you act.[932]

قَالُوا أُوذِينَا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَأْتِيَنَا وَمِنْ
بَعْدِ مَا جِئْتَنَا ۚ قَالَ عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَنْ
يُهْلِكَ عَدُوَّكُمْ وَيَسْتَخْلِفَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَيَنْظُرَ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾

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mission of Moses when they were vanquished. On the other hand, they are shown as still opposing Moses when other signs were shown later on, though their hearts seem to have been impressed with Moses' truth, as on one occasion they are shown as saying to Pharaoh that there was "the finger of God" in what Moses did (Ex. 8:19). Notwithstanding this conviction, they are still shown as opposing Moses and as suffering from boils like Pharaoh's followers (Ex. 9:11). But according to Rabbinical literature, some Egyptians accompanied Moses when he departed from Egypt, which is corroborated by the Bible narrative: "And a mixed multitude also went up with them" (Exod. 12:38). "For the Egyptians, when the time fixed for Moses' descent from the mountain had expired, came in a body, forty thousand of them, accompanied by two Egyptian magicians, Yanos and Yambros, the same who imitated Moses in producing the signs and the plagues in Egypt" (Jewish Ency.). These two magicians are also mentioned in 2 Tim. 3:8, which is a further corroboration of the truth of the statement made in the Qur'ān and of the incompleteness of the Bible narrative.

It should be further noted that the magicians could not have believed unless they had heard the arguments of Moses as to the existence of God and as to a life after death in which they now believed so staunchly that they were ready to sacrifice their very lives for their faith. It shows that Moses had explained the essential religious truths to the whole gathering before he showed the signs.

931 The word translated as dominant is *qāhir,* which signifies *one who has overcome, conquered,* or *subdued another* (LL).

932 By *the land* is meant the *Promised Land,* for thither was Moses taking them. Their being made rulers in the land was conditional upon their doing good; this is suggested in the concluding words of the verse.

SECTION 16: **Moses shows more Signs**

130 And certainly We overtook Pharaoh's people with droughts and diminution of fruits that they might be mindful.

وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ بِالسِّنِينَ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ﴿١٣٠﴾

131 But when good befell them they said: This is due to us. And when evil afflicted them, they attributed it to the ill-luck of Moses and those with him. Surely their evil fortune is only from Allāh, but most of them know not.[933]

فَإِذَا جَاءَتْهُمُ الْحَسَنَةُ قَالُوا لَنَا هَٰذِهِ ۖ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَطَّيَّرُوا بِمُوسَىٰ وَمَن مَّعَهُ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّمَا طَائِرُهُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣١﴾

132 And they said: Whatever sign thou mayest bring to us to charm us therewith — we shall not believe in thee.

وَقَالُوا مَهْمَا تَأْتِنَا بِهِ مِنْ آيَةٍ لِّتَسْحَرَنَا بِهَا فَمَا نَحْنُ لَكَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

133 So We sent upon them widespread death,[934] and the locusts and the lice and the frogs and the blood — clear signs.[935] But they behaved haughtily and they were a guilty people.

فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الطُّوفَانَ وَالْجَرَادَ وَالْقُمَّلَ وَالضَّفَادِعَ وَالدَّمَ آيَاتٍ مُّفَصَّلَاتٍ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

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933 The original word for *evil fortune* is *ṭā'ir,* lit., *a bird.* See 1417 for explanation. *Their evil fortune is from Allāh* means that the misfortunes which they were made to suffer were brought about by Allāh as a result of their own evil deeds.

934 *Ṭūfān* (from *ṭāfa, he went round* or *circuited the thing*) is originally *every accident that besets men on all sides* (R), and hence it is also applied to *flood* or *deluge.* It also means *death,* or *quick and widespread death*; or *death prevailing generally* (LL). Hence it might mean either *plague causing excessive death* or *flood. Widespread death,* as the true interpretation of *ṭūfān,* is also accepted by Bukhārī (B. 65: vii).

935 The Bible mentions the following signs: (1) Turning of the water into blood; (2) frogs; (3) lice; (4) flies; (5) plague upon beasts and men; (6) hail; (7) locusts; (8) darkness; (9) death of the first-born. Of these the Qur'ān mentions the first two, the third, and the seventh in clear words; the fourth is included in the third; the fifth and the ninth are mentioned together as *ṭūfān* or *widespread death;* the hail is not mentioned, but the destruction of fruits, which was brought about by it, is mentioned in v. 130; while instead of the darkness we have the *drought* in that verse, which seems to have been the actual affliction, and of which darkness may have been a result either metaphorically or actually, because of hurricanes and storms darkening the land, as is usually the case in time of drought. The two signs of v. 130, with the five mentioned here, are the seven signs which, with the two signs of the rod and the white hand, make up the nine signs of 17:101 and 27:12.

134 And when the plague[936] fell upon them, they said: O Moses, pray for us to thy Lord as He has made promise with thee. If thou remove the plague from us, we will certainly believe in thee and will let the Children of Israel go with thee.

وَلَمَّا وَقَعَ عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّجْزُ قَالُوا يٰمُوسَى ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ بِمَا عَهِدَ عِنْدَكَ ۚ لَئِنْ كَشَفْتَ عَنَّا الرِّجْزَ لَنُؤْمِنَنَّ لَكَ وَلَنُرْسِلَنَّ مَعَكَ بَنِيٓ إِسْرَآءِيلَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

135 But when We removed the plague from them till a term which they should attain, lo! they broke (their promise).[937]

فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمُ الرِّجْزَ إِلَىٰٓ أَجَلٍ هُمْ بٰلِغُوهُ إِذَا هُمْ يَنْكُثُونَ ﴿١٣٥﴾

136 So We exacted retribution from them and drowned them in the sea, because they rejected Our signs and were heedless of them.

فَانْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنٰهُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَذَّبُوا بِاٰيٰتِنَا وَكَانُوا عَنْهَا غٰفِلِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

137 And We made the people who were deemed weak to inherit the eastern lands and the western ones which We had blessed. And the good word of thy Lord was fulfilled in the Children of Israel — because of their patience. And We destroyed what Pharaoh and his people had wrought and what they had built.[938]

وَأَوْرَثْنَا الْقَوْمَ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا يُسْتَضْعَفُونَ مَشٰرِقَ الْأَرْضِ وَمَغٰرِبَهَا الَّتِي بٰرَكْنَا فِيهَا ۖ وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ الْحُسْنَىٰ عَلَىٰ بَنِيٓ إِسْرَآءِيلَ ۙ بِمَا صَبَرُوا ۖ وَدَمَّرْنَا مَا كَانَ يَصْنَعُ فِرْعَوْنُ وَقَوْمُهُ وَمَا كَانُوا يَعْرِشُونَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

138 And We took the Children of Israel across the sea. Then they came to a people who were devoted to their idols. They said: O Moses, make for us a god as they have gods. He said: Surely you are an ignorant people![939]

وَجٰوَزْنَا بِبَنِيٓ إِسْرَآءِيلَ الْبَحْرَ فَأَتَوْا عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ يَعْكُفُونَ عَلَىٰٓ أَصْنَامٍ لَهُمْ ۚ قَالُوا يٰمُوسَى اجْعَلْ لَنَآ إِلٰهًا كَمَا لَهُمْ اٰلِهَةٌ ۚ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ ﴿١٣٨﴾

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936 The reference is to the plague mentioned in the previous verse.

937 A reference to Exodus, ch. 8-11, will show that Pharaoh again and again broke his promise to let the Children of Israel go — promises which he made on condition that a certain affliction should be removed.

938 The land that was *blessed* is none other than the Holy Land, for which a Divine promise was given to Abraham. The *good word* referred to here is that contained in Gen. 17:8. The eastern and the western lands might signify the eastern and the western tracts of the Holy Land, or the lands on the eastern and western sides of the Jordan.

939 The Israelites undoubtedly came across idolatrous nations in their wanderings in Syria. They themselves had idolatrous leanings: "The people gathered themselves together unto Aaron and said unto him, Up, make us gods which shall go before us!" (Exod. 32:1). Many other anecdotes show a similar tendency to idol-worship.

139 (As to) these, that wherein they are engaged shall be destroyed and that which they do is vain.

إِنَّ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ مُتَبَّرٌ مَّا هُمْ فِيهِ وَبٰطِلٌ
مَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٣٩﴾

140 He said: Shall I seek for you a god other than Allāh, while He has made you excel (all) created things?[940]

قَالَ أَغَيْرَ اللّٰهِ أَبْغِيكُمْ إِلٰهًا وَّهُوَ
فَضَّلَكُمْ عَلَى الْعٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٤٠﴾

141 And when We delivered you from Pharaoh's people, who subjected you to severe torment, killing your sons and sparing your women. And therein was a great trial from your Lord.

وَإِذْ أَنْجَيْنٰكُمْ مِّنْ اٰلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ
سُوٓءَ الْعَذَابِ ۚ يُقَتِّلُونَ أَبْنَآءَكُمْ وَ
يَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَآءَكُمْ ۗ وَفِي ذٰلِكُمْ بَلَآءٌ
مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٤١﴾

SECTION 17: **Moses receives the Law**

142 And We appointed for Moses thirty nights, and completed them with ten, so the appointed time of his Lord was complete forty nights. And Moses said to his brother Aaron: Take my place among my people, and act well and follow not the way of the mischief-makers.

وَوٰعَدْنَا مُوسٰى ثَلٰثِينَ لَيْلَةً وَّأَتْمَمْنٰهَا
بِعَشْرٍ فَتَمَّ مِيقٰتُ رَبِّهٖٓ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ۚ
وَقَالَ مُوسٰى لِأَخِيهِ هٰرُونَ اخْلُفْنِي فِي
قَوْمِي وَأَصْلِحْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿١٤٢﴾

143 And when Moses came at Our appointed time and his Lord spoke to him, he said: My Lord, show me (Thyself) so that I may look at Thee. He said: Thou canst not see Me; but look at the mountain; if it remains firm in its place, then wilt thou see Me. So when his Lord manifested His glory to the mountain, He made it crumble and Moses fell down in a swoon. Then when he recovered, he said: Glory be to Thee! I turn to Thee, and I am the first of the believers.[941]

وَلَمَّا جَآءَ مُوسٰى لِمِيقٰتِنَا وَكَلَّمَهٗ رَبُّهٗ ۙ
قَالَ رَبِّ أَرِنِيٓ أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ ۗ قَالَ لَنْ
تَرٰىنِي وَلٰكِنِ انْظُرْ إِلَى الْجَبَلِ فَإِنِ
اسْتَقَرَّ مَكَانَهٗ فَسَوْفَ تَرٰىنِي ۚ فَلَمَّا تَجَلّٰى
رَبُّهٗ لِلْجَبَلِ جَعَلَهٗ دَكًّا وَّخَرَّ مُوسٰى صَعِقًا ۚ
فَلَمَّآ أَفَاقَ قَالَ سُبْحٰنَكَ تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَ
أَنَا۠ أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٤٣﴾

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940 Moses' argument against idolatry is the one to which the Holy Qur'ān repeatedly calls attention, viz. that man, being as it were the lord of creation under

941, see next page.

144 He said: O Moses, surely I have chosen thee above the people by My messages and My words. So take hold of what I give thee and be of the grateful.

قَالَ يٰمُوْسٰٓى اِنِّىْ اصْطَفَيْتُكَ عَلَى النَّاسِ
بِرِسٰلٰتِىْ وَبِكَلَامِىْ ۖ فَخُذْ مَآ اٰتَيْتُكَ
وَكُنْ مِّنَ الشّٰكِرِيْنَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

145 And We ordained[942] for him in the tablets admonition of every kind and clear explanation of all things. So take hold of them with firmness and enjoin thy people to take hold of what is best thereof. I shall show you the abode of the transgressors.[943]

وَكَتَبْنَا لَهٗ فِى الْاَلْوَاحِ مِنْ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ
مَّوْعِظَةً وَّتَفْصِيْلًا لِّكُلِّ شَىْءٍ ۚ فَخُذْهَا
بِقُوَّةٍ وَّاْمُرْ قَوْمَكَ يَاْخُذُوْا بِاَحْسَنِهَا ؕ
سَاُورِيْكُمْ دَارَ الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ﴿١٤٥﴾

146 I shall turn away from My messages those who are unjustly proud in the earth. And if they see every sign, they will not believe in it; and if they see the way of rectitude, they take it not for a way; and if they see the way of error, they take it for a way. This is because they reject Our messages and are heedless of them.

سَاَصْرِفُ عَنْ اٰيٰتِىَ الَّذِيْنَ يَتَكَبَّرُوْنَ
فِى الْاَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ؕ وَاِنْ يَّرَوْا كُلَّ
اٰيَةٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُوْا بِهَا ۚ وَاِنْ يَّرَوْا سَبِيْلَ
الرُّشْدِ لَا يَتَّخِذُوْهُ سَبِيْلًا ۚ وَاِنْ يَّرَوْا
سَبِيْلَ الْغَىِّ يَتَّخِذُوْهُ سَبِيْلًا ؕ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ
كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا وَكَانُوْا عَنْهَا غٰفِلِيْنَ ﴿١٤٦﴾

147 And those who reject Our messages and the meeting of the Hereafter — their deeds are fruitless. Can they be rewarded except for what they do?

وَالَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا وَلِقَآءِ الْاٰخِرَةِ
حَبِطَتْ اَعْمَالُهُمْ ؕ هَلْ يُجْزَوْنَ اِلَّا
مَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٤٧﴾

God, and excelling the whole of creation, should not take objects lower than himself as his gods.

941 The highest bliss of paradise is said to be the sight of the Divine Being. The words addressed to Moses, *thou canst not see Me*, do not negative the sight of the Divine Being in the life after death. All that they negative is the seeing of the Divine Being with the physical eye. Moses' request seems to have been based on the elders' demand spoken of in 2:55. The crumbling of the mountain is the same as the rumbling or earthquake of 2:55. I venture, however, another explanation. What Moses wanted to see was the great manifestation of Divine glory which was reserved for the Holy Prophet Muḥammad. In fact, both Moses and Jesus were not equal to the task which was reserved for the Prophet Muḥammad. Jesus said that he could not teach his followers all things, but that when the Comforter made his appearance he would guide them into all truth. That Moses was unequal to the Holy Prophet's task was clearly demonstrated by his falling down in a swoon when he beheld the Great Manifestation.

942 *Kataba* means *He* (God) *prescribed, appointed* or *ordained and made obligatory* (LL). The words *admonition of every kind* and *explanation of all things* cannot be taken generally, but are limited by the requirements of the time in which Moses appeared.

943 The meaning is that a time will come to the Israelites when they will become transgressors, i.e. they will not keep the Divine commandments.

SECTION 18: **Israelites worship a calf**

148 And Moses' people made of their ornaments a calf after him — a (lifeless) body,[944] having a lowing sound. Could they not see that it spoke not to them, nor guided them in the way? They took it (for worship) and they were unjust.

وَاتَّخَذَ قَوْمُ مُوسٰى مِنْۢ بَعْدِهٖ مِنْ
حُلِيِّهِمْ عِجْلًا جَسَدًا لَّهٗ خُوَارٌ ؕ اَلَمْ
يَرَوْا اَنَّهٗ لَا يُكَلِّمُهُمْ وَلَا يَهْدِيْهِمْ سَبِيْلًا ۘ
اِتَّخَذُوْهُ وَكَانُوْا ظٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿۱۴۸﴾

149 And when they repented[945] and saw that they had gone astray, they said: If our Lord have not mercy on us and forgive us, we shall certainly be of the losers.

وَلَمَّا سُقِطَ فِيْۤ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَرَاَوْا اَنَّهُمْ قَدْ
ضَلُّوْا ۙ قَالُوْا لَئِنْ لَّمْ يَرْحَمْنَا رَبُّنَا
وَيَغْفِرْ لَنَا لَنَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ ﴿۱۴۹﴾

150 And when Moses returned to his people, wrathful, grieved, he said: Evil is that which you have done after me! Did you hasten on the judgment of your Lord?[946] And he threw down the tablets and seized his brother by the head, dragging him towards him. He said: Son of my mother, the people reckoned me weak and had well-nigh slain me. So make not the enemies to rejoice over me and count me not among the unjust people.

وَلَمَّا رَجَعَ مُوْسٰۤى اِلٰى قَوْمِهٖ غَضْبَانَ
اَسِفًا ۙ قَالَ بِئْسَمَا خَلَفْتُمُوْنِيْ مِنْۢ
بَعْدِيْ ۚ اَعَجِلْتُمْ اَمْرَ رَبِّكُمْ ۚ وَاَلْقَى
الْاَلْوَاحَ وَاَخَذَ بِرَاْسِ اَخِيْهِ يَجُرُّهٗۤ
اِلَيْهِ ؕ قَالَ ابْنَ اُمَّ اِنَّ الْقَوْمَ اسْتَضْعَفُوْنِيْ
وَكَادُوْا يَقْتُلُوْنَنِيْ ۫ فَلَا تُشْمِتْ بِيَ
الْاَعْدَآءَ وَلَا تَجْعَلْنِيْ مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿۱۵۰﴾

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944 The word *jasad* means *a body,* as well as *red* or *intensely yellow.* The former meaning is the one generally adopted by the commentators, the significance being that the calf made was a mere body without a soul. Yet it was so made that it gave a lowing sound like that of a calf. The other meaning also affords a true description of the calf, for, being made of gold ornaments, it was of a red or an intensely yellow colour.

945 *Suqiṭa fī aidī-him* is a phrase which, by the consensus of opinion, means *they repented* (from *saqaṭa, it fell down*). The phrase is said not to have been known before the Qur'ān (LL). Explaining the word in his commentary, Bukhārī says: *Every one who repents is spoken of as suqiṭa fī yadi-hī* (B. 65: vii). Or *nadm* is understood and the meaning is, *when regret was brought before them.* The Israelites' repentance, though mentioned first, was subsequent to Moses' return (2:54). In fact, the order here is not historical, but one connecting the repentance with the sin, mentioning the events which brought about that repentance afterwards.

946 The word *'ajila* is used as a transitive in the sense of *sabaqa,* and the meaning is, *did you hasten the commandment of your Lord?* The *amr,* or *the commandment,* has been explained as meaning *the appointed time or the judgment.*

151 He said: My Lord, forgive me and my brother, and admit us to Thy mercy, and Thou art the Most Merciful of those who show mercy.[947]

قَالَ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِأَخِي وَأَدْخِلْنَا فِي
رَحْمَتِكَ ۖ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ ﴿١٥١﴾

SECTION 19: **The Torah and the Prophet's Advent**

152 Those who took the calf (for a god) — wrath from their Lord, and disgrace in this world's life, will surely overtake them. And thus do We recompense those who invent lies.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ سَيَنَالُهُمْ
غَضَبٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَذِلَّةٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ
الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُفْتَرِينَ ﴿١٥٢﴾

153 And those who do evil deeds, then repent after that and believe — thy Lord after that is surely Forgiving, Merciful.

وَالَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ ثُمَّ تَابُوا مِنْ
بَعْدِهَا وَآمَنُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنْ
بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٥٣﴾

154 And when Moses' anger calmed down, he took up the tablets; and in the writing thereof was guidance and mercy for those who fear their Lord.[948]

وَلَمَّا سَكَتَ عَنْ مُوسَى الْغَضَبُ أَخَذَ
الْأَلْوَاحَ ۖ وَفِي نُسْخَتِهَا هُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ
لِلَّذِينَ هُمْ لِرَبِّهِمْ يَرْهَبُونَ ﴿١٥٤﴾

155 And Moses chose of his people seventy men for Our appointment.[949] So when the earthquake overtook them, he said: My Lord, if Thou hadst pleased, Thou hadst destroyed them before and myself (too). Wilt Thou destroy us for that which the

وَاخْتَارَ مُوسَى قَوْمَهُ سَبْعِينَ رَجُلًا
لِمِيقَاتِنَا ۖ فَلَمَّا أَخَذَتْهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ قَالَ
رَبِّ لَوْ شِئْتَ أَهْلَكْتَهُمْ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَإِيَّايَ ۖ

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947 Aaron's excuse and Moses' acceptance of it show clearly that Aaron was quite innocent, having had a share neither in making the calf nor in worshipping it. The Bible account, which makes a righteous prophet of God guilty of the most heinous crime, must be rejected as untrue. That forgiveness was not sought for any fault in connection with calf-worship is clear from the fact that Moses joins himself with Aaron in the prayer given in this verse. Forgiveness here, as frequently elsewhere in the Holy Qur'ān, is equivalent to the Divine protection, which every man should seek against the frailties and shortcomings of human nature. See 380 for a full explanation of the word *ghafr*.

948 According to Exod. 32:19 Moses "brake them beneath the mountain" in his anger, and Exod. ch. 34 describes how the tablets were renewed. The Qur'ān differs from this narrative. It does not state that the tablets were broken or renewed, but mentions their being taken up by Moses after his anger had calmed and while the writing was still on them.

949 Exod. 24:1 speaks of Moses having taken up seventy elders of Israel along with him, though they were forbidden to "come near the Lord", and on this occasion Moses was in the mountain forty days and forty nights (Exod. 24:18). Although he is also spoken of in the Bible as having gone into the mountain after the incident of the calf-worship and to have remained there for forty days and

foolish among us have done? It is naught but Thy trial. Thou causest to perish thereby whom Thou pleasest and guidest whom Thou pleasest. Thou art our Protector, so forgive us and have mercy on us, and Thou art the Best of those who forgive.

أَتُهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ السُّفَهَاءُ مِنَّا ۚ إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا فِتْنَتُكَ ۖ تُضِلُّ بِهَا مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَهْدِي مَنْ تَشَاءُ ۖ أَنْتَ وَلِيُّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْغَافِرِينَ ﴿١٥٥﴾

156 And ordain for us good in this world's life and in the Hereafter, for surely we turn to Thee. He said: I afflict with My chastisement whom I please, and My mercy encompasses all things. So I ordain it for those who keep their duty and pay the poor-rate, and those who believe in Our messages —[949a]

وَاكْتُبْ لَنَا فِي هَٰذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ إِنَّا هُدْنَا إِلَيْكَ ۖ قَالَ عَذَابِي أُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ أَشَاءُ ۖ وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ۚ فَسَأَكْتُبُهَا لِلَّذِينَ يَتَّقُونَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ بِآيَاتِنَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٥٦﴾

157 Those who follow the Messenger-Prophet, the *Ummī*,[950] whom they find mentioned in the Torah and the Gospel.[951] He enjoins

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَاةِ

forty nights (Exod. 34:28), the allusion in the Qur'ān is to the first incident. There was no occasion for a second visit according to the Holy Qur'ān.

949a No attribute of the Divine Being receives such prominence in the Holy Qur'ān as the attribute of *mercy*. Evil there is in the world, and the evil-doers must receive their due, but mark the contrast: *And My mercy encompasses all things*. The truth is that even chastisement is a phase of Divine mercy, because it seeks not to punish, but to correct the evil-doer. Divine mercy we are here told is specially ordained for those who keep their duty and who believe in the Divine revelations given to Prophet Muḥammad.

950 For *ummī*, meaning *one who neither writes nor reads a writing*, see 117. Hence the Arabs are called an *ummī* people, and the *Ummī* Prophet is either *the prophet of the ummī people* (i.e. *the Arabs*) *because he was like them*, or *he was so called because he himself did not know reading and writing* (R). But according to some, the Prophet is called *Ummī* because he came from the *Umm al-Qurā*, i.e. Makkah, which is the Metropolis of Arabia (MB).

The suggestion of Rodwell that the word *ummī* means *gentile* in the sense of a non-Jewish or heathen people is not supported by any recognized authority; see 2:78, where the Jews are called *ummī*. LL, it is true, gives *gentile* as the signification of *ummī*, but a reference to the authorities he quotes clearly shows that if the word *gentile* expresses the meaning of *ummī*, it does so in the general sense of *one belonging to a gens* or *clan*; therefore Lane's conclusion that in a tropical and secondary sense *ummī* means *heathen* is entirely without foundation.

As for the fact that the Holy Prophet was unable to read or write before revelation came to him, there can be no two opinions. On this point the Qur'ān is conclusive: "And thou didst not recite before it any book, nor didst thou transcribe one with thy right hand" (29:48). There is a difference of opinion, however, as to whether he could read or write after revelation. Without entering into the details of this controversy I may remark that, while there is ground for believing that he could read, he still had his letters written by others; see 1919.

951 There are many prophecies regarding the advent of the Holy Prophet both in the Old and the New Testament. The Torah and the Gospel are specially mentioned here because Moses and Jesus were respectively the first and the last

them good and forbids them evil, and makes lawful to them the good things and prohibits for them impure things, and removes from them their burden and the shackles which were on them. So those who believe in him and honour him and help him,[952] and follow the light which has been sent down with him — these are the successful.

وَالْإِنْجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهٰهُمْ
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبٰتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ
عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبٰٓئِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ
وَالْأَغْلٰلَ الَّتِىْ كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ فَالَّذِيْنَ
اٰمَنُوْا بِهٖ وَعَزَّرُوْهُ وَنَصَرُوْهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا
النُّوْرَ الَّذِىْٓ أُنْزِلَ مَعَهٗٓ ۙ أُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ
الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

SECTION 20 : **Divine Favours on Israelites**

158 Say : O mankind, surely I am the Messenger of Allāh to you all, of Him, Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth.[953] There is no god but He ; He gives life and causes death. So believe in Allāh and His Messenger, the *Ummī* Prophet who believes in Allāh and His words, and follow him so that you may be guided aright.

قُلْ يٰٓأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّىْ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ إِلَيْكُمْ
جَمِيْعًا الَّذِىْ لَهٗ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ
لَآ إِلٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ يُحْىٖ وَيُمِيْتُ ۖ فَاٰمِنُوْا
بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهِ النَّبِىِّ الْأُمِّىِّ الَّذِىْ يُؤْمِنُ
بِاللّٰهِ وَكَلِمٰتِهٖ وَاتَّبِعُوْهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

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of the Israelite prophets. Deut. 18 : 15-18 speaks very clearly of the raising of a prophet (who shall be the like of Moses) from among the brethren of the Israelites, i.e. the Ishmaelites or the Arabs, while Deut. 33 : 2 speaks of the shining forth of the manifestation of the Lord, i.e. his coming in full glory " from Mount Paran ". The Gospel is full of the prophecies of the advent of the Holy Prophet ; Matt. 13 : 31, Matt. 21 : 33-44, Mark 12 : 1-11, Luke 20 : 9-18, where the Lord of the vineyard comes after the son (i.e. Jesus) is maltreated, John 1 : 22, John 14 : 16, John 14 : 26 all contain such prophecies.

952 Noldeke's supposition that there is a reference to the *Anṣār*, i.e. *the helpers* of Madīnah, here, and Rodwell's conclusion that hence the verse must have been added at Madīnah, are not entitled to serious consideration. Was the Prophet without any helpers at Makkah ?

953 As against the various prophets spoken of in this chapter, every one of whom was sent to *his people* (*qaumi-hī*), the Prophet Muḥammad is here spoken of as having been sent to *all people,* to the whole of mankind. Thus the appearance of the Prophet Muḥammad was a turning point in the history of humanity. The day of the national prophet was over and a new era had dawned in which the whole of humanity was ultimately to be united under one spiritual head. Six hundred years before, Jesus Christ, the last of the national prophets, said to a non-Israelite woman that he was " not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel " (Matt. 15 : 24) ; and being pressed, only added : " It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs " (Matt. 15 : 26). In the new era, however, the idea of *nationality* had to give place to the broader idea of *one humanity,* and the basis of it was laid by the Holy Qur'ān.

159 And of Moses' people is a party who guide with truth, and therewith they do justice.[953a]

وَمِنْ قَوْمِ مُوسَىٰٓ أُمَّةٌ يَّهْدُونَ بِالْحَقِّ
وَبِهٖ يَعْدِلُوْنَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

160 And We divided them into twelve tribes, as nations. And We revealed to Moses when his people asked him for water: Strike the rock with thy staff; so out flowed from it twelve springs. Each tribe knew its drinking-place. And We made the clouds to give shade over them and We sent to them manna and quails. Eat of the good things We have given you. And they did not do Us any harm, but they wronged themselves.

وَقَطَّعْنٰهُمُ اثْنَتَيْ عَشْرَةَ اَسْبَاطًا اُمَمًا ؕ
وَاَوْحَيْنَآ اِلٰى مُوْسٰٓى اِذِ اسْتَسْقٰىهُ قَوْمُهٗٓ
اَنِ اضْرِبْ بِّعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ ۚ فَانْۢبَجَسَتْ
مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا ؕ قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ
اُنَاسٍ مَّشْرَبَهُمْ ؕ وَظَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الْغَمَامَ
وَاَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَنَّ وَالسَّلْوٰى ؕ كُلُوْا
مِنْ طَيِّبٰتِ مَا رَزَقْنٰكُمْ ؕ وَمَا ظَلَمُوْنَا
وَلٰكِنْ كَانُوْٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُوْنَ ﴿١٦٠﴾

161 And when it was said to them: Dwell in this town and eat from it whence you wish, and make petition for forgiveness, and enter the gate submissively, We shall forgive you your wrongs. We shall give more to the doers of good.

وَاِذْ قِيْلَ لَهُمُ اسْكُنُوْا هٰذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ وَكُلُوْا مِنْهَا
حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ وَقُوْلُوْا حِطَّةٌ وَّادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ
سُجَّدًا نَّغْفِرْ لَكُمْ خَطِيْٓـٰٔتِكُمْ ؕ سَنَزِيْدُ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿١٦١﴾

162 But those who were unjust among them changed it for a word other than that which they were told, so We sent upon them a pestilence from heaven for their wrongdoing.[953b]

فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا مِنْهُمْ قَوْلًا غَيْرَ الَّذِيْ
قِيْلَ لَهُمْ فَاَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِجْزًا مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ
بِمَا كَانُوْا يَظْلِمُوْنَ ﴿١٦٢﴾

SECTION 21 : **Israelites' Transgressions**

163 And ask them about the town which stood by the sea. When they violated the Sabbath, when their fish

وَسْئَلْهُمْ عَنِ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِيْ كَانَتْ حَاضِرَةَ
الْبَحْرِ ۘ اِذْ يَعْدُوْنَ فِي السَّبْتِ اِذْ تَاْتِيْهِمْ

953a, 953b, see next page.

came to them on their Sabbath day on the surface, and when it was not their Sabbath they came not to them. Thus did We try them because they transgressed.[954]

حِيتَانُهُمْ يَوْمَ سَبْتِهِمْ شُرَّعًا وَيَوْمَ لَا يَسْبِتُونَ ۙ لَا تَأْتِيهِمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نَبْلُوهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ ﴿١٦٣﴾

164 And when a party of them said: Why preach you to a people whom Allāh would destroy or whom He would chastise with a severe chastisement? They said: To be free from blame before your Lord, and that haply they may guard against evil.

وَإِذْ قَالَتْ أُمَّةٌ مِّنْهُمْ لِمَ تَعِظُونَ قَوْمًا ۙ اللَّهُ مُهْلِكُهُمْ أَوْ مُعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا ۖ قَالُوا مَعْذِرَةً إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٦٤﴾

165 So when they neglected that whereof they had been reminded, We delivered those who forbade evil and We overtook those who were iniquitous with an evil chastisement because they transgressed.

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ أَنجَيْنَا الَّذِينَ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ السُّوءِ وَأَخَذْنَا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا بِعَذَابٍ بَئِيسٍ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ ﴿١٦٥﴾

166 So when they revoltingly persisted in that which they had been forbidden, We said to them: Be (as) apes, despised and hated.[954a]

فَلَمَّا عَتَوْا عَن مَّا نُهُوا عَنْهُ قُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ ﴿١٦٦﴾

167 And when thy Lord declared that He would send against them to the day of Resurrection those who would subject them to severe torment. Surely thy Lord is Quick in requiting; and surely He is Forgiving, Merciful.

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكَ لَيَبْعَثَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَن يَسُومُهُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ ۗ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَسَرِيعُ الْعِقَابِ ۖ وَإِنَّهُ لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٦٧﴾

953a Thus the Qur'ān recognizes that there were good people among the Jews.

953b For the statements made in vv. 160-162, see 96, 97, 89, 90, 91, 93, 92, 94, 95.

954 The city referred to here is generally recognized as being Ela, which was situated on the Red Sea. The incident alluded to is mentioned as an instance of the Jewish violation of the Sabbath. The fish appeared on the surface of the water on the Sabbath because they had a sense of security on that day. This was a temptation for the people to break the law.

954a See 107.

168 And We divided them in the earth into parties — some of them are righteous and some of them are otherwise. And We tried them with blessings and misfortunes that they might turn.

وَقَطَّعْنٰهُمْ فِي الْاَرْضِ اُمَمًا ۚ مِنْهُمُ
الصّٰلِحُوْنَ وَ مِنْهُمْ دُوْنَ ذٰلِكَ ۫ وَبَلَوْنٰهُمْ
بِالْحَسَنٰتِ وَالسَّيِّاٰتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُوْنَ ﴿۱۶۸﴾

169 Then after them came an evil posterity[955] who inherited the Book, taking the frail goods of this low life and saying: It will be forgiven us. And if the like good came to them, they would take it (too).[956] Was not a promise taken from them in the Book that they would not speak anything about Allāh but the truth? And they study what is in it. And the abode of the Hereafter is better for those who keep their duty. Do you not then understand?

فَخَلَفَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ وَّرِثُوا الْكِتٰبَ
يَاْخُذُوْنَ عَرَضَ هٰذَا الْاَدْنٰى وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ
سَيُغْفَرُ لَنَا ۚ وَاِنْ يَّاْتِهِمْ عَرَضٌ مِّثْلُهٗ
يَاْخُذُوْهُ ؕ اَلَمْ يُؤْخَذْ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّيْثَاقُ
الْكِتٰبِ اَنْ لَّا يَقُوْلُوْا عَلَى اللّٰهِ اِلَّا الْحَقَّ
وَدَرَسُوْا مَا فِيْهِ ؕ وَالدَّارُ الْاٰخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ
لِّلَّذِيْنَ يَتَّقُوْنَ ؕ اَفَلَا تَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿۱۶۹﴾

170 And as for those who hold fast by the Book and keep up prayer — surely We waste not the reward of the reformers.

وَالَّذِيْنَ يُمَسِّكُوْنَ بِالْكِتٰبِ وَاَقَامُوا
الصَّلٰوةَ ؕ اِنَّا لَا نُضِيْعُ اَجْرَ الْمُصْلِحِيْنَ ﴿۱۷۰﴾

171 And when We shook the mountain over them as if it were a covering, and they thought that it was going to fall down upon them: Hold on firmly that which We have given you, and be mindful of that which is in it, so that you may guard against evil.[957]

وَاِذْ نَتَقْنَا الْجَبَلَ فَوْقَهُمْ كَاَنَّهٗ ظُلَّةٌ
وَّظَنُّوْٓا اَنَّهٗ وَاقِعٌۢ بِهِمْ ۚ خُذُوْا مَآ اٰتَيْنٰكُمْ
بِقُوَّةٍ وَّاذْكُرُوْا مَا فِيْهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿۱۷۱﴾

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955 Lexicologists recognize a difference between *khalf* and *khalaf*, the former being applied to *evil* and the latter to *good*, whether a son or a generation (LL).

956 First they commit a crime for the frail goods of this life, saying that they will be forgiven; then persist in their evil course and when a similar occasion arises, they again return to the old crimes. There is no repentance.

957 The stories built upon these simple words by some commentators must be rejected. The words simply relate the experience of the elders of Israel when they stood at the foot of the mountain, which rose above them. There was a severe earthquake, which is referred to in v. 155, causing them to think that the mountain would fall down upon them. According to LA, the primary significance of *natq* is *za'za'*, which means the *moving, agitating, shaking*, or *putting a thing into a state of commotion*. Thus the use of *nataqnā* instead of *rafa'nā* (2:63) clearly explains that the mountain was shaken violently by an earthquake while the elders of Israel stood at its foot. *Natq* has also another meaning, viz. *taking up from the roots*, but this is not the significance here.

SECTION 22: **Evidence of Divine Impress on Man's Nature**

172 And when thy Lord brought forth from the children of Adam, from their loins, their descendants, and made them bear witness about themselves: Am I not your Lord? They said: Yes; we bear witness. Lest you should say on the day of Resurrection: We were unaware of this,[958]

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِيٓ ءَادَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ
ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ
بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَا أَنْ تَقُولُوا
يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هٰذَا غٰفِلِينَ ﴿١٧٢﴾

173 Or (lest) you should say: Only our fathers ascribed partners (to Allāh) before (us), and we were (their) descendants after them. Wilt Thou destroy us for what liars did?[959]

أَوْ تَقُولُوٓا إِنَّمَآ أَشْرَكَ ءَابَآؤُنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ
وَكُنَّا ذُرِّيَّةً مِّنْ بَعْدِهِمْ أَفَتُهْلِكُنَا
بِمَا فَعَلَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ ﴿١٧٣﴾

174 And thus do We make the messages clear, and that haply they may return.

وَكَذٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْاٰيٰتِ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿١٧٤﴾

175 And recite to them the news of him to whom We give Our messages, but he withdraws himself from them, so the devil follows him up, and he is of those who perish.[960]

وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِيٓ ءَاتَيْنٰهُ ءَايٰتِنَا فَانْسَلَخَ
مِنْهَا فَأَتْبَعَهُ الشَّيْطٰنُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْغٰوِينَ ﴿١٧٥﴾

176 And if We had pleased, We would have exalted him thereby; but he clings to the earth[961] and follows his low desire. His parable is as the parable of the dog — if thou drive him away, he lolls out his tongue, and

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنٰهُ بِهَا وَلٰكِنَّهُۥٓ أَخْلَدَ
إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوٰىهُ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ
الْكَلْبِ إِنْ تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثْ أَوْ

958 The verse does not mention the bringing forth of descendants from Adam, but from the children of Adam, and this seems clearly to refer to every human being as he comes into existence. The evidence is, therefore, that which human nature itself affords. It is, in fact, the same evidence which is elsewhere spoken of as being afforded by human nature as in "the nature made by Allah in which He has made men" (30:30).

959 The Arabic word is *mubṭil*, which means *one who says a thing in which is no truth* or *reality* (R-LL).

960 Balaam, Umayyah ibn Abi Salt, Abū 'Āmir, and all the hypocrites, have been respectively indicated as the persons referred to here, but the best explanation is supplied by Qatādah, who says: *It speaks generally of every one to whom guidance is brought but he turns aside from it.* This view is corroborated by what is stated at the conclusion of the parable in v 176, *this is the parable of the people who reject Our messages.*

961, see next page.

if thou leave him alone, he lolls out his tongue. Such is the parable of the people who reject Our messages. So relate the narrative that they may reflect.

تَتْرُكْهُ يَلْهَثْ ۚ ذٰلِكَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِيْنَ
كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا ۚ فَاقْصُصِ الْقَصَصَ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿١٧٦﴾

177 Evil is the likeness of the people who reject Our messages and wrong their own souls.

سَآءَ مَثَلًا الْقَوْمُ الَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا
وَاَنْفُسَهُمْ كَانُوْا يَظْلِمُوْنَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

178 He whom Allāh guides is on the right way ; and he whom He leaves in error — they are the losers.

مَنْ يَّهْدِ اللّٰهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِيْ ۚ وَمَنْ
يُّضْلِلْ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُوْنَ ﴿١٧٨﴾

179 And certainly We have created for hell many of the jinn and the men — they have hearts wherewith they understand not, and they have eyes wherewith they see not, and they have ears wherewith they hear not. They are as cattle ; nay, they are more astray. These are the heedless ones.[962]

وَلَقَدْ ذَرَاْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيْرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ
وَالْاِنْسِ ۖ لَهُمْ قُلُوْبٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُوْنَ بِهَا ۡ
وَلَهُمْ اَعْيُنٌ لَّا يُبْصِرُوْنَ بِهَا ۡ وَلَهُمْ اٰذَانٌ
لَّا يَسْمَعُوْنَ بِهَا ۗ اُولٰٓئِكَ كَالْاَنْعَامِ بَلْ
هُمْ اَضَلُّ ۗ اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْغٰفِلُوْنَ ﴿١٧٩﴾

180 And Allāh's are the best names,[963] so call on Him thereby and leave alone those who violate the sanctity[964] of His names. They will be recompensed for what they do.

وَلِلّٰهِ الْاَسْمَآءُ الْحُسْنٰى فَادْعُوْهُ بِهَا ۪
وَذَرُوا الَّذِيْنَ يُلْحِدُوْنَ فِيْٓ اَسْمَآئِهٖ ۗ
سَيُجْزَوْنَ مَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٨٠﴾

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961 *Earth* here stands for all that is earthly, for things material. The people spoken of here are those who do not care for the higher values of life.

962 Many men and jinn are created for hell, but they are none other than the heedless ones who do not care for what is said. They have been given hearts, but they do not use them to understand the truth ; they have been given eyes, but they do not employ them to see the truth ; they have been given ears, but they turn a deaf ear to the truth. This has been stated to show that Allāh has not created them differently from others, but they themselves do not use the faculties which Allāh has granted them.

963 By *al-asmā-al-ḥusnā* are meant *names expressing the most excellent attributes of the Divine Being*. By *calling on Him thereby* is meant that man should always keep the Divine attributes before his mind, endeavouring to possess those attributes, for it is only thus that he can attain to perfection.

964 *Yulḥidūn* is from *alḥada,* meaning *he deviated from the right course* with respect to a thing (LL). According to R, it means *a deviation from the right course with respect to the names of Allāh*, or *violation of the sanctity of His names*, and it is of two kinds: firstly, *giving Him an improper or inaccurate attribute* ; and secondly, *to interpret His attributes in a manner which does not befit Him.* Polytheism of every kind is, therefore, a violation of the sanctity of the Divine names.

181 And of those whom We have created is a community[964a] who guide with the truth and therewith do justice.

وَمِمَّنْ خَلَقْنَآ اُمَّةٌ يَّهْدُوْنَ بِالْحَقِّ وَبِهٖ يَعْدِلُوْنَ ﴿١٨١﴾

SECTION 23 : **The Coming of the Doom**

182 And those who reject Our messages — We lead them (to destruction) step by step from whence they know not.

وَالَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِّنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿١٨٢﴾

183 And I grant them respite. Surely My scheme is effective.[965]

وَاُمْلِيْ لَهُمْ ۚ اِنَّ كَيْدِيْ مَتِيْنٌ ﴿١٨٣﴾

184 Do they not reflect (that) there is no madness in their companion? He is only a plain warner.

اَوَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوْا ۜ مَا بِصَاحِبِهِمْ مِّنْ جِنَّةٍ ۗ اِنْ هُوَ اِلَّا نَذِيْرٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿١٨٤﴾

185 Do they not consider the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and what things Allāh has created, and that it may be that their doom has drawn nigh? In what announcement after this will they then believe?

اَوَلَمْ يَنْظُرُوْا فِيْ مَلَكُوْتِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَمَا خَلَقَ اللّٰهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۙ وَّاَنْ عَسٰٓى اَنْ يَّكُوْنَ قَدِ اقْتَرَبَ اَجَلُهُمْ ۚ فَبِاَيِّ حَدِيْثٍۭ بَعْدَهٗ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿١٨٥﴾

186 Whomsoever Allāh leaves in error, there is no guide for him. And He leaves them alone in their inordinacy, blindly wandering on.

مَنْ يُّضْلِلِ اللّٰهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهٗ ۚ وَيَذَرُهُمْ فِيْ طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُوْنَ ﴿١٨٦﴾

187 They ask thee about the Hour,[966] when will it come to pass? Say: The knowledge thereof is with

يَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ اَيَّانَ مُرْسٰهَا ۚ قُلْ اِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِنْدَ رَبِّيْ ۚ لَا يُجَلِّيْهَا لِوَقْتِهَآ

964a "This is my community," the Prophet is reported to have said (IJ. v. ix, p. 86).

965 The significance of the word *kaid* (translated here as *scheme*) is much misunderstood, like that of *makr*. *Kaid* indicates *the exercising of art, ingenuity, cunning* or *skill in the management or ordering of affairs, with excellent consideration* or *deliberation*, and *ability to manage with subtlety according to his own free will* (LL). Thus *kāda* (inf. n. *kaid*) means *he contrived, devised or plotted a thing, whether good* or *bad* (LA). And again *kāda* (aorist *yakīdu*) means *he worked* or *laboured at* or *upon anything; he laboured, took pains, exerted himself, strove* or *struggled to do, executed* or *accomplished anything; he laboured, strove* or *struggled with anything to prevail* or *overcome* or *to effect an object* (LL). In a verse of al-'Ajjāj, the word *kaid*, occurring in reference to God, is rendered by LL as meaning *His skilful ordering*.

966 That is, the Hour with which they are threatened as being the hour of their doom. The word *sā'at* or the *hour* is used in the Holy Qur'ān to indicate

my Lord only. None but He will manifest it at its time. It is momentous in the heavens and the earth. It will not come to you but of a sudden. They ask thee as if thou wert solicitous about it. Say: Its knowledge is with Allāh only, but most people know not.

إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ ثَقُلَتْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ لَا تَأْتِيكُمْ إِلَّا بَغْتَةً ۗ يَسْأَلُونَكَ كَأَنَّكَ حَفِيٌّ عَنْهَا ۖ قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ وَلٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨٧﴾

188 Say: I control not benefit or harm for myself except as Allāh please. And had I known the unseen, I should have much of good, and no evil would touch me. I am but a warner and the giver of good news to a people who believe.[967]

قُلْ لَّآ أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَّلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَآءَ اللّٰهُ ۚ وَلَوْ كُنْتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ لَاسْتَكْثَرْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ ۖ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ السُّوٓءُ ۚ إِنْ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ وَّبَشِيرٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُّؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٨٨﴾

SECTION 24: **The Final Word**

189 He it is Who created you from a single soul, and of the same did He make his mate, that he might find comfort in her.[968] So when he covers her she bears a light burden, then moves about with it. Then when it grows heavy, they both call upon Allāh, their Lord: If Thou givest us a good one, we shall certainly be of the grateful.[969]

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ نَّفْسٍ وَّاحِدَةٍ وَّجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا ۚ فَلَمَّا تَغَشّٰهَا حَمَلَتْ حَمْلًا خَفِيفًا فَمَرَّتْ بِهٖ ۚ فَلَمَّآ أَثْقَلَتْ دَّعَوَا اللّٰهَ رَبَّهُمَا لَئِنْ اٰتَيْتَنَا صَالِحًا لَّنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشّٰكِرِينَ ﴿١٨٩﴾

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both the doom of the guilty in this life and the time when a perfect manifestation of rewards and punishments will take place in the Hereafter.

967 The simplicity and nobility of this statement as indicating the mission of a prophet is unsurpassed. He gives glad news of triumph to those who believe, warns the evil-doers of the evil consequences of their deeds in this life as well as in the next, but he does not claim the possession of Divine powers. It is stated that on the day of the death of his son Ibrāhīm, a total eclipse of the sun was witnessed. Some people began to whisper that the darkening of the sun was due to the death of the Prophet's son; but he was too sincere to allow men to remain under such a delusion, although it was calculated to enhance his dignity in the eyes of his followers. He ascended the pulpit and thus addressed the people: "Surely the sun and the moon are two signs of Allāh; they do not get eclipsed in consequence of the death of anybody nor on account of anyone's life, so when you see this then call on Allāh, and magnify Him and pray to Him and give alms" (B. 16:2).

968 *Sakn* originally signifies *being still, motionless,* or *quiet,* but *sakana ilai-hi*

969, see next page.

190 But when He gives them a good one, they set up with Him associates in that which He has given them. High is Allāh above what they associate (with Him).

فَلَمَّآ اٰتٰهُمَا صَالِحًا جَعَلَا لَهٗ شُرَكَآءَ فِيْمَآ اٰتٰهُمَا ۚ فَتَعٰلَى اللّٰهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿١٩٠﴾

191 Do they associate (with Him) that which has created naught, while they are themselves created?

اَيُشْرِكُوْنَ مَا لَا يَخْلُقُ شَيْـًٔا وَّهُمْ يُخْلَقُوْنَ ﴿١٩١﴾

192 And they cannot give them help, nor can they help themselves.

وَلَا يَسْتَطِيْعُوْنَ لَهُمْ نَصْرًا وَّلَآ اَنْفُسَهُمْ يَنْصُرُوْنَ ﴿١٩٢﴾

193 And if you invite them to guidance, they will not follow you. It is the same to you whether you invite them or you are silent.[970]

وَاِنْ تَدْعُوْهُمْ اِلَى الْهُدٰى لَا يَتَّبِعُوْكُمْ ۗ سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْكُمْ اَدَعَوْتُمُوْهُمْ اَمْ اَنْتُمْ صَامِتُوْنَ ﴿١٩٣﴾

194 Those whom you call on besides Allāh are slaves like yourselves;[971] so call on them, then let them answer you, if you are truthful.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ تَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ عِبَادٌ اَمْثَالُكُمْ فَادْعُوْهُمْ فَلْيَسْتَجِيْبُوْا لَكُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿١٩٤﴾

195 Have they feet with which they walk, or have they hands with which they hold, or have they eyes with which they see, or have they ears with which they hear? Say: Call upon your associate-gods then plot against me and give me no respite.

اَلَهُمْ اَرْجُلٌ يَّمْشُوْنَ بِهَآ ۡ اَمْ لَهُمْ اَيْدٍ يَّبْطِشُوْنَ بِهَآ ۡ اَمْ لَهُمْ اَعْيُنٌ يُّبْصِرُوْنَ بِهَآ ۡ اَمْ لَهُمْ اٰذَانٌ يَّسْمَعُوْنَ بِهَا ۗ قُلِ ادْعُوْا شُرَكَآءَكُمْ ثُمَّ كِيْدُوْنِ فَلَا تُنْظِرُوْنِ ﴿١٩٥﴾

196 Surely my Friend is Allāh, Who revealed the Book, and He befriends the righteous.

اِنَّ وَلِيِّۦَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْ نَزَّلَ الْكِتٰبَ ۖ وَهُوَ يَتَوَلَّى الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿١٩٦﴾

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means *he trusted to or relied upon it so as to be easy or quiet in mind* or *inclined to it,* or *he became familiar with it* (LL).

969 That this verse refers to Adam and Eve is rejected by all reliable commentators. It describes the condition of man in general and refers to the evidence of his nature, for when in distress he always turns to Allāh, but when in ease he goes after other gods or his own low desires. The verse clearly blames the idol-worshippers for associating others with Allāh, as is shown by the use of the plural in v. 190 and the verses that follow.

970 This verse speaks of the utter heedlessness of the reprobate. Invitation to Truth must, however, be extended to all, though some may not benefit by it. The meaning is further clarified in vv. 198, 199.

971 *'Ibād* is the plural of *'abd,* which means *a servant* or *a slave,* and applies to man as being a bondman to his Creator. Every created thing being in a state of subjugation to God, as man is, the idols, along with other false gods, are here spoken of as *'ibād,* the significance being that they are all in a state of subjugation to God.

197 And those whom you call upon besides Him are not able to help you, nor can they help themselves.[972]

وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ نَصْرَكُمْ وَلَا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَنْصُرُونَ ﴿١٩٧﴾

198 And if you invite them to guidance, they hear not; and thou seest them looking towards thee, yet they see not.

وَإِنْ تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَىٰ لَا يَسْمَعُوا ۖ وَتَرَاهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ وَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿١٩٨﴾

199 Take to forgiveness and enjoin good and turn away from the ignorant.

خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجٰهِلِينَ ﴿١٩٩﴾

200 And if a false imputation[973] from the devil afflict thee, seek refuge in Allāh. Surely He is Hearing, Knowing.

وَإِمَّا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ نَزْغٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللّٰهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٠٠﴾

201 Those who guard against evil, when a visitation[974] from the devil afflicts them, they become mindful, then lo! they see.[975]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طٰٓئِفٌ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٢٠١﴾

202 And their brethren[976] increase them in error, then they cease not.

وَإِخْوٰنُهُمْ يَمُدُّونَهُمْ فِي الْغَيِّ ثُمَّ لَا يُقْصِرُونَ ﴿٢٠٢﴾

203 And when thou bringest them not a sign, they say: Why dost thou not demand it? Say: I follow only that which is revealed to me from my Lord. These are clear proofs from your Lord and a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe.

وَإِذَا لَمْ تَأْتِهِمْ بِاٰيَةٍ قَالُوا لَوْلَا اجْتَبَيْتَهَا ۚ قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَتَّبِعُ مَا يُوحٰىٓ إِلَيَّ مِنْ رَبِّي ۚ هٰذَا بَصَآئِرُ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٢٠٣﴾

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972 There is a prophecy here that not only will the power of the opponents be frustrated in the coming struggles when they will find no help from their gods, but those very gods, i.e. the idols, will not be able to save themselves and will be annihilated.

973 The primary significance of *nazagha-hū* is *he censured him and charged him with a vice and spoke evil of him* (T). It also signifies *the sowing of dissensions,* and it is used in this sense in 12:100. According to R, the word signifies *entering upon an affair with the object of corrupting it.* I prefer the first signification, taking *nazgh* as equivalent to *false imputation,* the devil in this case, as frequently in the Holy Qur'ān, standing for the devilish enemies who spread all kinds of false reports concerning the Prophet, against which he is told to seek refuge in Allāh.

974 *Ṭā'if* means *a visitation* (LL), originally *going round*. The *visitation of the devil* means *the happening of any grievous incident* or *the coming of an affliction* from the hands of the devil, or the wicked acting in opposition to the righteous. Or the devil's visitation may signify anger which blinds a man.

975 Being endowed with insight, they see their way out of the affliction. Or, the meaning is that anger does not blind them.

976, see next page.

204 And when the Qur'ān is recited, listen to it and remain silent, that mercy may be shown to you.

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ الْقُرْآنُ فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ وَ
أَنْصِتُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٢٠٤﴾

205 And remember thy Lord within thyself humbly and fearing, and in a voice not loud, in the morning and the evening, and be not of the heedless.[977]

وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً
وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ
وَالْآصَالِ وَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ ﴿٢٠٥﴾

206 Surely those who are with thy Lord are not too proud to serve Him, and they glorify Him and prostrate themselves before Him.[978]

Prostration

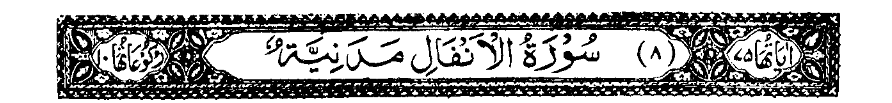
إِنَّ الَّذِينَ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ
عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَيُسَبِّحُونَهُ وَلَهُ يَسْجُدُونَ ﴿٢٠٦﴾ السجدة ع

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976 That is, the brethren of the devils, or the devil's human associates.

977 *Āṣāl* is the plural of *aṣl* or *aṣīl* which means *the evening time.* Though the direction to remember God is given in general terms, and requires a man to glorify God at all times, yet the plural is used regarding the evening as referring to the fact that while there is only one regular prayer in the morning, in the evening there is a number of regular prayers, *Zuhr, 'Aṣr, Maghrib* and *'Isha'*.

978 The recital of this verse is followed by an actual prostration, so that the physical state of the body may be in perfect agreement with the spiritual condition of the mind. There are in all fifteen occasions in the Qur'ān where the believers are required to prostrate themselves, and the Prophet's practice was to prostrate himself when reciting such verses whether it was a recital during prayer service or on ordinary occasions. Other such verses are: 13: 15, 16: 50, 17: 109, 19: 58, 22: 18, 22: 77, 25: 60, 27: 26, 32: 15, 38: 24, 41: 38, 53: 62, 84: 21, 96: 19.



CHAPTER 8

Al-Anfāl : VOLUNTARY GIFTS.

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 10 *sections*; 75 *verses*)

As this chapter deals with the battle of Badr, the first battle which the Muslims had to fight, it goes under the name of *Anfāl*, which means literally *voluntary gifts*, though it has also been applied to gains acquired in war, or what is generally called *spoils of war*. I prefer, however, the literal significance of the word. The battle had to be fought, yet the Muslim State had at the time no treasury, nor any arsenal, nor an army. Voluntary gifts were therefore called for, and not only this battle but all the succeeding battles which the Muslims had to fight were carried on only by voluntary gifts. The opening verses of the chapter lend support to this significance, as there we are told how the Muslims should prepare themselves for war.

The chapter opens with certain statements necessary to a preparation for the battle, among which are the giving of free gifts, settling up of all internal differences and being lowly and humble before God. The latter part of the first section and the second section deal with the battle of Badr. The third section points out the way to success, the essence of which is obedience and faithfulness to the Holy Prophet, which the companions unwaveringly exhibited in this battle, under the most trying circumstances. The fourth section refers to the successful issue of the war. After pointing out the plans of the opponents against the Prophet, it states that the Muslims will be made the guardians of the Sacred Mosque at Makkah, and that disbelievers will no more have any access to it. The fifth refers to the great value of the success in the battle of Badr as a sign of the Prophet's truth. As regards numbers, the Muslims were only a third of the number of their opponents and as regards the efficiency of this small force, which consisted mostly of old men and raw and inexperienced youths, it was nothing as compared with the strong and sturdy Makkan warriors. The sixth indicates that success did not depend on numbers and weapons; while the seventh proceeds to show that the battle had completely undermined the enemy's strength, referring in conclusion to the treaties of peace which the Arab tribes now sought to establish with the Muslims, but which later on they frequently violated. The eighth section directs the Muslims to be ready to deal a blow and to be well-equipped, because they could only hope to secure peace by strength and readiness. The ninth informs them that they will have to fight against even ten times their number, and thus really gives them to understand that they must be prepared to meet overwhelming numbers. The last section explains how far those Muslims should be assisted who had chosen to remain with their polytheistic brethren, laying emphasis on the sacredness of treaties made, even with unbelieving tribes.

The battle of Badr, which forms the chief topic of this chapter, is frequently referred to as the *Furqān* or the Criterion, in the Holy Qur'ān, and has already been referred to as such in the third chapter. In the historical order of events this chapter should have taken its place after the second chapter; but owing to its peculiar nature as affording proof of the truth of the Prophet's mission, it finds its proper place after a full discussion of prophethood in the last chapter, and thus affords an illustration in the Prophet's own life of that discomfiture which overtakes the opponents of prophets, as illustrated by reference to the histories of earlier prophets in the last chapter. The major portion was undoubtedly revealed

SECTION 1 **The Battle of Badr**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.	بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○
1 They ask thee about voluntary gifts. Say: Voluntary gifts are for Allāh and the Messenger.[979] So keep your duty to Allāh and set aright your differences, and obey Allāh and His Messenger, if you are believers.	يَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ عَنِ الْاَنْفَالِ ۭ قُلِ الْاَنْفَالُ لِلّٰهِ وَالرَّسُوْلِ ۚ فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَاَصْلِحُوْا ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ ۠ وَاَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗٓ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ①
2 They only are believers whose hearts are full of fear when Allāh is mentioned, and when His messages are recited to them they increase them in faith, and in their Lord do they trust,	اِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ الَّذِيْنَ اِذَا ذُكِرَ اللّٰهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوْبُهُمْ وَاِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتُهٗ زَادَتْهُمْ اِيْمَانًا وَّعَلٰي رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُوْنَ ②
3 Those who keep up prayer and spend out of what We have given them.	الَّذِيْنَ يُقِيْمُوْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنٰهُمْ يُنْفِقُوْنَ ③

either immediately before or immediately after the battle of Badr, i.e. in the second year of the Hijrah; but the concluding verses of the seventh section and the eighth section, containing as they do clear references to the repeated violation of agreements by the disbelievers, must have been revealed during the period preceding the conquest of Makkah, or possibly in that immediately following, as these violations ultimately led to the declaration of immunity, which finds expression in the chapter that follows. Verses 30-35, which are supposed by some to have been revealed at Makkah, are really references to past history, to which attention is called to encourage the Muslims under the new difficulties.

979 *Nafl*, pl. *nawāfil*, means *an act performed voluntarily*, such as supererogatory prayers, and *nafal*, pl. *anfāl*, means an *addition* or *accession to what is due, a free* or *voluntary gift*; also *spoils of war*. There is much difference of opinion among the commentators as to what is meant by *anfāl* here. The most generally received opinion is that it means property acquired during the war, being in this sense synonymous with *ghanīmah*. The orders regarding the distribution of property acquired in war, the *ghanīmah*, are, however, contained further on in v. 41. According to R, *anfāl* means gain which accures *without one's labouring for it*, and on this basis some authorities take the word as meaning *gains in war, when actually there has been no war*, but the proper word for it is *fai'*, for which see 59:7. As all gains of war fall under the definition of *ghanīmah* or *fai'*, I take the word *anfāl* as carrying here its literal significance of *voluntary gifts* for the advancement of the cause of Islām, such voluntary gifts being most needed at a time when the very life of Islām was threatened. Indeed there is no better justification for a war than that it is carried on by the voluntary gifts

4 These are the believers in truth. For them are with their Lord exalted grades and protection and an honourable sustenance.

أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَقًّا ۚ لَّهُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَرِزْقٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٤﴾

5 Even as thy Lord caused thee to go forth from thy house with truth, though a party of the believers were surely averse,[980]

كَمَا أَخْرَجَكَ رَبُّكَ مِن بَيْتِكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَكَارِهُونَ ﴿٥﴾

6 Disputing with thee about the truth after it had become clear — as if they were being driven to death while they saw (it).

يُجَادِلُونَكَ فِي الْحَقِّ بَعْدَمَا تَبَيَّنَ كَأَنَّمَا يُسَاقُونَ إِلَى الْمَوْتِ وَهُمْ يَنظُرُونَ ﴿٦﴾

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of those whose life is in danger. It is the only war that is really carried on by the people in self-defence. Wars carried on by huge loans which ultimately crush a people are really wars of capitalists against the people themselves.

980 The circumstances of the battle of Badr have been misunderstood, even by some Muslims. Christian opinion on the point is summed up in Palmer's note: "The occasion alluded to was one when Muḥammad had made preparations for attacking an unarmed caravan on its way from Syria to Mecca, when Abū Sufyān, who was in charge of it, sent word to Mecca and obtained an escort of nearly a thousand men; many of Muḥammad's followers wished to attack the caravan only, but the Prophet and his immediate followers were for throwing themselves on the escort".

While the several incidents mentioned here are separately true, there is a misconception as to their relation to each other. It is true that a caravan was returning from Syria, and an army had marched forth from Makkah; it is also true that some of the Muslims wished that they should encounter the caravan and not face the Makkah force. Had the Holy Prophet desired to plunder the caravan, he would have done so long before Abū Sufyān could obtain succour from Makkah. Madīnah was situated at a distance of thirteen days' journey from Makkah, so that if the Holy Prophet had actually an idea of plundering the caravan, he would have done it long before Abū Sufyān could obtain succour in less than a month, even if he had been apprised of the Holy Prophet's intentions and had sent for aid from Makkah. And why should the Prophet have waited all this while and not plundered the caravan before help reached Abū Sufyān?

Badr, where the encounter took place, lies at a distance of three days' journey from Madīnah. Here, marching towards each other, the two armies met. This shows that the Makkan army had long been on its way to Madīnah, while the Muslims were as yet quite unprepared. The enemy had marched forth for ten days and the Muslims only for three days when the two forces encountered each other, which shows clearly that the Muslims had turned out to take the defensive against an invading force. The Prophet had never any design of plundering the caravan, for if he had any such design he could have carried it out long before the Makkan force had approached Madīnah, and his hands would thus have been strengthened to meet a powerful enemy. It is quite clear that the Holy Prophet only marched forth when the enemy had already travelled over three-fourths of the way to Madīnah, and the caravan had left Madīnah far behind.

Further, it is clearly stated here that a party of the believers were averse to fighting. They could not have been averse if they had to encounter only an unarmed caravan. What is said in the next verse makes it clearer still, *they went forth as if they were being driven to death*, because they knew that they were going to meet an enemy not only treble in numbers, but also much more powerful and efficient.

7 And when Allāh promised you one of the two parties that it should be yours, and you loved that the one not armed should be yours,[981] and Allāh desired to establish the Truth by His words,[982] and to cut off the root of the disbelievers —

وَ اِذۡ یَعِدُکُمُ اللّٰہُ اِحۡدَی الطَّآئِفَتَیۡنِ اَنَّہَا لَکُمۡ وَ تَوَدُّوۡنَ اَنَّ غَیۡرَ ذَاتِ الشَّوۡکَۃِ تَکُوۡنُ لَکُمۡ وَ یُرِیۡدُ اللّٰہُ اَنۡ یُّحِقَّ الۡحَقَّ بِکَلِمٰتِہٖ وَ یَقۡطَعَ دَابِرَ الۡکٰفِرِیۡنَ ۙ﴿۷﴾

8 That He might cause the Truth to triumph and bring the falsehood to naught, though the guilty disliked.

لِیُحِقَّ الۡحَقَّ وَ یُبۡطِلَ الۡبَاطِلَ وَ لَوۡ کَرِہَ الۡمُجۡرِمُوۡنَ ۚ﴿۸﴾

9 When you sought the aid of your Lord, so He answered you: I will assist you with a thousand of the angels following one another.

اِذۡ تَسۡتَغِیۡثُوۡنَ رَبَّکُمۡ فَاسۡتَجَابَ لَکُمۡ اَنِّیۡ مُمِدُّکُمۡ بِاَلۡفٍ مِّنَ الۡمَلٰٓئِکَۃِ مُرۡدِفِیۡنَ ﴿۹﴾

10 And Allāh gave it only as good news, and that your hearts might be at ease thereby. And victory is only from Allāh; surely Allāh is Mighty, Wise.[983]

وَ مَا جَعَلَہُ اللّٰہُ اِلَّا بُشۡرٰی وَ لِتَطۡمَئِنَّ بِہٖ قُلُوۡبُکُمۡ ۚ وَ مَا النَّصۡرُ اِلَّا مِنۡ عِنۡدِ اللّٰہِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰہَ عَزِیۡزٌ حَکِیۡمٌ ﴿۱۰﴾

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981 The two parties referred to were the unarmed caravan of the Quraish going to Makkah and the armed force of the Quraish that was on its way to Madīnah. Naturally, some of the Muslims desired that their encounter should take place with the unarmed Quraish caravan, which was now a long way from Madīnah, and not with the powerful army which was advancing against Madīnah.

982 By *His words* is meant here *the fulfilment of His words*, because the Prophet had declared at Makkah, long before the fight actually took place, that an encounter would take place between the Muslims and the Quraish, in which the former would be victorious. These prophecies had hitherto been laughed at by the Makkans, because they could never imagine that their power could be broken by such an insignificant community. Of the many prophecies which will be noted in their proper place, I may refer here to one which the Holy Prophet himself repeated aloud in the field. I'Ab says that the Holy Prophet prayed on the day of Badr, saying: "O Allāh, I beseech Thee to fulfil Thy promise and Thy compact! O Allāh, if Thou pleasest (to destroy this community), Thou wilt not be worshipped (on earth!)." Then the Holy Prophet came forth and he cried: "Soon shall the hosts be routed and they will turn their backs" (B. 56:89). Now these concluding words occur in 54:45, which is one of the earliest Makkan revelations, and the incident shows that the importance of the battle of Badr lay in the many prophecies which by their fulfilment bore witness to the truth of the Holy Prophet.

983 Compare 3:123, where the coming down of angels in the battle of Uhud is mentioned. Also see 485, which explains the object of the coming of the angels. It is nowhere stated in the Holy Qur'ān that the angels actually fought, but here, as in 3:125, we are told that the angels were sent down to bear good news of victory and to ease the hearts of the Muslims. Here, however, we are further told (v. 11) that, as a result of the coming of the angels, calm fell upon the Muslims, their hearts being strengthened and their footsteps being steadied, and (v. 12) that while the believers were thus made firm, terror was cast into the hearts of the disbelievers. Hence it is that the number of angels

SECTION 2: **The Battle of Badr**

11 When He made slumber fall on you as a security from Him, and sent down upon you water from the clouds that He might thereby purify you,[984] and take away from you the uncleanness of the devil, and that He might fortify your hearts and make firm (your) feet thereby.[985]

إِذْ يُغَشِّيكُمُ النُّعَاسَ أَمَنَةً مِّنْهُ وَيُنَزِّلُ عَلَيْكُم مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً لِّيُطَهِّرَكُم بِهِ وَيُذْهِبَ عَنكُمْ رِجْزَ الشَّيْطَانِ وَلِيَرْبِطَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتَ بِهِ الْأَقْدَامَ ﴿١١﴾

12 When thy Lord revealed to the angels: I am with you, so make firm those who believe. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve. So smite above the necks and smite every finger-tip of them.[986]

إِذْ يُوحِي رَبُّكَ إِلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ أَنِّي مَعَكُمْ فَثَبِّتُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ۚ سَأُلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ فَاضْرِبُوا فَوْقَ الْأَعْنَاقِ وَاضْرِبُوا مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ ﴿١٢﴾

13 This is because they opposed Allāh and His Messenger. And whoever opposes Allāh and His Messenger — then surely Allāh is Severe in requiting.

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَاقُّوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ وَمَن يُشَاقِقِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿١٣﴾

14 This — taste it, and (know) that for the disbelievers is the chastisement of the Fire.[987]

ذَٰلِكُمْ فَذُوقُوهُ وَأَنَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٤﴾

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corresponds with the strength of the enemy force in each case, their number being one thousand at Badr, where the enemy had a like force. For the other two occasions, see 485.

984 Compare 25:25, which is a prophecy about the events of this remarkable battle: "On the day when the heaven shall burst asunder with the clouds and the angels shall be sent down a sending". The rainfall brought many advantages to the Muslims, for which see next footnote.

985 Before the rain fell the Muslim position was very weak. The enemy had the command of the water and the Muslims were in a low and sandy place. Therefore there were some who had misgivings, which, as is said here, were due to the devil's uncleanness. The enemy having taken possession of the drinking-water, the Muslims feared being troubled by thirst, which is called *the devil of the desert.* The rain strengthened the position of the Muslims and consequently comforted their hearts. This was a purification, for after the rainfall they all became certain of Divine help and so of their triumph over the enemy.

986 The last sentence is apparently addressed to the fighting believers. *Smiting above the necks* is either the same as *smiting the necks,* or it signifies *the striking of the heads,* because what is above the neck is the head. And the striking of the finger-tips indicates the striking of the hands which held weapons to kill the Muslims. The two phrases respectively signify the killing of the enemy and disabling him so as to render him unfit for taking further part in fighting.

987 That is, taste this torment in this life as an indication of the chastisement of Fire in the next life.

15 O you who believe, when you meet those who disbelieve marching for war, turn not your backs to them.[988]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا زَحْفًا فَلَا تُوَلُّوهُمُ الْأَدْبَارَ ﴿١٥﴾

16 And whoso turns his back to them on that day — unless manoeuvring for battle or turning to join a company — he, indeed, incurs Allāh's wrath and his refuge is hell. And an evil destination it is.

وَمَنْ يُوَلِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ دُبُرَهُ إِلَّا مُتَحَرِّفًا لِقِتَالٍ أَوْ مُتَحَيِّزًا إِلَىٰ فِئَةٍ فَقَدْ بَاءَ بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَأْوَاهُ جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٦﴾

17 So you slew them not but Allāh slew them, and thou smotest not when thou didst smite (the enemy), but Allāh smote (him),[989] and that He might confer upon the believers a benefit[990] from Himself. Surely Allāh is Hearing, Knowing.

فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ ۚ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ ۚ وَلِيُبْلِيَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلَاءً حَسَنًا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾

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988 *Zaḥafa* originally means *he walked* or ***marched little by little,*** and applies to the crawling along of a child when unable to walk. Then ***zaḥf*** came to mean *an army* or *military force marching* ***little by little towards the enemy,*** or ***heavily*** *by reason of their multitude and force* (LL). Thus it became synonymous with *war,* as in a ḥadīth quoted by T, ***farra min al-zaḥf,*** which means ***he fled from*** *war* (LL).

989 *Ramā* carries a number of significances, ***throwing, flinging, casting,*** *assailing, smiting, shooting, going forth,* etc. (LL). It is used in connection with fighting, and therefore I adopt *smiting* as its equivalent, which, like its original, makes the meaning clear without seeking an understood object. The first part of the verse refers to the Muslims generally — ***you did not slay them, but Allāh*** *slew them,* the address being in the plural; and the second part, being in the singular, is understood as referring to the Holy Prophet. Otherwise there is no difference between the two passages. The Muslims slew the enemy, but it is affirmed that really they did not slay, but it was Allāh Who slew them; the meaning apparently being that Allāh's hand was working in the battle, which is also clear from the fact that three hundred, mostly raw, young men, equipped with neither horses nor arms, prevailed against a thousand of the most renowned warriors. The same meaning must be attached to the other passage relating to the smiting of the enemy. Whether the Prophet actually threw a handful of pebbles at the enemy, which discomfited the latter, is a different question. It is sufficient to learn that a powerful enemy was discomfited by about a third of its number, while from the point of view of efficiency and equipment even ten men from among the Muslims were not equal to one of the enemy. It was Allāh's hand that slew them, and it was His hand that smote them and ultimately put them to rout. That the Prophet actually threw a handful of dust at the enemy is in no way inconsistent with this explanation.

990 *Iblā',* though ordinarily meaning ***trying,*** and ***proving,*** like ***balā'*** and *ibtilā'* (two other verbs from the same root), means here, by the unanimous opinion of all commentators, *the conferring of a favour* (Rz). The lexicons also give it the same significance. Thus LL explains the words ***ablā-hu balā'-an ḥasan-an*** as meaning, *God did to him a good deed* or ***conferred a benefit on him. The good*** *gift* or *the benefit* spoken of here is a victory which strengthened the foundations of Islām, and dealt a death-blow to the evil designs of those who were determined to exterminate it, as is plainly stated in the next verse.

18 This[991] — and (know) that Allāh will weaken the struggle of the disbelievers.

ذَٰلِكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مُوهِنُ كَيْدِ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

19 If you sought a judgment, the judgment has indeed come to you;[992] and if you desist, it is better for you. And if you return (to fight), We (too) shall return and your forces will avail you nothing, though they may be many; and (know) that Allāh is with the believers.

إِن تَسْتَفْتِحُوا فَقَدْ جَاءَكُمُ الْفَتْحُ ۖ وَإِن تَنتَهُوا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَإِن تَعُودُوا نَعُدْ وَلَن تُغْنِيَ عَنكُمْ فِئَتُكُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَوْ كَثُرَتْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

SECTION 3: The Way to Success

20 O you who believe, obey Allāh and His Messenger and turn not away from Him while you hear.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَوَلَّوْا عَنْهُ وَأَنتُمْ تَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 And be not like those who say, We hear; and they hear not.

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 Surely the vilest of beasts,[993] in Allāh's sight, are the deaf, the dumb, who understand not.

إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِندَ اللَّهِ الصُّمُّ الْبُكْمُ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 And if Allāh had known any good in them, He would have made them hear. And if He makes them hear, they would turn away while they are averse.

وَلَوْ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا لَّأَسْمَعَهُمْ ۖ وَلَوْ أَسْمَعَهُمْ لَتَوَلَّوا وَّهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

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991 *This* here stands for, *this was the Divine purpose in bringing about this encounter.*

992 It is related that when the Quraish left Makkah to attack the Muslims, they held on to the curtains of the Ka'bah and prayed thus: "O Allāh, assist the best of the two forces and the most rightly directed of the two parties and the most honoured of the two groups and the most excellent of the two religions". Others say that Abū Jahl prayed in the field of battle, saying: "O Allāh, whoever of us is the greater cutter of the ties of relationship and more wicked, destroy him to-morrow morning" (Rz). Palmer's remark in this connection, that the Quraish prayed in the above words "when they were threatened with an attack from Muhammad", is a travesty of the facts. Indeed, it is utterly absurd to speak of Muhammad *threatening* the Quraish, when the Muslims did not constitute even a thousandth part of the whole population of Arabia, and their military strength was almost negligible as compared with the Quraish.

993 *Dābbah* means literally *anything that walks* (or *creeps* or *crawls*) *upon the earth* (LL); hence any animal, or a beast, or any living thing. Note that the

24 O you who believe, respond to Allāh and His Messenger, when he calls you to that which gives you life.[994] And know that Allāh comes in between a man and his heart,[995] and that to Him you will be gathered.

يَاأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ
إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ ۖ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ
يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَأَنَّهُ
إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And guard yourselves against an affliction which may not smite those of you exclusively who are unjust;[996] and know that Allāh is Severe in requiting.

وَاتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً لَا تُصِيبَنَّ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا
مِنْكُمْ خَاصَّةً ۖ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ
شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 And remember when you were few, deemed weak in the land, fearing lest people should carry you off by force,[997] He sheltered you and strengthened you with His help, and gave you of the good things that you might give thanks.

وَاذْكُرُوا إِذْ أَنْتُمْ قَلِيلٌ مُسْتَضْعَفُونَ
فِي الْأَرْضِ تَخَافُونَ أَنْ يَتَخَطَّفَكُمُ
النَّاسُ فَآوَاكُمْ وَأَيَّدَكُمْ بِنَصْرِهِ وَرَزَقَكُمْ
مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 O you who believe, be not unfaithful to Allāh and the Messenger, nor be unfaithful to your trusts, while you know.

يَاأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَخُونُوا اللَّهَ وَ
الرَّسُولَ وَتَخُونُوا أَمَانَاتِكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 And know that your wealth and your children are a temptation, and that Allāh is He with Whom there is a mighty reward.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ
وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

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deaf and the dumb signify those who are spiritually deaf and dumb — *those who do not understand*.

994 *Faith* or submission to Allāh is *life*, and *disbelief* is *death*. By the expression *that which gives you life* some understand the *Qur'ān*, others take it to mean *jihād*, or exertion in the cause of truth. Evidently it is *faith*.

995 By *heart* is meant *the desires of the heart*. The Divine intervention is the cutting off of those desires. The faithful are enjoined to be quick in responding to the call of the Prophet, and not to indulge in worldly desires, for these may soon be cut off. Or, the meaning is that they must respond to the call of the Prophet lest, having deprived themselves of one occasion of doing good, the heart should be hardened, and, as a punishment for the first rejection, Allāh may so turn it that it may not turn to good at all.

996 The reference is not to one particular incident, but generally to all afflictions that are of such a widespread nature as to overtake even others, in addition to those for whom they are primarily intended.

997 There was a time when the Muslims were so weak that they could be carried off by force. Such was their condition at Makkah. In Madīnah they were undoubtedly securer, and the enemy had to collect a force to crush them. Or, the *help* referred to here is the Divine help which the Muslims received in the battle of Badr.

SECTION 4 : **Muslims to be Guardians of the Sacred Mosque**

29 O you who believe, if you keep your duty to Allāh, He will grant you a distinction and do away with your evils and protect you. And Allāh is the Lord of mighty grace.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓا إِن تَتَّقُوا ٱللَّهَ يَجْعَل
لَّكُمْ فُرْقَانًا وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنكُمْ سَيِّـَٔاتِكُمْ
وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۗ وَٱللَّهُ ذُو ٱلْفَضْلِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 And when those who disbelieved devised plans against thee that they might confine thee or slay thee or drive thee away — and they devised plans and Allāh, too, had arranged a plan; and Allāh is the best of planners.[998]

وَإِذْ يَمْكُرُ بِكَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيُثْبِتُوكَ
أَوْ يَقْتُلُوكَ أَوْ يُخْرِجُوكَ ۚ وَيَمْكُرُونَ
وَيَمْكُرُ ٱللَّهُ ۖ وَٱللَّهُ خَيْرُ ٱلْمَٰكِرِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And when Our messages are recited to them, they say: We have heard. If we wished, we could say the like of it;[999] this is nothing but the stories of the ancients.

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَايَٰتُنَا قَالُوا قَدْ سَمِعْنَا
لَوْ نَشَآءُ لَقُلْنَا مِثْلَ هَٰذَآ ۙ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّآ
أَسَٰطِيرُ ٱلْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 And when they said: O Allāh, if this is indeed the truth from Thee, then rain down on us stones from heaven or inflict on us a painful chastisement.

وَإِذْ قَالُوا ٱللَّهُمَّ إِن كَانَ هَٰذَا هُوَ ٱلْحَقَّ
مِنْ عِندِكَ فَأَمْطِرْ عَلَيْنَا حِجَارَةً مِّنَ
ٱلسَّمَآءِ أَوِ ٱئْتِنَا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 And Allāh would not chastise them while thou wast among them; nor would Allāh chastise them while they seek forgiveness.[1000]

وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنتَ فِيهِمْ ۚ
وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

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998 The reference is to the final plans of the Quraish when, the companions having emigrated to Madīnah, the Prophet was left alone at Makkah. Various plans were suggested at a great meeting of the Quraish chiefs in their town hall; the plan ultimately adopted was that the Prophet should be slain, a number of youths belonging to different tribes thrusting their swords into his body at one and the same time, so that one man or tribe should not have the charge laid against him or it. It was with this object that the Prophet's house was surrounded, but he got away unnoticed (IH). The Divine plan was that the disbelievers should see the downfall of their power at the hands of the Prophet.

999 That this was an empty boast is confirmed by the fact that, although the Holy Qur'ān repeatedly challenged them to produce anything like it, they could not produce even the like of its shortest chapter.

1000 The punishment was to overtake them when the Holy Prophet was no more among them, i.e. after his flight from Makkah. But even then the punishment might be averted, if they asked for forgiveness.

34 And what excuse have they that Allāh should not chastise them while they hinder (men) from the Sacred Mosque and they are not its (true) guardians? Its guardians are only those who keep their duty, but most of them know not.[1001]

وَمَا لَهُمْ أَلَّا يُعَذِّبَهُمُ اللّٰهُ وَهُمْ يَصُدُّونَ
عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَمَا كَانُوٓا أَوْلِيَآءَهُۥ ۚ
إِنْ أَوْلِيَآؤُهُۥٓ إِلَّا الْمُتَّقُونَ وَلٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ
لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 And their prayer at the House is nothing but whistling and clapping of hands.[1001a] Taste, then, the chastisement, because you disbelieved.

وَمَا كَانَ صَلَاتُهُمْ عِنْدَ الْبَيْتِ إِلَّا
مُكَآءً وَّتَصْدِيَةً ۚ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا
كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 Surely those who disbelieve spend their wealth to hinder (people) from the way of Allāh. So they will go on spending it, then it will be to them a regret, then they will be overcome. And those who disbelieve will be gathered together to hell,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ لِيَصُدُّوا
عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ ۚ فَسَيُنْفِقُونَهَا ثُمَّ تَكُونُ
عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَةً ثُمَّ يُغْلَبُونَ ۗ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا
إِلٰى جَهَنَّمَ يُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 That Allāh may separate the wicked from the good, and put the wicked one upon another, then heap them together, then cast them into hell. These indeed are the losers.

لِيَمِيزَ اللّٰهُ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ وَيَجْعَلَ
الْخَبِيثَ بَعْضَهُۥ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ فَيَرْكُمَهُۥ جَمِيعًا
فَيَجْعَلَهُۥ فِي جَهَنَّمَ ۚ أُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

SECTION 5: **Badr as a Sign of the Prophet's Truth**

38 Say to those who disbelieve, if they desist, that which is past will be forgiven them; and if they return,[1003] then the example of those of old has already gone.[1004]

قُلْ لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا إِنْ يَّنْتَهُوا يُغْفَرْ
لَهُمْ مَّا قَدْ سَلَفَ ۚ وَإِنْ يَّعُودُوا فَقَدْ
مَضَتْ سُنَّتُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

1001 The disbelievers are here declared not to be the true guardians of the Sacred Mosque, because while that Mosque was an emblem of the Unity of the Divine Being, its name having been clearly associated with monotheism since the time of Abraham, the disbelievers who now posed as its guardians were idolaters. So they are told that they are unfit to hold its guardianship, which would henceforth be made over to a people who keep their duty, i.e. the Muslims. The words contain a prophecy not only as to the deprivation of the disbelieving Quraish of the guardianship of the Ka'bah, but also as to the passing of the guardianship into the hands of the Muslims.

1001a In fact the House was not used by them for offering prayers to God but for sacrilegious talk and gossiping.

1003, 1004, see next page.

39 And fight with them until there is no more persecution, and all religions are for Allāh. But if they desist, then surely Allāh is Seer of what they do.[1005]

وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ
الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ ۚ فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ
بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 And if they turn back, then know that Allāh is your Patron. Most excellent the Patron and most excellent the Helper![1006]

وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَاكُمْ ۚ
نِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ ﴿٤٠﴾

PART X

41 And know that whatever you acquire in war, a fifth of it is for Allāh and for the Messenger and for the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer, if you believe in Allāh and in that which We revealed to Our servant, on the day of Discrimination, the day on which the two parties met. And Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.[1007]

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَأَنَّ لِلَّهِ
خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ
وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ آمَنْتُمْ
بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا يَوْمَ الْفُرْقَانِ
يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٤١﴾

1003 Desisting and returning both relate to *fighting against the Muslims*, not to unbelief, because the unbelievers could not be said *to return* to disbelief. They had gone away from Badr quite discomfited, and they were told that, if they desisted from fighting, they would be forgiven.

1004 The meaning is that they could read their own doom in the doom of those with whom Allāh had dealt previously in similar circumstances. Compare 18:55, which states that the disbelievers only wait "that what happened to the ancients should overtake them".

1005 That is, if they desist from fighting and put an end to their mischief, God's decree of punishment will not be executed. God sees what men do, and if they mend their ways, He will not punish them. The state of religious liberty which Islām aimed at is put tersely in the two opening statements — *there is no more persecution* and *all religions are for Allāh.*

1006 If they return to fight, then Allāh will protect the Muslim community, helping them against their enemy, as He is their Patron and Helper.

1007 LL explains *ghanama* as meaning *he acquired a thing without difficulty.* Hence the original meaning of the word *ghanīmah* is simply *acquisition* or *achievement*, and the word is then applied to what is acquired in war after fighting with the enemy and vanquishing him, and is a technical term for such property.

Regarding the one-fifth spoken of here, the most generally accepted opinion is that it is to be divided again into five parts, the Prophet, the near of kin, the orphans, the poor, and the wayfarer being equal sharers. The near of kin included all individuals belonging to the tribes of Banī-Hāshim and Banī-'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, to whom zakāt money was not allowed. The poor among them were thus paid from this source of income. As to the Prophet's twenty-fifth, it appears that it was also used for the benefit of the Muslims. The words of one of his sayings are:

42 When you were on the nearer side (of the valley) and they were on the farther side, while the caravan was in a lower place than you.[1008] And if you had tried to make a mutual appointment, you would certainly have broken away from the appointment,[1009] but[1010] — in order that Allāh might bring about a matter which had to be done;[1011] that he who perished by clear argument might perish, and he who lived by clear argument might live.[1012] And surely Allāh is Hearing, Knowing:

إِذْ أَنتُم بِالْعُدْوَةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُم بِالْعُدْوَةِ
الْقُصْوَىٰ وَالرَّكْبُ أَسْفَلَ مِنكُمْ ۚ وَلَوْ
تَوَاعَدتُّمْ لَاخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِي الْمِيعَادِ ۙ وَلَٰكِن
لِّيَقْضِيَ اللَّهُ أَمْرًا كَانَ مَفْعُولًا لِّيَهْلِكَ
مَنْ هَلَكَ عَن بَيِّنَةٍ وَيَحْيَىٰ مَنْ حَيَّ عَن
بَيِّنَةٍ ۗ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَسَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 When Allāh showed them to thee in thy dream as few — and if He had shown them to thee as many, you would certainly have become weak-hearted and you would have disputed

إِذْ يُرِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَنَامِكَ قَلِيلًا ۖ وَلَوْ
أَرَاكَهُمْ كَثِيرًا لَّفَشِلْتُمْ وَلَتَنَازَعْتُمْ

wa-l-khumsu mardūd-un fī-kum, i.e. *the fifth (too) is given back to you.* That the Prophet led a life of the utmost simplicity is admitted on all hands. The remaining four-fifths of the *ghanīmah* were divided among those who took part in the battle, as they were not otherwise paid for their services, but there is no order to this effect in the Qur'ān itself. It may be further noted that this arrangement was simply an exigency. The war was forced on the Muslims all of a sudden when the State had not yet been formed in the proper sense of the word; there was no army at all, nor a treasury from which to pay it; and just as they were required to carry it on on the basis of voluntary gifts, so they were allowed a share in the war acquisitions. If the State pays its soldiers as it pays its civil servants, the war acquisitions would all go to the State treasury, just as income from zakāt or tribute went to the State treasury. It is nowhere laid down that the Muslim State shall not maintain a regular army.

The day of Discrimination referred to here is the battle of Badr. It is so called because prophecies of an encounter between the Muslims and their enemies and of the vanquishment of the enemy are met with in very early revelations. See also 395.

1008 The position of the three parties, i.e. the party of the Muslims and two parties of the Quraish, is here made clear. The Muslims were on the nearer side, i.e. *the side nearer to Madīnah*, the main army of the Quraish was on the further side, i.e. *the side which was farther from Madīnah*, while the caravan was in a lower place, i.e. *towards the sea-coast*, and farther away from Madīnah, on its way to Makkah.

1009 The Muslims were so weak that they could not think of making an appointment with the enemy — they would have broken away from the appointment.

1010 There is an ellipsis here, the meaning being, *but an encounter was brought about without an appointment.*

1011 The matter *had to be done*, i.e., Allāh had decided to do it. *Maf'ūl* means literally *a thing already done*, the use of the past tense when the occurrence

1012, see next page.

about the matter, but Allāh saved (you). Surely He is Knower of what is in the breasts.

فِي الْأَمْرِ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ سَلَّمَ ۗ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 And when He showed them to you, when you met, as few in your eyes, and He made you to appear few in their eyes, in order that Allāh might bring about a matter which had to be done. And to Allāh are all affairs returned.[1013]

وَإِذْ يُرِيكُمُوهُمْ إِذِ الْتَقَيْتُمْ فِي أَعْيُنِكُمْ قَلِيلًا وَيُقَلِّلُكُمْ فِي أَعْيُنِهِمْ لِيَقْضِيَ اللَّهُ أَمْرًا كَانَ مَفْعُولًا ۗ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ ﴿٤٤﴾

SECTION 6 : **Success does not depend on Numbers**

45 O you who believe, when you meet an army, be firm, and remember Allāh much, that you may be successful.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا لَقِيتُمْ فِئَةً فَاثْبُتُوا وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 And obey Allāh and His Messenger and dispute not one with another, lest you get weak-hearted and your power depart; and be steadfast. Surely Allāh is with the steadfast.

وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَلَا تَنَازَعُوا فَتَفْشَلُوا وَتَذْهَبَ رِيحُكُمْ ۖ وَاصْبِرُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And be not like those who came forth from their homes exultingly and to be seen of men, and they hinder (people) from the way of Allāh.[1014] And Allāh encompasses what they do.

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بَطَرًا وَرِئَاءَ النَّاسِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ ﴿٤٧﴾

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is certain being frequent in Arabic. The matter referred to is the vanquishment of the opponents of Islām.

1012 The disbelievers had seen clear arguments of the Prophet's truth, yet they rejected him and had thus perished in a spiritual sense; they were now vanquished in the battle and thus perished temporally. Or, the meaning is that *those who would perish might perish by clear argument and those who would live might live by clear argument*, the battle itself being the clear argument referred to here.

1013 In the previous verse it is stated that the enemy were shown to the Prophet in a dream to be few, and here we are told that they were also shown to be few to the Muslims when the two armies met. The second point has been fully explained in 395. As regards the Prophet's seeing them few in a vision, it must no doubt be interpreted as signifying their actual weakness, notwithstanding their great number.

1014 The reference is clearly to the army of the Quraish, which had marched forth in great exultation to destroy Madīnah.

48 And when the devil[1015] made their works fair-seeming to them, and said: None among men can overcome you this day, and I am your protector. But when the two armies came in sight of one another, he turned upon his heels, and said: Surely I am clear of you, I see what you see not; surely I fear Allāh. And Allāh is Severe in requiting.

وَإِذْ زَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ وَقَالَ لَا غَالِبَ لَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَإِنِّي جَارٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ فَلَمَّا تَرَاءَتِ الْفِئَتٰنِ نَكَصَ عَلٰى عَقِبَيْهِ وَقَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيٓءٌ مِّنْكُمْ إِنِّيٓ أَرٰى مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ إِنِّيٓ أَخَافُ اللّٰهَ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٤٨﴾

SECTION 7: **Enemy's Strength weakened**

49 And when the hypocrites and those in whose hearts is a disease said: Their religion has deluded them. And whoever trusts in Allāh, then surely Allāh is Mighty, Wise.

إِذْ يَقُولُ الْمُنٰفِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ غَرَّ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ دِينُهُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللّٰهِ فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 And if thou couldst see when the angels cause to die those who disbelieve, smiting their faces and their backs, and (saying): Taste the punishment of burning.

وَلَوْ تَرٰٓى إِذْ يَتَوَفَّى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۙ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ وُجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ ۚ وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 This is for that which your own hands have sent on before, and because Allāh is not in the least unjust to the servants —

ذٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ﴿٥١﴾

52 In the manner of the people of Pharaoh and those before them, they disbelieved in Allāh's messages, so Allāh punished them for their sins. Surely Allāh is Strong, Severe in requiting.[1016]

كَدَأْبِ اٰلِ فِرْعَوْنَ ۙ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَفَرُوا بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللّٰهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ قَوِيٌّ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 This is because Allāh never changes a favour which He has conferred upon a people until they change their own condition — and because Allāh is Hearing, Knowing —

ذٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَمْ يَكُ مُغَيِّرًا نِّعْمَةً أَنْعَمَهَا عَلٰى قَوْمٍ حَتّٰى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ ۙ وَأَنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٣﴾

1015 The person referred to here is said to have been Surāqah ibn Mālik, who was of the tribe of Banī Bakr, a branch of Banī Kanānah. When setting out to attack Madīnah, the Quraish had a fear that the Banī Kanānah, who were their inveterate enemies, might attack Makkah in their absence. Surāqah gave them promise of help. It may be, however, that what is stated here is only the devil's suggestion to the Quraish leaders.

1016 The mention of the people of Pharaoh here serves to show the Prophet's

54 In the manner of the people of Pharaoh, and those before them. They rejected the messages of their Lord, so We destroyed them for their sins. And We drowned Pharaoh's people and they were all wrongdoers.

كَدَأْبِ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ ۙ وَالَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُم بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَأَغْرَقْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ ۚ وَكُلٌّ كَانُوا ظَالِمِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 Surely the vilest of beasts in Allāh's sight are those who disbelieve, then they would not believe.

إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِندَ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

56 Those with whom thou makest an agreement, then they break their agreement every time, and they keep not their duty.[1017]

الَّذِينَ عَاهَدتَّ مِنْهُمْ ثُمَّ يَنقُضُونَ عَهْدَهُمْ فِي كُلِّ مَرَّةٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 So if thou overtake them in war, scatter by them those who are behind them, that they may be mindful.[1018]

فَإِمَّا تَثْقَفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْحَرْبِ فَشَرِّدْ بِهِم مَّنْ خَلْفَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 And if thou fear treachery on the part of a people, throw back to them (their treaty) on terms of equality. Surely Allāh loves not the treacherous.[1019]

وَإِمَّا تَخَافَنَّ مِن قَوْمٍ خِيَانَةً فَانبِذْ إِلَيْهِمْ عَلَىٰ سَوَاءٍ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْخَائِنِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

SECTION 8 : **Peace to be secured by Strength**

59 And let not those who disbelieve think that they can outstrip (Us). Surely they cannot escape.

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَبَقُوا ۚ إِنَّهُمْ لَا يُعْجِزُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 And make ready for them whatever force you can and horses tied at the frontier, to frighten thereby the

وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُم مَّا اسْتَطَعْتُم مِّن قُوَّةٍ وَمِن رِّبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُرْهِبُونَ بِهِ عَدُوَّ

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likeness to Moses and foretells the absolute discomfiture of the enemy ultimately.

1017 It shows how the opponents of Islām disregarded their responsibility and violated their agreements. The use of the words *every time* with regard to these violations shows clearly that the Muslims never hesitated in making a new agreement when one was violated, but the disbelievers did not even then respect their agreements; hence, as a last resort, the Muslims were allowed to repudiate unrespected agreements (v. 58).

1018 That is, an exemplary punishment should be inflicted on them, so that a stop might be put to further fighting and bloodshed.

1019 If the other party does not remain faithful to the agreement of peace, the Muslims may also repudiate it. The use of the word *fear* does not indicate that a mere apprehension, unattended with any action on the part of the other party, is sufficient for repudiation. Read it along with v. 62, and the meaning is clear.

enemy of Allāh and your enemy and others besides them, whom you know not — Allāh knows them. And whatever you spend in Allāh's way, it will be paid back to you fully and you will not be wronged.[1020]

اللّٰهِ وَ عَدُوَّكُمْ وَ اٰخَرِيْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِهِمْ ۚ لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَهُمْ ۚ اَللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُهُمْ ؕ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوْا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ يُوَفَّ اِلَيْكُمْ وَ اَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۶۰﴾

61 And if they incline to peace, incline thou also to it, and trust in Allāh. Surely He is the Hearer, the Knower.

وَ اِنْ جَنَحُوْا لِلسَّلْمِ فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا وَ تَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿۶۱﴾

62 And if they intend to deceive thee,[1021] then surely Allāh is sufficient for thee. He it is Who strengthened thee with His help and with the believers,

وَ اِنْ يُّرِيْدُوْۤا اَنْ يَّخْدَعُوْكَ فَاِنَّ حَسْبَكَ اللّٰهُ ؕ هُوَ الَّذِيْۤ اَيَّدَكَ بِنَصْرِهٖ وَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿۶۲﴾

63 And He has united their hearts. If thou hadst spent all that is in the earth, thou couldst not have united their hearts, but Allāh united them. Surely He is Mighty, Wise.

وَ اَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوْبِهِمْ ؕ لَوْ اَنْفَقْتَ مَا فِي الْاَرْضِ جَمِيْعًا مَّاۤ اَلَّفْتَ بَيْنَ قُلُوْبِهِمْ وَ لٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ اَلَّفَ بَيْنَهُمْ ؕ اِنَّهٗ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿۶۳﴾

64 O Prophet, Allāh is sufficient for thee and those who follow thee of the believers.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَسْبُكَ اللّٰهُ وَ مَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿۶۴﴾

SECTION 9: **Muslims to meet Overwhelming Numbers**

65 O Prophet, urge the believers to fight.[1022] If there be of you twenty steadfast, they shall overcome two hundred; and if there be of you a hundred, they shall overcome a thousand of those who disbelieve, because they are a people who do not understand.[1022a]

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ عَلَى الْقِتَالِ ؕ اِنْ يَّكُنْ مِّنْكُمْ عِشْرُوْنَ صٰبِرُوْنَ يَغْلِبُوْا مِائَتَيْنِ ۚ وَ اِنْ يَّكُنْ مِّنْكُمْ مِّائَةٌ يَّغْلِبُوْۤا اَلْفًا مِّنَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بِاَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُوْنَ ﴿۶۵﴾

1020 *Force* (Ar. *quwwah*) means *all those things which are a source of strength, including all kinds of implements of war and other defensive and offensive operations.* The Muslims had won a victory at Badr, though they were not even well-equipped and had made no preparation for the war. But they are told that they must in future keep themselves well prepared and avail themselves of all sources of strength, so that the enemy should by their very preparedness assume a peaceful attitude. It was evident that the weakness of the Muslims was a temptation for their opponents to attack them.

1021 The deceit is in relation to what has been said in the previous verse, the meaning being that *if they intend to deceive thee under cloak of peace,* even in such a case peace is to be accepted.

1022 It should be noted that the war to which the Muslims were to be urged was the defensive war which the Muslims had to fight to save themselves and to

1022a, see next page.

66 Now Allāh has lightened your burden and He knows that there is weakness in you. So if there be of you a hundred steadfast, they shall overcome two hundred; and if there be of you a thousand, they shall overcome two thousand by Allāh's permission. And Allāh is with the steadfast.[1023]

اَلْـٰٔنَ خَفَّفَ اللّٰهُ عَنْكُمْ وَ عَلِمَ اَنَّ فِيْكُمْ ضَعْفًا ؕ فَاِنْ يَّكُنْ مِّنْكُمْ مِّائَةٌ صَابِرَةٌ يَّغْلِبُوْا مِائَتَيْنِ ۚ وَ اِنْ يَّكُنْ مِّنْكُمْ اَلْفٌ يَّغْلِبُوْۤا اَلْفَيْنِ بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ مَعَ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ﴿۶۶﴾

67 It is not fit for a prophet to take captives unless he has fought and triumphed in the land. You desire the frail goods of this world, while Allāh desires (for you) the Hereafter. And Allāh is Mighty, Wise.[1024]

مَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ اَنْ يَّكُوْنَ لَهٗۤ اَسْرٰى حَتّٰى يُثْخِنَ فِي الْاَرْضِ ؕ تُرِيْدُوْنَ عَرَضَ الدُّنْيَا ۖۗ وَ اللّٰهُ يُرِيْدُ الْاٰخِرَةَ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿۶۷﴾

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protect the religion of Islām. The sword had been taken up against them; see 2:190, 2:217, 22:39, etc.

1022a The Muslims were very few as compared with their enemies, and there was not even one Muslim to ten disbelievers. Thus there is a clear prophecy here that, notwithstanding their fewer numbers, the Muslims shall be victorious. After the battle of Badr came the battle of Uḥud, in which the Muslims were less than 1 to 4 against the enemy; this was followed by the battle of the Aḥzāb, in which they were 1 to 10, yet the enemy was routed.

1023 This verse is supposed by some to abrogate the previous verse, where it is stated that twenty patient Muslims shall overcome two hundred disbelievers. This is not a correct view. Firstly, because only an injunction could be said to be abrogated, and not a statement. Secondly, because the two statements relate to two different states of the Muslims. At the time of the battle of Badr there was no Muslim army in existence. Every man available, young or old, sick or healthy, had to fight to save the life of the community. They had very few arms, and they had never been trained. This is referred to in the words: *He knows that there is weakness in you.* So the Muslim forces as then constituted could at most be a match for double their numbers. But a time did come when they were a match for ten times their numbers. So both the statements in the Qur'ān proved true. But even if the words may be taken as an injunction to the Muslims to overcome twice and afterwards ten times their numbers, there is no question of abrogation. There are two commandments, one in accordance with the circumstances of the Muslim society as it was then, another in accordance with a future state when they would be well-armed.

1024 There exists some misunderstanding as to the meaning of *yuthkhina* used here. *Thakhuna* means *he* or *it became thick,* and *athkhana* means *ghalaba, he overcame* (LA). The same word is again used in the Holy Qur'ān exactly in the same sense: "Until when you have *overcome* them, take them prisoners" (47:4).

On the authority of certain reports, the commentators are of opinion that this verse and the next refer to releasing the prisoners of war taken at Badr after taking ransom from them, which act, it is said, is here disapproved. But various considerations show that these verses refer to some other incidents. Firstly, the condition laid down here for taking prisoners is that the Prophet should fight against the enemy, and that had actually been done at Badr. Secondly, the taking of prisoners and their release on this very occasion is justified in clear words only two verses further on, "O Prophet, say to those of the captives who are in your

68 Were it not for an ordinance from Allāh that had gone before,[1025] surely there would have befallen you a great chastisement for what you were going to do.[1026]

لَوْلَا كِتٰبٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ سَبَقَ لَمَسَّكُمْ فِيْمَآ اَخَذْتُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيْمٌ ﴿۶۸﴾

69 Eat then of the lawful and good (things) which you have acquired in war, and keep your duty to Allāh. Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

فَكُلُوْا مِمَّا غَنِمْتُمْ حَلٰلًا طَيِّبًا ۖ وَّاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۶۹﴾

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hands: If Allāh knows anything good in your hearts, He will give you better than that which has been taken from you" (v. 70). This shows that these verses were revealed when the prisoners were still *in the hands* of the Muslims and *that which has been taken* is clearly *the ransom,* which must have taken many days to reach Madīnah. If the verse had conveyed a Divine commandment to slay the prisoners and not to release them, that step could still have been taken. But the very fact that no such step was taken shows clearly that the verse conveyed no such Divine commandment.

The legality of the Holy Prophet's procedure on this occasion is clearly borne out by an earlier revelation: "So when you meet in battle those who disbelieve, then smite the necks until you have overcome them, then make them prisoners, and afterwards either set them free as a favour or let them ransom themselves" (47:4). The Prophet never slew a single prisoner of war, even after the battle of Badr, though thousands of prisoners were taken in some of these battles. On the other hand, the prisoners were almost always set free as a favour, and ransom was taken only from the Badr prisoners.

The question is, what is then hinted at in this verse and in the one that follows? To me it seems quite clear that the reference is to the *desire* (mark the word *desire* used in the verse) — not to an action already completed — of a party of the Muslims referred to in v. 7, *and you loved that the one not armed should be yours.* Some Muslims desired to attack and capture the unarmed caravan, but depredations like these, though committed by disbelievers upon the Muslims, were not fit for a prophet. He must fight a hard fight in his defence first and then, if he overcomes the enemy, he may take prisoners. Thus this injunction also declares slavery to be illegal, and allows only the retaining of those who are taken prisoners in war. The *frail goods of this life* appropriately refer to the caravan and its merchandise, while the addition of the concluding words in v. 69, *eat then of the lawful and good things which you have acquired in war,* shows that the ransom received on account of the prisoners is among the *lawful and good things.*

1025 That ordinance from Allāh is referred to in several places in this chapter; it was to bring about an encounter with the main army of the Quraish at Badr: "And when Allāh promised you one of the two parties that it should be yours . . . and Allāh desired to establish the truth" (v. 7); and again: "In order that Allāh might bring about a matter which had to be done" (v. 42).

1026 You say *akhadha fī kadhā* meaning *he took to a thing,* or *set about* or *commenced doing it* (LL).

SECTION 10: **Relations of Muslim State with others**

70 O Prophet, say to those of the captives who are in your hands: If Allāh knows anything good in your hearts, He will give you better than that which has been taken from you, and will forgive you. And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُل لِّمَن فِي أَيْدِيكُم مِّنَ الْأَسْرَىٰ إِن يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ خَيْرًا يُؤْتِكُمْ خَيْرًا مِّمَّا أُخِذَ مِنكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٧٠﴾

71 And if they intend to be treacherous to thee, so indeed they have been treacherous to Allāh before, but He gave (you) mastery over them. And Allāh is Knowing, Wise.

وَإِن يُرِيدُوا خِيَانَتَكَ فَقَدْ خَانُوا اللَّهَ مِن قَبْلُ فَأَمْكَنَ مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٧١﴾

72 Surely those who believed and fled (their homes) and struggled hard in Allāh's way with their wealth and their lives, and those who gave shelter and helped — these are friends one of another. And those who believed and did not flee, you are not responsible for their protection until they flee. And if they seek help from you in the matter of religion, it is your duty to help (them) except against a people between whom and you there is a treaty. And Allāh is Seer of what you do.[1027]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ آوَوا وَّنَصَرُوا أُولَٰئِكَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يُهَاجِرُوا مَا لَكُم مِّن وَلَايَتِهِم مِّن شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ يُهَاجِرُوا ۚ وَإِنِ اسْتَنصَرُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ فَعَلَيْكُمُ النَّصْرُ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُم مِّيثَاقٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٧٢﴾

73 And those who disbelieve are friends one of another. If you do it not, there will be persecution in the land and great mischief.[1028]

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ إِلَّا تَفْعَلُوهُ تَكُن فِتْنَةٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَفَسَادٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿٧٣﴾

1027 The friendship alluded to in this verse has been a matter of much discussion among the commentators. The meaning seems to be clear. Those who believed, and, having been persecuted, fled from their homes, formed a community at Madīnah along with those who gave them shelter and helped them, i.e., the *Anṣār*. But there were those who chose to remain in their homes. The Muslim community at Madīnah could not undertake to guard the interests of such persons, and this is what is meant by saying, *you are not responsible for their protection*. But if they seek help in the matter of religion, it is incumbent on the Muslim community to give them help, unless there exists a treaty of alliance with the people against whom such help is sought.

1028 If you do not help your brethren in the matter of religion, the disbelievers will become more daring in their persecutions and in causing mischief and disorder in the land.

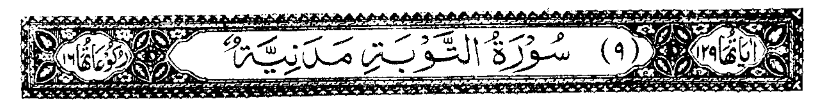
74 And those who believed and fled and struggled hard in Allāh's way, and those who gave shelter and helped — these are the believers truly. For them is forgiveness and an honourable provision.

وَالَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوْا وَهَاجَرُوْا وَجٰهَدُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰوَوْا وَّنَصَرُوْٓا اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ حَقًّا ؕ لَهُمْ مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَّرِزْقٌ كَرِيْمٌ ۝

75 And those who believed afterwards and fled and struggled hard along with you, they are of you. And the relatives are nearer one to another in the ordinance of Allāh. Surely Allāh is Knower of all things.[1029]

وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مِنْۢ بَعْدُ وَهَاجَرُوْا وَجٰهَدُوْا مَعَكُمْ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ مِنْكُمْ ؕ وَاُولُوا الْاَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ اَوْلٰى بِبَعْضٍ فِيْ كِتٰبِ اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ۝

1029 When even strangers who have accepted Islām and fled from their homes become "of you", those who have in addition ties of relationship, possess every title to have their interests guarded by the Muslim community.



CHAPTER 9

Al-Barā'at : THE IMMUNITY

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 16 *sections ;* 129 *verses*)

The title of this chapter is taken from the opening statement, which contains a declaration of *immunity* from obligations with such of the idolatrous tribes as had repeatedly broken their engagements. This declaration is one of the most important events in the history of Islām, for hitherto the Muslims had constantly suffered from the hostility of the unscrupulous idolatrous tribes who had no regard for their treaties, dealing a blow at the Muslims whenever they had an opportunity of doing so. The chapter is known under various other names, *al-Taubah* or *Repentance,* being the best known. This is not really a new chapter, and this accounts for the *Bismillāh* being omitted from the opening. It is admittedly a part of the last chapter, while a distinct name has been assigned to it by reason of the importance of the declaration of *immunity,* from which it takes its name. A reference to the seventh and the eighth sections of the last chapter will show that the idolaters repeatedly broke the agreements which bound them to remain on peaceful terms with the Muslims. This frequent violation ultimately led to the declaration of immunity, because it was impossible that the Muslims should be bound for ever by the terms of those agreements, while their enemies could repudiate them with impunity.

A declaration of immunity necessitated by the repeated treaty violations of the idolaters is made in the first section, with two clear exceptions; one in the case of those tribes who had remained true to their obligations, and a second in the case of idolaters who sought protection from the Muslims. These latter were to be conducted safely to their tribes, and were not to be molested in any way. The second section gives the chief reason for freeing the Muslims from the liabilities of certain agreements, again stating expressly that the Muslims were to stand firm by their agreements so long as the other party adhered to their terms. In the third section the idolaters are told that their pretensions relating to the entertainment of the pilgrims and the repairing or building of the Sacred House could not save them from the consequences of their evil deeds, while the conclusion of that section calls attention to the sacrifices which the Muslims would now be required to make in the cause of truth. The fourth section states how Islām was triumphing in Arabia, while the fifth, after speaking of the falling off of the Jews and the Christians from the pure monotheism of their great prophets, predicts the final triumph of Islām, the only religion of pure monotheism in the whole world. Thenceforward to the end, with the exception of the last three sections, are contained references to the Tabūk expedition, and particularly to those who had been guilty of default in joining that expedition. Thus the hypocrites had made their presence clearly felt among the Muslims from the time of the battle of Uḥud, in the third year of the Hijrah, and they had been given a chance up to the close of the ninth year to mend their ways, and the final word with regard to them was now urgently needed. The three concluding sections are a natural sequel to the subject of hypocrisy. The fourteenth speaks of the faithful, and the fifteenth of their duty towards God and His Prophet, their attention being drawn in the closing words of this section to the necessity of proper arrangements for the propagation of the Faith. Thus at the end of a chapter which almost entirely deals with treaty obligations, ultimatums and wars, the faithful are told that every Muslim community must contribute men to carry the message of Truth to the whole world, which was the real object of Islām. The last section speaks of the Prophet's great anxiety for the hypocrites as well as the believers.

The whole of this chapter was revealed in the ninth year of the Hijrah, the opening verses belonging to the close, and the major portion to about the middle, of that year, during or after the Tabūk expedition, which took place in the month of Rajab in the ninth year of the Hijrah.

SECTION 1 **Declaration of Immunity**

1 A declaration of immunity from Allāh and His Messenger to those of the idolaters with whom you made an agreement.[1030]

بَرَآءَةٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖٓ اِلَى الَّذِيْنَ عٰهَدْتُّمْ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ۝١

2 So go about in the land for four months and know that you cannot escape Allāh and that Allāh will disgrace the disbelievers.

فَسِيْحُوْا فِي الْاَرْضِ اَرْبَعَةَ اَشْهُرٍ وَّاعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِي اللّٰهِ ۙ وَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ مُخْزِي الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ۝٢

3 And an announcement from Allāh and His Messenger to the people on the day of the greater pilgrimage[1031] that Allāh is free from liability to the idolaters, and so is His Messenger. So if you repent, it will be better for you; and if you turn away, then know that you will not escape Allāh. And announce painful chastisement to those who disbelieve —

وَاَذَانٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖٓ اِلَى النَّاسِ يَوْمَ الْحَجِّ الْاَكْبَرِ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ بَرِيْٓءٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ۙ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ ۗ فَاِنْ تُبْتُمْ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ وَاِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَاعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِي اللّٰهِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بِعَذَابٍ اَلِيْمٍ ۝٣

4 Except those of the idolaters with whom you made an agreement, then they have not failed you in anything and have not backed up any one against you; so fulfil their agreement to the end of their term. Surely Allāh

اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ عٰهَدْتُّمْ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَنْقُصُوْكُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَّلَمْ يُظَاهِرُوْا عَلَيْكُمْ اَحَدًا فَاَتِمُّوْٓا اِلَيْهِمْ عَهْدَهُمْ اِلٰى

1030 This verse is to be read along with v. 4, which makes a clear exception in favour of those who did not fail in their agreements. It is a fact that the idolatrous tribes of Arabia broke their agreements with the Muslims again and again (8:56), yet the Muslims were enjoined to accept peace if the disbelievers consented to it, even after repeated violations (8:61). But this state of things could not continue long, for it was soon found that it was impossible to trust such neighbours. This repudiation of agreements took place on a large scale when the Muslims were absent on the Tabūk expedition. The first thirteen verses of this chapter were publicly proclaimed by 'Alī, on the occasion of the pilgrimage in the ninth year of the Hijrah, and the following announcements made as the result: (1) that no idolater shall approach the Sacred House after this; (2) that no one shall go naked round the Ka'bah (B. 65:ix, 3). The attitude of the tribes to whom this ultimatum was given through 'Alī is well indicated in their reply: "O 'Alī, deliver this message to thy cousin (i.e. the Prophet), that we have thrown the agreements behind our backs, and there is no agreement between him and us except smiting with spears and striking with swords" (Rz).

1031 By *the day of the greater pilgrimage* is meant either the ninth of *Dhu-l-Hijjah,* when all pilgrims gather together in the plain of 'Arafāt, or the tenth when they assemble in Minā.

loves those who keep their duty.[1032]

مُدَّتِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤﴾

5 So when the sacred months have passed, slay the idolaters,[1033] wherever you find them, and take them captive and besiege them and lie in wait for them in every ambush. But if they repent and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, leave their way free. Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.[1034]

فَإِذَا انْسَلَخَ الْأَشْهُرُ الْحُرُمُ فَاقْتُلُوا
الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَخُذُوهُمْ
وَاحْصُرُوهُمْ وَاقْعُدُوا لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصَدٍ ۚ
فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتَوُا الزَّكٰوةَ
فَخَلُّوا سَبِيلَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٥﴾

6 And if anyone of the idolaters seek thy protection, protect him till he hears the word of Allāh, then convey him to his place of safety. This is because they are a people who know not.[1035]

وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ
فَأَجِرْهُ حَتّٰى يَسْمَعَ كَلٰمَ اللّٰهِ ثُمَّ أَبْلِغْهُ
مَأْمَنَهُ ۚ ذٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦﴾

SECTION 2 : **Reasons for the Immunity**

7 How can there be an agreement for the idolaters with Allāh and with His Messenger, except those with whom you made an agreement at the Sacred Mosque? So as long as they are true to you, be true to them. Surely Allāh loves those who keep their duty.[1036]

كَيْفَ يَكُونُ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ عَهْدٌ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ وَ
عِنْدَ رَسُولِهِ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ عٰهَدْتُّمْ عِنْدَ
الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۚ فَمَا اسْتَقَامُوا لَكُمْ
فَاسْتَقِيمُوا لَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٧﴾

1032 Only two tribes, the Banī Ḍamrah, and the Banī Kanānah, are related to have adhered to their treaties. The exception given here makes it clear that the Muslims were not fighting with the idolaters on account of their religion, but on account of their having been untrue to their engagements.

1033 The clear exception of the last verse shows that by the idolaters here are meant, not all idolaters or polytheists wherever they may be found in the world, not even all idolaters of Arabia, but only those idolatrous tribes of Arabia assembled at the pilgrimage who had first made agreements with the Muslims and then violated them.

1034 The exception here has given rise to much misconception. It is thought that it offers to the disbelievers the alternative of the sword or the Qur'ān. Nothing is farther from the truth. The injunction contained in the first part of the verse establishes the fact that the whole verse relates to certain idolatrous Arab tribes

1035, 1036, see next page.

8 How (can it be)? And if they prevail against you, they respect neither ties of relationship nor covenant in your case. They would please you with their mouths while their hearts refuse; and most of them are transgressors.

كَيْفَ وَإِنْ يَّظْهَرُوْا عَلَيْكُمْ لَا يَرْقُبُوْا فِيْكُمْ إِلًّا وَّلَا ذِمَّةً ۚ يُرْضُوْنَكُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتَأْبٰى قُلُوْبُهُمْ ۚ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ فٰسِقُوْنَ ⑧

9 They have taken a small price for the messages of Allāh, so they hinder (men) from His way. Surely evil is that which they do.

اِشْتَرَوْا بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيْلًا فَصَدُّوْا عَنْ سَبِيْلِهٖ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ سَآءَ مَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ⑨

10 They respect neither ties of relationship nor covenant, in the case of a believer. And these are they who go beyond the limits.[1037]

لَا يَرْقُبُوْنَ فِيْ مُؤْمِنٍ إِلًّا وَّلَا ذِمَّةً ۚ وَأُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُعْتَدُوْنَ ⑩

11 But if they repent and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, they are your brethren in faith. And We make the messages clear for a people who know.

فَإِنْ تَابُوْا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتَوُا الزَّكٰوةَ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّيْنِ ۗ وَنُفَصِّلُ الْاٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَّعْلَمُوْنَ ⑪

12 And if they break their oaths after their agreement and revile your

وَإِنْ نَّكَثُوْا أَيْمَانَهُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ عَهْدِهِمْ

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who had broken their engagements with the Muslims, and who had now been apprised of a similar repudiation by the Muslims. The order to kill them and to make them prisoners and to besiege them and ambush them amounts clearly to an order to fight against them, as it is in war only that all these things are made lawful. They had so often broken their word that they could no more be trusted. Yet, if they joined the brotherhood of Islām, and there was an absolute change in their condition, the punishment which they otherwise deserved could be remitted. It was a case of forgiving a guilty people who had repented. It should also be noted that a mere confession of the faith is not required; what is required is an absolute change, so that the old crimes are all abandoned. Therefore, along with the confession of the faith, it is required that they should keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate. The subject is further clarified in the next verse and the following section.

1035 This verse leaves no doubt that the Prophet was never ordered to kill anyone on account of his religion. "You shall give him a safe conduct that he may return home again securely in case he shall not think fit to embrace Muhammadanism" (Sale).

1036 So long as the idolaters were true to their agreements, the Muslims were required to be true to them. Just as in the case of war, the Muslims were not allowed to fight until the enemy had first attacked, so, in the case of repudiation of agreements, it was the enemy who first repudiated the agreement.

1037 Note the repeated assertions of the Qur'ān that the disbelievers were not to be fought against for their disbelief but for their being first in starting war or repudiating agreements. No remedy was left for the covert mischief of these people, except that the agreements should be overtly repudiated and a period put to all their mischief.

religion, then fight the leaders of disbelief — surely their oaths are nothing — so that they may desist.[1038]

وَطَعَنُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ فَقَاتِلُوا أَئِمَّةَ الْكُفْرِ ۙ
إِنَّهُمْ لَا أَيْمَانَ لَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَنْتَهُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 Will you not fight a people who broke their oaths and aimed at the expulsion of the Messenger, and they attacked you first? Do you fear them? But Allāh has more right that you should fear Him, if you are believers.

أَلَا تُقَاتِلُونَ قَوْمًا نَكَثُوا أَيْمَانَهُمْ وَهَمُّوا
بِإِخْرَاجِ الرَّسُولِ وَهُمْ بَدَءُوكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ ۚ
أَتَخْشَوْنَهُمْ ۚ فَاللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْشَوْهُ
إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

14 Fight them; Allāh will chastise them at your hands and bring them to disgrace, and assist you against them and relieve the hearts of a believing people,

قَاتِلُوهُمْ يُعَذِّبْهُمُ اللَّهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ وَ
يُخْزِهِمْ وَيَنْصُرْكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيَشْفِ
صُدُورَ قَوْمٍ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 And remove the rage of their hearts.[1039] And Allāh turns (mercifully) to whom He pleases. And Allāh is Knowing, Wise.

وَيُذْهِبْ غَيْظَ قُلُوبِهِمْ ۗ وَيَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ
مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾

16 Do you think that you would be left alone while Allāh has not yet known those of you who struggle hard and take not anyone as an intimate friend besides Allāh and His Messenger and the believers? And Allāh is Aware of what you do.

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُتْرَكُوا وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ
الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَلَمْ يَتَّخِذُوا مِنْ
دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَا رَسُولِهِ وَلَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَلِيجَةً ۚ وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

SECTION 3: **Idolaters' Service of the Sacred House**

17 The idolaters have no right to maintain the mosques of Allāh, while bearing witness to disbelief against themselves. These it is whose works are vain; and in the Fire will they

مَا كَانَ لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يَعْمُرُوا مَسَاجِدَ
اللَّهِ شَاهِدِينَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ بِالْكُفْرِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ

1038 Note, again, that those leaders of disbelief are to be fought against *who break their oaths after their agreements.*

1039 It is said to refer to the Khuzā'ah, who, having become Muslims, suffered severely at the hands of the Banī Bakr, assisted by the Quraish; but the

abide.[1040]

حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ ۚ وَفِي النَّارِ هُمْ خَالِدُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Only he can maintain the mosques of Allāh who believes in Allāh and the Last Day, and keeps up prayer and pays the poor-rate and fears none but Allāh. So these it is who may be of the guided ones.

إِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَلَمْ يَخْشَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَعَسَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ أَنْ يَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

19 Do you hold the giving of drink to the pilgrims and the maintenance of the Sacred Mosque[1041] equal to (the service of) one who believes in Allāh and the Last Day and strives hard in Allāh's way? They are not equal in the sight of Allāh. And Allāh guides not the iniquitous people.

أَجَعَلْتُمْ سِقَايَةَ الْحَاجِّ وَعِمَارَةَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ كَمَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَجَاهَدَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ لَا يَسْتَوُونَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 Those who believed and fled (their homes), and strove hard in Allāh's way with their wealth and their lives, are much higher in rank with Allāh. And it is these that shall triumph.

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Their Lord gives them good news of mercy and pleasure, from Himself, and Gardens wherein lasting blessings will be theirs,

يُبَشِّرُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِنْهُ وَرِضْوَانٍ وَجَنَّاتٍ لَهُمْ فِيهَا نَعِيمٌ مُقِيمٌ ﴿٢١﴾

22 Abiding therein for ever. Surely Allāh has a mighty reward with Him.

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

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reference may as well be to the Muslims in general, who had suffered the severest persecutions at the hands of the disbelievers. The punishment of the persecutors would no doubt relieve the hearts of the believers.

1040 By *the mosques of Allāh* is meant particularly the *Sacred Mosque at Makkah,* as being the centre of all the mosques of the world. This is made clear by the use of the words *Sacred Mosque* in v. 19 instead of *the mosques of Allāh.* It had long remained in the hands of the idolaters, who abode therein, visiting and repairing it, having placed a large number of idols within it. With the conquest of Makkah the Sacred Mosque was denuded of all idols, and was now as pure an emblem of monotheism as in the time of Abraham. Hence the idol-worshippers had nothing to do with it now.

1041 It is generally supposed to refer to 'Abbās, the Prophet's uncle, whose charge was giving drink to pilgrims and guarding the Sacred Mosque. But really a comparison is drawn here between all such minor acts of charity and public utility and the great responsibility of every individual to exert himself to his utmost to establish the Truth.

23 O you who believe, take not your fathers and your brothers for friends if they love disbelief above faith. And whoever of you takes them for friends, such are the wrongdoers.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوْٓا اٰبَآءَكُمْ وَاِخْوَانَكُمْ اَوْلِيَآءَ اِنِ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْكُفْرَ عَلَى الْاِيْمَانِ ۭ وَمَنْ يَّتَوَلَّهُمْ مِّنْكُمْ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ۝٢٣

24 Say: If your fathers and your sons and your brethren and your wives and your kinsfolk and the wealth you have acquired, and trade whose dullness you fear, and dwellings you love, are dearer to you than Allāh and His Messenger and striving in His way, then wait till Allāh brings His command to pass. And Allāh guides not the transgressing people.[1042]

قُلْ اِنْ كَانَ اٰبَآؤُكُمْ وَاَبْنَآؤُكُمْ وَاِخْوَانُكُمْ وَاَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيْرَتُكُمْ وَاَمْوَالُ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوْهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسٰكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَآ اَحَبَّ اِلَيْكُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ وَجِهَادٍ فِيْ سَبِيْلِهٖ فَتَرَبَّصُوْا حَتّٰى يَاْتِيَ اللّٰهُ بِاَمْرِهٖ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ۝٢٤

SECTION 4: **Islām made Triumphant in Arabia**

25 Certainly Allāh helped you in many battlefields, and on the day of Hunain, when your great numbers made you proud, but they availed you nothing, and the earth with all its spaciousness was straitened for you, then you turned back retreating.[1043]

لَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللّٰهُ فِيْ مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيْرَةٍ ۙ وَّيَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ ۙ اِذْ اَعْجَبَتْكُمْ كَثْرَتُكُمْ فَلَمْ تُغْنِ عَنْكُمْ شَيْئًا وَّضَاقَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْاَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ ثُمَّ وَلَّيْتُمْ مُّدْبِرِيْنَ ۝٢٥

1042 A true Muslim may have wealth, may carry on trade, may have magnificent houses, but these should not be dearer to him than Allāh and exertion in His path. In other words, he should be ready to sacrifice all these interests for a higher purpose, before which all these sink into insignificance. The essential difference between the Gospel teaching and the teaching of the Holy Qur'ān is, that while the former condemns wealth and the amassing of wealth outright, the latter does not require one actually to hate riches, but rather not to be obsessed by wealth to the neglect of one's higher duties and responsibilities. The acquisition of wealth is not harmful so long as it is not made the real aim of life, but has its proper place as the means to an end.

1043 With the declaration of immunity, there would naturally be an apprehension in the minds of the Muslims that the struggle would grow harder. Hence they are given an assurance of Divine help, amply justified by their previous experience.

The battle of Ḥunain, fought in the eighth year of the Hijrah in the valley of Ḥunain, at about three miles from Makkah, differed from the other battles inasmuch as the Muslims here outnumbered the enemy, the tribes of Hawāzin and Thaqīf being about 4,000 strong, while the Muslims are said to have been as many

26 Then Allāh sent down His calm upon His Messenger and upon the believers, and sent hosts which you saw not, and chastised those who disbelieved. And such is the reward of the disbelievers.

ثُمَّ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ سَكِيْنَتَهٗ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهٖ وَعَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَاَنْزَلَ جُنُوْدًا لَّمْ تَرَوْهَا وَعَذَّبَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا ؕ وَذٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿۲۶﴾

27 Then will Allāh after this turn mercifully to whom He pleases. And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.[1045]

ثُمَّ يَتُوْبُ اللّٰهُ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ ذٰلِكَ عَلٰى مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۲۷﴾

28 O you who believe, the idolaters are surely unclean,[1046] so they shall not approach the Sacred Mosque after this year of theirs.[1047] And if you fear poverty, then Allāh will enrich you out of His grace, if He please.[1048] Surely Allāh is Knowing, Wise.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْۤا اِنَّمَا الْمُشْرِكُوْنَ نَجَسٌ فَلَا يَقْرَبُوا الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ بَعْدَ عَامِهِمْ هٰذَا ۚ وَاِنْ خِفْتُمْ عَيْلَةً فَسَوْفَ يُغْنِيْكُمُ اللّٰهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖۤ اِنْ شَآءَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿۲۸﴾

29 Fight those who believe not in Allāh, nor in the Last Day, nor forbid that which Allāh and His Messenger have forbidden, nor follow the Religion of Truth, out of those who have been given the Book, until they pay the tax in acknowledgment of superiority and they are in a state of subjection.[1049]

قَاتِلُوا الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُوْنَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللّٰهُ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ وَلَا يَدِيْنُوْنَ دِيْنَ الْحَقِّ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ حَتّٰى يُعْطُوا الْجِزْيَةَ عَنْ يَّدٍ وَّهُمْ صٰغِرُوْنَ ﴿۲۹﴾

as ten or even twelve thousand. The archers of the enemy were good marksmen, and had occupied strong positions in the mountain passes. The Muslim army, on the other hand, contained two thousand men of Makkah, some of them still adhering to idolatry. Unfortunately this was the advance party of the army, and, unable to face the archers, they retreated causing disorder to the whole army. The Prophet, however, led the assault, at first alone, in face of the archers, but was soon joined by others and a victory was obtained, as the next verse shows.

1045 The reference may be to the prisoners of the Hawāzin, who numbered thousands, and who were all set free as an act of favour by the Holy Prophet, or to their ultimately coming over to Islām.

1046 Because they indulged in evil practices and went naked round the Ka'bah. Compare 5:90, where idols are declared to be unclean.

1047 The year of the proclamation, i.e. the ninth year of the Hijrah.

1048 The importance of Makkah as a commercial centre lay in the fact that the whole of Arabia repaired to it in the season of the pilgrimage, and there carried out important commercial transactions. The prohibition referred to in the first part of the verse could have been easily foreseen as affecting the commerce, and consequently the prosperity of Makkah, but worldly or business considerations never interfered with the carrying out of the moral reforms of Islām.

1049 The last word on the wars with the idolaters of Arabia having been said, this verse introduces the subject of fighting with the followers of the Book. Though the Jews had for a long time assisted the idolatrous Arabians in their

SECTION 5: **Islām will Triumph in the World**

30 And the Jews say: Ezra is the son of Allāh; and the Christians say: The Messiah is the son of Allāh. These are the words of their mouths.[1050] They imitate the saying of those who disbelieved before.[1051] Allāh's curse be on them! How they are turned away!

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرٌ ابْنُ اللَّهِ وَقَالَتِ النَّصَارَى الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ قَوْلُهُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ يُضَاهِئُونَ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ قَاتَلَهُمُ اللَّهُ أَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ۝

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struggle to uproot Islām, the great Christian power, the Roman Empire, had only just mobilized its forces for the subjection of the new religion, and the Tabūk expedition followed, which constitutes the subject-matter of a large portion of what follows in this chapter. As the object of this Christian power was simply the subjection of the Muslims, the words in which their final vanquishment by the Muslims is spoken of are different from those dealing with the final vanquishment of the idolatrous Arabians. The Qur'ān neither required that the idolaters should be compelled to accept Islām, nor was it in any way its object to bring the Christians into subjection. On the other hand, the idolaters wanted to suppress Islām by the sword, and the Christians first moved themselves to bring Muslim Arabia under subjection. The fate of each was, therefore, according to what it intended for the Muslims. The word *jizyah* is derived from *jazā*, meaning *he gave satisfaction*, and means, according to LL, *the tax that is taken from the free non-Muslim subjects of the Muslim Government whereby they ratify the compact that ensures them protection*; or, according to AH, *because it is a compensation for the protection which is guaranteed them, the non-Muslim subjects being free from military service.*

The phrase *'an yad-in* has been explained variously. The word *yad* (lit., *hand*) stands for *power* or *superiority*, the use of the *hand* being the real source of the superiority of man over all other animals, and the apparent meaning of the phrase is *in acknowledgment of your superiority in protecting their lives, etc.* (AH). It may also be added that the permission to fight, as given to the Muslims, is subject to the condition that the enemy should first take up the sword, *Fight in the way of Allāh with those who fight with you* (2:190). The Holy Prophet never overstepped this limit, nor did his followers. He fought against the Arabs when they took up the sword to destroy the Muslims, and he led an expedition against the Christians when the Roman Empire first mobilized its forces with the object of subjugating the Muslims. And so scrupulous was he that, when he found that the enemy had not yet taken the initiative, he did not attack the Roman Empire, but returned without fighting. Later on, however, the Roman Empire, like the Persians, helped the enemies of Islām and fomented trouble against the newly established Muslim Kingdom, as a result of which both these empires came into conflict with the Muslims and, notwithstanding the fact that both the Persians and the Romans were very powerful nations with unlimited resources and strong military organizations, and that they both tried at one and the same time to subjugate Islām, the result was what is predicted here in clear words — they were both reduced to a state of subjection by an insignificant nation like the Arabs.

1050 That there was a sect among the Jews who raised Ezra to the dignity of godhead, or son of God, is shown by Muslim historians. *Qasṭalānī* says, in the *Kitāb al-Nikāḥ*, that there was a party of Jews who held this belief. Nor did the Jews deny this allegation. The Qur'ān, too, mentions it only here in connection with the Christian doctrine, never blaming the Jews directly in the many controversies with them in the earlier chapters, and this shows that the Jewish nation as a whole was not guilty of entertaining this belief.

Another explanation of the statement made here is the free use of the word

1051, see next page.

31 They take their doctors of law and their monks for Lords besides Allāh, and (also) the Messiah, son of Mary. And they were enjoined that they should serve one God only — there is no god but He. Be He glorified from what they set up (with Him)![1052]

اِتَّخَذُوْۤا اَحْبَارَهُمْ وَ رُهْبَانَهُمْ اَرْبَابًا مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ وَ الْمَسِيْحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ ۚ وَ مَاۤ اُمِرُوْۤا اِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْۤا اِلٰهًا وَّاحِدًا ۚ لَاۤ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ؕ سُبْحٰنَهٗ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُوْنَ ۝

32 They desire to put out the light of Allāh with their mouths, and Allāh will allow nothing save the perfection of His light, though the disbelievers are averse.[1053]

يُرِيْدُوْنَ اَنْ يُّطْفِـُٔوْا نُوْرَ اللّٰهِ بِاَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَ يَاْبَى اللّٰهُ اِلَّاۤ اَنْ يُّتِمَّ نُوْرَهٗ وَ لَوْ كَرِهَ الْكٰفِرُوْنَ ۝

33 He it is Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the Religion of Truth, that He may cause it to prevail over all religions,[1054] though the polytheists are averse.

هُوَ الَّذِيْۤ اَرْسَلَ رَسُوْلَهٗ بِالْهُدٰى وَ دِيْنِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهٗ عَلَى الدِّيْنِ كُلِّهٖ ۙ وَ لَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُوْنَ ۝

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son. Elsewhere the Qur'ān says of the Jews and the Christians that they call themselves *the sons of Allāh and His beloved ones* (5:18), the meaning only being that they considered themselves *special favourites* of the Divine Being. Hence the belief regarding Ezra may be interpreted in the same light, for there is clear evidence that the Talmudists used very exaggerated language concerning him. Among the prophets of Israel, Ezra was specially honoured. In Rabbinical literature Ezra was considered "worthy of being the vehicle of the law, had it not been already given through Moses". "He is regarded and quoted as the type of person most competent and learned in the law. The Rabbis associate his name with several important institutions" (*Jewish Encyclopaedia*).

1051 We are here told that the Christian doctrine that Jesus Christ was the son of God was borrowed from earlier pagan people. Recent research has established the fact beyond all doubt. In fact, when St. Paul saw that the Jews would on no account accept Jesus Christ as a messenger of God, he introduced the pagan doctrine of sonship of God into the Christian religion, so that it might become more acceptible to the pagans.

1052 Most of the commentators agree that it does not mean that they took them actually for gods; the meaning is that they followed them blindly in what they enjoined and what they forbade, and therefore they are described as having taken them for Lords, on account of attaching to them a Divine dignity. It is related in a ḥadīth that, when this verse was revealed, 'Adī ibn Ḥātim, a convert from Christianity, asked the Holy Prophet as to the significance of this verse, for, he said, we did not worship our doctors of law and monks. The Holy Prophet's reply was: *Was it not that the people considered lawful what their priests declared to be lawful, though it was forbidden by God*. Ḥātim replied in the affirmative. That, the Prophet said, was what the verse meant (Tr. 44:9; IJ). Muslims who accord a similar position to their *pīrs* or saints are guilty of the same error.

1053 This is a prophecy of the ultimate triumph of Islām in face of severe opposition from the Jews and Christians. All opposition to truth, whether based on force or propaganda, is here compared with putting out the Divine light by blowing with the mouth to show that all such attempts would prove futile. The Divine light will be made perfect, by which is meant the triumph of Islām throughout the world, as the next verse states clearly.

1054, see next page.

34 O you who believe, surely many of the doctors of law and the monks eat away the property of men falsely, and hinder (them) from Allāh's way. And those who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in Allāh's way — announce to them a painful chastisement,[1055]

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْۤا اِنَّ كَثِيْرًا مِّنَ الْاَحْبَارِ
وَالرُّهْبَانِ لَيَاْكُلُوْنَ اَمْوَالَ النَّاسِ
بِالْبَاطِلِ وَيَصُدُّوْنَ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ؕ
وَالَّذِيْنَ يَكْنِزُوْنَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ
وَلَا يُنْفِقُوْنَهَا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۙ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ
بِعَذَابٍ اَلِيْمٍ ﴿۳۴﴾

35 On the day when it will be heated in the Fire of hell, then their foreheads and their sides and their backs will be branded with it: This is what you hoarded up for yourselves, so taste what you used to hoard.[1056]

يَّوْمَ يُحْمٰى عَلَيْهَا فِيْ نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوٰى
بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوْبُهُمْ وَظُهُوْرُهُمْ ؕ
هٰذَا مَا كَنَزْتُمْ لِاَنْفُسِكُمْ فَذُوْقُوْا
مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْنِزُوْنَ ﴿۳۵﴾

1054 The prophecy of the ultimate triumph of Islām in the whole world is repeated thrice in the Holy Qur'ān, in exactly the same words — here and in 48:28 and 61:9. Here as well as in 61:9 it is mentioned in connection with Christianity, while in 48:28, it is mentioned in connection with the Arab opposition to Islām. In Arabia itself, Islām became triumphant in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. Idolatry was wiped out from the face of the country, while many of the Jews and Christians accepted the Religion of Truth. The Prophet's death instead of putting any check to the advance of Islām was a signal for an unparalleled advance of his religion. The first century of the Muslim era saw, not only vast Christian communities swelling the ranks of Islām, in Egypt, N. Africa, Asia Minor, Persia and Central Asia, but also brought to light the amazing fact that Islām, coming in contact with all the great religions of the world, with Zoroastrianism in Persia, with Buddhism and Hinduism in India and Afghanistan, and with Confucianism in China, conquered the hearts of the followers of every religion and they accepted the message of Truth in vast numbers, so that great Muslim communities sprang up in the whole known world, and the light of Islām enlightened the whole world from the farthest East to the farthest West.

The reason for this triumph, unprecedented in the history of religion, is not far to seek. It was the Religion of Truth; it presented the whole truth and infused a new life into all people who accepted it, while every other religion presented only partial truth. Every religion accepted this or that prophet, while Islām accepted all the prophets of the world, and every religion had obscured the great Truth of Divine Unity by mixing up with it some kind of *shirk*, while Islām presented the purest monotheism. Islām thus presenting the Perfect Light of Divine Unity and the whole Truth relating to prophethood appealed to every people, and the truth of the words — *He it is Who sent His Messenger with guidance and the Religion of Truth that He may make it prevail over all religions*— shone out in full resplendence. Yet we are told in reliable ḥadīth that even a greater manifestation of the fulfilment of these words will be witnessed in the latter days when the Messiah of this *ummah* makes his appearance (IJ, Rz). And the final manifestation of this great truth is foreshadowed in the gradual acceptance of the principles of Islām throughout the whole world, notwithstanding the fact that the political power of Islām is at its lowest ebb.

1055 The acquisition of wealth is not disallowed, but the hoarding of it so as not to spend it in the cause of truth and for the welfare of humanity is denounced.

1056 The punishment of an evil is spoken of throughout the Holy Qur'ān

36 Surely the number of months with Allāh is twelve months by Allāh's ordinance, since the day when He created the heavens and the earth — of these four are sacred. That is the right religion; so wrong not yourselves therein.[1057] And fight the polytheists all together as they fight you all together.[1058] And know that Allāh is with those who keep their duty.

إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ
شَهْرًا فِي كِتٰبِ اللّٰهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ
وَالْأَرْضَ مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ ۚ ذٰلِكَ
الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ ۚ فَلَا تَظْلِمُوا فِيهِنَّ
أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَقٰتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً
كَمَا يُقٰتِلُونَكُمْ كَافَّةً ۚ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللّٰهَ
مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 Postponing (of the sacred month)[1059] is only an addition in disbelief, whereby those who disbelieve are led astray. They allow it one year and forbid it (another) year, that they may agree in the number (of months) which Allāh has made sacred, and thus make lawful what Allāh has forbidden. The evil of their doings is made fair-seeming to them. And Allāh guides not the disbelieving people.

إِنَّمَا النَّسِيءُ زِيَادَةٌ فِي الْكُفْرِ يُضَلُّ بِهِ
الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُحِلُّونَهُ عَامًا وَيُحَرِّمُونَهُ
عَامًا لِيُوَاطِئُوا عِدَّةَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللّٰهُ فَيُحِلُّوا
مَا حَرَّمَ اللّٰهُ ۚ زُيِّنَ لَهُمْ سُوءُ أَعْمَالِهِمْ ۗ
وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

as similar to the evil. Even in this world, a man feels a torment similar to the nature of the evil in which he indulges. Being branded with the hoarded wealth is thus a fit description of the chastisement of the hoarders.

1057 The allusion here is to the Arab practice of postponing the pilgrimage to a month other than that in which it fell, for which see the next verse. Whether the object was intercalation, in order to make the solar and lunar year tally, or whether a continuous cessation of war for a fourth part of the year was too long, is a disputed point; but such postponement was undoubtedly a great hardship for a majority of the people.

1058 Fighting was prohibited in the sacred months (2:217). Excepting this, the Muslims were told to fight with the idolaters *as* the idolaters fought with them, i.e. since all idolaters united in fighting with the Muslims, the latter, too, should unite in fighting with them.

1059 According to most of the commentators, *nasī'* means *postponement*, and the reference here is to the practice of postponing observance of the sacred month, thus allowing an ordinary month to be observed as sacred and a sacred month to be treated as ordinary. This practice interfered with the security of life which was guaranteed in the sacred months, and is, therefore, denounced. According to others, *nasī'* means *addition* (of a month), and refers to the practice of the intercalation of a month every fourth year. AH prefers the first, and says that the three successive months of *Dhu-l-Qa'dah*, *Dhu-l-Ḥijjah* and *Muḥarram* seemed too long for them to refrain from their depredations and bloodshed, and therefore they violated the last of these, keeping sacred instead the next month.

SECTION 6 : **The Tabūk Expedition.**

38 O you who believe, what (excuse) have you that when it is said to you, Go forth in Allāh's way, you should incline heavily to earth? Are you contented with this world's life instead of the Hereafter? The provision of this world's life is but little as compared with the Hereafter.[1060]

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا مَا لَكُمۡ اِذَا قِيۡلَ لَكُمُ
انۡفِرُوۡا فِىۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ اثَّاقَلۡتُمۡ اِلَى الۡاَرۡضِ ؕ
اَرَضِيۡتُمۡ بِالۡحَيٰوةِ الدُّنۡيَا مِنَ الۡاٰخِرَةِ ۚ
فَمَا مَتَاعُ الۡحَيٰوةِ الدُّنۡيَا فِى الۡاٰخِرَةِ
اِلَّا قَلِيۡلٌ ﴿۳۸﴾

39 If you go not forth, He will chastise you with a painful chastisement,[1061] and bring in your place a people other than you, and you can do Him no harm. And Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.

اِلَّا تَنۡفِرُوۡا يُعَذِّبۡكُمۡ عَذَابًا اَلِيۡمًا ۙ
وَّيَسۡتَبۡدِلۡ قَوۡمًا غَيۡرَكُمۡ وَلَا تَضُرُّوۡهُ
شَيۡـًٔا ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَىۡءٍ قَدِيۡرٌ ﴿۳۹﴾

40 If you help him not, Allāh certainly helped him when those who disbelieved expelled him — he being the second of the two; when they were both in the cave, when he said to his companion: Grieve not, surely Allāh is with us.[1062] So Allāh sent down His tranquillity on him and strengthened him with hosts which you saw not, and made lowest the word of those who disbelieved. And the word of Allāh, that is the uppermost. And Allāh is Mighty, Wise.

اِلَّا تَنۡصُرُوۡهُ فَقَدۡ نَصَرَهُ اللّٰهُ اِذۡ اَخۡرَجَهُ
الَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوۡا ثَانِىَ اثۡنَيۡنِ اِذۡ هُمَا فِى الۡغَارِ
اِذۡ يَقُوۡلُ لِصَاحِبِهٖ لَا تَحۡزَنۡ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَنَا ۚ
فَاَنۡزَلَ اللّٰهُ سَكِيۡنَتَهٗ عَلَيۡهِ وَاَيَّدَهٗ بِجُنُوۡدٍ
لَّمۡ تَرَوۡهَا وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوا
السُّفۡلٰى ؕ وَكَلِمَةُ اللّٰهِ هِىَ الۡعُلۡيَا ؕ وَاللّٰهُ
عَزِيۡزٌ حَكِيۡمٌ ﴿۴۰﴾

41 Go forth, light and heavy,[1063] and strive hard in Allāh's way with

اِنۡفِرُوۡا خِفَافًا وَّثِقَالًا وَّجَاهِدُوۡا بِاَمۡوَالِكُمۡ
وَاَنۡفُسِكُمۡ فِىۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ ؕ ذٰلِكُمۡ خَيۡرٌ

1060 The reference here is to the expedition of Tabūk, which was undertaken in the middle of the ninth year of the Hijrah owing to the threatening attitude of the Roman Emperor. There were many hindrances to the raising of an army sufficient to meet the strong forces of the Roman Empire. The chief of these, as enumerated by Rz, are: (1) a great drought; (2) the length of the journey to the confines of Syria; (3) the ripening of the fruits, which were now ready to be gathered; (4) the intensity of the heat; and (5) the organization and power of the Roman army. In spite of all these difficulties 30,000 men gathered round the Prophet's banner.

1061 The reference here and in what follows is to certain men who, while professing belief, hesitated to accept the Prophet's call to get ready for the expedition.

1062 This refers to the Prophet's flight from Makkah, when he was forced

1063, see next page.

لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

your wealth and your lives. This is better for you, if you know.

لَوْ كَانَ عَرَضًا قَرِيبًا وَسَفَرًا قَاصِدًا
لَّاتَّبَعُوكَ وَلَٰكِن بَعُدَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الشُّقَّةُ
وَسَيَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ لَوِ اسْتَطَعْنَا لَخَرَجْنَا
مَعَكُمْ يُهْلِكُونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ
إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

42 Had it been a near gain and a short journey, they would certainly have followed thee, but the hard journey was too long for them.[1064] And they will swear by Allāh: If we had been able, we would have gone forth with you. They cause their own souls to perish; and Allāh knows that they are liars.

SECTION 7: **The Hypocrites.**

عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنكَ لِمَ أَذِنتَ لَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ
لَكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَتَعْلَمَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

43 Allāh pardon thee![1065] Why didst thou permit them until those who spoke the truth had become manifest to thee and thou hadst known the liars?

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to hide himself in a cave called Thaur, about three miles from Makkah, with only one companion, Abū Bakr. The believers are told that Allāh saved the Prophet from the hands of his enemies when he had but one companion amidst a whole nation of enemies, and that Allāh would help him now.

Abū Bakr's devotion to the Holy Prophet was so great that the latter chose him to be his "sole companion", *the second of the two,* in that most critical hour of his life. The following account from Muir will explain the reference: "He himself went straightway to the house of Abū Bakr, and after a short consultation ventured the plan for immediate flight. Abū Bakr shed tears of joy; the hour of emigration had at last arrived, and he was to be the companion of the Prophet's journey. . . . They crept in the shade of the evening through a back window, and escaped unobserved from the southern suburb. Pursuing their way south, and clambering in the dark up the bare and rugged ascent, they reached at last the lofty peak of Mount Thaur, distant about an hour and a half from the city, and took refuge in a cavern near its summit. . . . The sole companion, or in Arabic phraseology *the second of the two,* became one of Abū Bakr's most honoured titles. . . . Muḥammad and his companion felt it no doubt to be a time of jeopardy. Glancing upwards at a crevice through which the morning light began to break, Abū Bakr whispered: 'What if one were to look through the chink and see us underneath his very feet!' '*Think not thus, Abū Bakr!*' said the Prophet. '*We are two, but God is in the midst a third.*'"

1063 That is, whether it is easy or difficult for you to proceed or whether you are sufficiently armed or not.

1064 Tabūk was midway between Madīnah and Damascus. The Arabs were accustomed to fighting near home; hence, the distance was one of the chief considerations which held back those who were insincere.

1065 *'Afa-llāhu 'an-ka* (lit., *Allāh pardon thee*), does not convey the significance of pardon of sins; it is rather the equivalent of *Allāh bless thee!* or *may Allāh set thy affairs aright!* In previous battles, too, the hypocrites always stayed away, offering one excuse or another. But the Divine purpose in this last expedition of the Prophet was to bring about a clear distinction, and to clean the Muslim society of the hypocritical element thoroughly. Such a dis-

44 Those who believe in Allāh and the Last Day ask not leave of thee (to stay away) from striving hard with their wealth and their persons. And Allāh is Knower of those who keep their duty.

لَا يَسْتَأْذِنُكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أَن يُجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 They alone ask leave of thee who believe not in Allāh and the Last Day, and their hearts are in doubt, so in their doubt they waver.

إِنَّمَا يَسْتَأْذِنُكَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَارْتَابَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ فَهُمْ فِي رَيْبِهِمْ يَتَرَدَّدُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 And if they had intended to go forth, they would certainly have provided equipment for it; but Allāh did not like their going forth. So He withheld them, and it was said: Hold back with those who hold back.

وَلَوْ أَرَادُوا الْخُرُوجَ لَأَعَدُّوا لَهُ عُدَّةً وَلَٰكِن كَرِهَ اللَّهُ انبِعَاثَهُمْ فَثَبَّطَهُمْ وَقِيلَ اقْعُدُوا مَعَ الْقَاعِدِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 Had they gone forth with you, they would have added to you naught but trouble, and would have hurried to and fro among you seeking (to sow) dissension among you. And among you there are those who would listen to them. And Allāh well knows the wrongdoers.[1066]

لَوْ خَرَجُوا فِيكُم مَّا زَادُوكُمْ إِلَّا خَبَالًا وَلَأَوْضَعُوا خِلَالَكُمْ يَبْغُونَكُمُ الْفِتْنَةَ وَفِيكُمْ سَمَّاعُونَ لَهُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 Certainly they sought (to sow) dissension before, and they devised plots against thee till the Truth came, and Allāh's command prevailed, though they did not like (it).

لَقَدِ ابْتَغَوُا الْفِتْنَةَ مِن قَبْلُ وَقَلَّبُوا لَكَ الْأُمُورَ حَتَّىٰ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَظَهَرَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ وَهُمْ كَارِهُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 And among them is he who says: Excuse me and try me not. Surely into trial have they already fallen, and truly hell encompasses the disbelievers.

وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَقُولُ ائْذَن لِّي وَلَا تَفْتِنِّي ۚ أَلَا فِي الْفِتْنَةِ سَقَطُوا ۗ وَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمُحِيطَةٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 If good befalls thee, it grieves them; and if hardship afflicts thee, they say: Indeed we had taken care of our affair before. And they turn away rejoicing.

إِن تُصِبْكَ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُؤْهُمْ ۖ وَإِن تُصِبْكَ مُصِيبَةٌ يَقُولُوا قَدْ أَخَذْنَا أَمْرَنَا مِن قَبْلُ وَيَتَوَلَّوا وَّهُمْ فَرِحُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

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tinction was really brought about later on as vv. 83, 84 point out, the Prophet being told there that all spiritual relations with the hypocrites were to be cut off.

1066 These verses were revealed during the journey to Tabūk, where most of the hypocrites themselves were not present. But a few had accompanied the expedition to inform others of their party of the happenings on the way.

51 Say: Nothing will afflict us save that which Allāh has ordained for us. He is our Patron; and on Allāh let the believers rely.

قُلْ لَّنْ يُّصِيْبَنَآ اِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللّٰهُ لَنَا ۚ هُوَ
مَوْلٰىنَا ۚ وَعَلَى اللّٰهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٥١﴾

52 Say: Do you await for us but one of two most excellent things? And we await for you that Allāh will afflict you with chastisement from Himself or by our hands. So wait; we too are waiting with you.[1067]

قُلْ هَلْ تَرَبَّصُوْنَ بِنَآ اِلَّآ اِحْدَى
الْحُسْنَيَيْنِ ۭ وَنَحْنُ نَتَرَبَّصُ بِكُمْ
اَنْ يُّصِيْبَكُمُ اللّٰهُ بِعَذَابٍ مِّنْ عِنْدِهٖٓ
اَوْ بِاَيْدِيْنَا ۚ فَتَرَبَّصُوْٓا اِنَّا مَعَكُمْ مُّتَرَبِّصُوْنَ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 Say: Spend willingly or unwillingly, it will not be accepted from you. Surely you are a transgressing people.

قُلْ اَنْفِقُوْا طَوْعًا اَوْ كَرْهًا لَّنْ يُّتَقَبَّلَ
مِنْكُمْ ۭ اِنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا فٰسِقِيْنَ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 And nothing hinders their contributions being accepted from them, except that they disbelieve in Allāh and in His Messenger and they come not to prayer except as lazy people, and they spend not but while they are reluctant.

وَمَا مَنَعَهُمْ اَنْ تُقْبَلَ مِنْهُمْ نَفَقٰتُهُمْ
اِلَّآ اَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَبِرَسُوْلِهٖ وَلَا
يَاْتُوْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ اِلَّا وَهُمْ كُسَالٰى وَلَا
يُنْفِقُوْنَ اِلَّا وَهُمْ كٰرِهُوْنَ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 Let not then their wealth nor their children excite thine admiration. Allāh only wishes to chastise them therewith in this world's life and (that) their souls may depart while they are disbelievers.[1068]

فَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ اَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَآ اَوْلَادُهُمْ ۭ
اِنَّمَا يُرِيْدُ اللّٰهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الْحَيٰوةِ
الدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ اَنْفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كٰفِرُوْنَ ﴿٥٥﴾

1067 The two most excellent things are, the laying down of life in the cause of Truth, or being sharer in the ultimate triumph of Truth. The Muslims never thought that they could be defeated. They would either die defending the cause of Truth or live and conquer.

The only punishment that the hypocrites received from the hands of the Muslims was, that they were named and asked to leave the mosque (IJ). Otherwise their liberty was not interfered with. There is mention of one of them living in Madīnah to the time of 'Uthmān, the third Caliph, in full enjoyment of his rights as a citizen; the only distinctive treatment mentioned of him is that the poor-rate was not accepted from him by the Holy Prophet, or by his three immediate successors. See also the next verse.

1068 The hypocrites experienced earthly torture about their property and children for two reasons: (1) because, avowing their belief in Islām, they had to take some share in its defensive expeditions and thus spend part of their property,

56 And they swear by Allāh that they are truly of you. And they are not of you, but they are a people who are afraid.

وَيَحۡلِفُونَ بِاللّٰهِ اِنَّهُمۡ لَمِنۡكُمۡ ؕ وَمَا هُمۡ مِّنۡكُمۡ وَلٰـكِنَّهُمۡ قَوۡمٌ يَّفۡرَقُوۡنَ ۝

57 If they could find a refuge or caves or a place to enter, they would certainly have turned thereto, running away in all haste.

لَوۡ يَجِدُوۡنَ مَلۡجَاً اَوۡ مَغٰرٰتٍ اَوۡ مُدَّخَلًا لَّوَلَّوۡا اِلَيۡهِ وَهُمۡ يَجۡمَحُوۡنَ ۝

58 And of them are those who blame thee in the matter of the alms. So if they are given thereof, they are pleased, and if they are not given thereof, lo! they are enraged.

وَمِنۡهُمۡ مَّنۡ يَّلۡمِزُكَ فِى الصَّدَقٰتِ ۚ فَاِنۡ اُعۡطُوۡا مِنۡهَا رَضُوۡا وَاِنۡ لَّمۡ يُعۡطَوۡا مِنۡهَاۤ اِذَا هُمۡ يَسۡخَطُوۡنَ ۝

59 And if they were content with that which Allāh and His Messenger gave them, and had said: Allāh is sufficient for us; Allāh will soon give us (more) out of His grace and His Messenger too: surely to Allāh we make petition.

وَلَوۡ اَنَّهُمۡ رَضُوۡا مَاۤ اٰتٰٮهُمُ اللّٰهُ وَرَسُوۡلُهٗ ۙ وَقَالُوۡا حَسۡبُنَا اللّٰهُ سَيُؤۡتِيۡنَا اللّٰهُ مِنۡ فَضۡلِهٖ وَرَسُوۡلُهٗۤ ۙ اِنَّاۤ اِلَى اللّٰهِ رٰغِبُوۡنَ ۝

SECTION 8: **The Hypocrites**

60 (Zakāt) charity is only for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer it, and those whose hearts are made to incline (to truth), and (to free) the captives, and those in debt, and in the way of Allāh and for the wayfarer — an ordinance from Allāh. And Allāh is Knowing, Wise.[1069]

اِنَّمَا الصَّدَقٰتُ لِلۡفُقَرَآءِ وَالۡمَسٰكِيۡنِ وَالۡعٰمِلِيۡنَ عَلَيۡهَا وَالۡمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوۡبُهُمۡ وَفِى الرِّقَابِ وَالۡغٰرِمِيۡنَ وَفِىۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ وَابۡنِ السَّبِيۡلِ ؕ فَرِيۡضَةً مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيۡمٌ حَكِيۡمٌ ۝

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unwillingly though it was, in the cause of Islām; (2) the children of many of them were true believers, and they knew that after their death their property and their children were to become a source of strength to the very religion which they tried to extirpate.

1069 That by *ṣadaqāt* here is meant the *obligatory charity,* called *zakāt,* and not voluntary alms, is shown by the concluding words of the verse, which call it *an ordinance* from Allāh. The verse defines the objects for which the poor-rate may be spent. Altogether eight heads of expenditure are recognized. There are the poor, or those in straitened circumstances; then there are the needy, by which are meant people who need some help to enable them to earn their living. Poor students and craftsmen or business men without sufficient means are included in this category. Thirdly, there are the collectors of *zakāt* and other people employed to administer the funds. This shows that the institution was meant for raising a

61 And of them are those who molest the Prophet and say, He is (all) ear.[1070] Say: A hearer of good for you — he believes in Allāh and believes the faithful, and is a mercy for those of you who believe. And those who molest the Messenger of Allāh, for them is a painful chastisement.

وَمِنْهُمُ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ النَّبِيَّ وَيَقُولُونَ
هُوَ أُذُنٌ ۚ قُلْ أُذُنُ خَيْرٍ لَّكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ
بِاللَّهِ وَيُؤْمِنُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ رَسُولَ
اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٦١﴾

62 They swear by Allāh to you to please you; and Allāh — as well as His Messenger — has a greater right that they should please Him, if they are believers.[1071]

يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ لَكُمْ لِيُرْضُوكُمْ وَاللَّهُ وَ
رَسُولُهُ أَحَقُّ أَن يُرْضُوهُ إِن كَانُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 Know they not that whoever opposes Allāh and His Messenger, for him is the Fire of hell to abide in it? That is the grievous abasement.

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ مَن يُحَادِدِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ
فَأَنَّ لَهُ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا فِيهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ
الْخِزْيُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٦٣﴾

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public fund, whose management should entirely be in the hands of a public body. The Qur'ān does not recognize it as a private charity. It is sad to note that, as the Qur'ān would have it, the institution of *zakāt* is entirely neglected by the Muslims. In the fourth class are people whose hearts are made to incline to Truth. With respect to the preaching of a religion there is always a class which is ready to listen but the carrying of the message of Truth to them needs funds. There are also people who may need help, if they accept the Truth. Expenses in this connection are recognized here as a part of the necessary expenditure of poor-rate. The fifth head relates to the freeing of the prisoners of war. Islām thus laid down a permanent basis for the abolition of slavery. The sixth class is that of debtors — people who incur debts for right purposes. Islām requires all the members of the society to live in a free atmosphere, and those burdened with debt must therefore be freed of their burdens. Squanderers of wealth are, however, not included in this category. The seventh head is in general words, *fī sabīl Allāh*, or in the way of Allāh. Some limit the significance of these words to warriors (fighting in defence of faith and the community), or those who are engaged in propagating Islamic truths, while others think that the words are general and include every charitable purpose. The eighth head is that of wayfarers, people who are stranded in a country, to whatever religion or nation they may belong.

1070 The word *udhun*, lit., *an ear*, is applied to *one who hears and believes everything that is said to him*, "as though by reason of the excess of his listening he were altogether the organ of hearing, like as a spy is termed *'ain*" (lit., *eye*) (LL). The hypocrites made various derogatory remarks concerning the Prophet, saying among other things, that he was a man who believed everything that he heard, and they were therefore sure that they would make him believe their hypocritical professions. Rodwell is wrong when he says in his note on this word that *udhun* means *injure*. Palmer has also made a mistake here. The error is due to the confusion of the word with *adh-an*, which is quite a different word, being from the root *adhā*.

1071 Though Allāh and His Messenger are both mentioned together, the duty of the faithful is here said to be to please *Him*, i.e. Allāh alone.

64 The hypocrites fear lest a chapter should be sent down concerning them, telling them plainly of what is in their hearts. Say: Go on mocking, surely Allah will bring to light what you fear.

يحذر المنٰفقون ان تنزل عليهم سورة
تنبئهم بما في قلوبهم ۚ قل استهزءوا ۚ
ان الله مخرج ما تحذرون ﴿٦٤﴾

65 And if thou ask them, they would certainly say: We were only talking idly and sporting. Say: Was it Allāh and His messages and His Messenger that you mocked?

ولئن سالتهم ليقولن انما كنا نخوض
ونلعب ۚ قل ابالله واٰيٰته ورسوله
كنتم تستهزءون ﴿٦٥﴾

66 Make no excuse, you disbelieved after your believing. If We pardon a party of you, We shall chastise a party, because they are guilty.[1072]

لا تعتذروا قد كفرتم بعد ايمانكم ۚ
ان نعف عن طائفة منكم نعذب
طائفة بانهم كانوا مجرمين ﴿٦٦﴾

SECTION 9: **The Hypocrites**

67 The hypocrites, men and women, are all alike. They enjoin evil and forbid good and withhold their hands. They have forsaken Allāh, so He has forsaken them. Surely the hypocrites are the transgressors.

المنٰفقون والمنٰفقٰت بعضهم من بعض ۘ
يامرون بالمنكر وينهون عن المعروف
ويقبضون ايديهم ۚ نسوا الله فنسيهم ۚ
ان المنٰفقين هم الفٰسقون ﴿٦٧﴾

68 Allāh promises the hypocrites, men and women, and the disbelievers the Fire of hell to abide therein. It is enough for them. And Allāh curses them, and for them is a lasting chastisement.

وعد الله المنٰفقين والمنٰفقٰت والكفار
نار جهنم خٰلدين فيها ۚ هي حسبهم ۚ
ولعنهم الله ۚ ولهم عذاب مقيم ﴿٦٨﴾

69 Like those before you — they were stronger than you in power and had more wealth and children. So they enjoyed their portion; thus have you enjoyed your portion as those before you enjoyed their portion, and you indulge in idle talk as they did. These

كالذين من قبلكم كانوا اشد منكم
قوة واكثر اموالا واولادا ۚ فاستمتعوا
بخلاقهم فاستمتعتم بخلاقكم كما
استمتع الذين من قبلكم بخلاقهم
وخضتم كالذي خاضوا ۚ اولٰئك حبطت

1072 History shows that most of the hypocrites ultimately repented and sincerely joined the ranks of the faithful.

are they whose works are null in this world and the Hereafter, and these are they who are the losers.

أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 Has not the story reached them of those before them — of the people of Noah and 'Ād and Thamūd, and the people of Abraham and the dwellers of Midian and the overthrown cities? Their messengers came to them with clear arguments. So Allāh wronged them not but they wronged themselves

أَلَمْ يَأْتِهِمْ نَبَأُ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَعَادٍ وَثَمُودَ وَقَوْمِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَأَصْحَابِ مَدْيَنَ وَالْمُؤْتَفِكَاتِ أَتَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

71 And the believers, men and women, are friends one of another. They enjoin good and forbid evil and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, and obey Allāh and His Messenger. As for these, Allāh will have mercy on them. Surely Allāh is Mighty, Wise.

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَٰئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٧١﴾

72 Allāh has promised to the believers, men and women, Gardens, wherein flow rivers, to abide therein, and goodly dwellings in Gardens of perpetual abode. And greatest of all is Allāh's goodly pleasure. That is the grand achievement.

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَمَسَاكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِي جَنَّاتِ عَدْنٍ وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٧٢﴾

SECTION 10: The Hypocrites

73 O Prophet, strive hard against the disbelievers and the hypocrites and be firm against them. And their abode is hell, and evil is the destination.[1073]

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٧٣﴾

1073 *Jāhada* signifies *he strove* or *exerted himself*, and *jihād* is *the using one's utmost power in contending with an object of disapprobation* (LL). It is in a secondary sense that the word signifies *fighting*, and it is repeatedly used in the Holy Qur'ān in its primary significance. It is a fact that those who professed

74 They swear by Allāh that they said nothing. And certainly they did speak the word of disbelief, and disbelieved after their Islām, and they purposed that which they could not attain.[1074] And they sought revenge only because Allāh — as well as His Messenger — had enriched them out of His grace.[1075] So if they repent, it will be good for them; and if they turn away, Allāh will chastise them with a painful chastisement in this world and the Hereafter; and they shall have in the earth neither a friend nor a helper.

يَحْلِفُونَ بِاللّٰهِ مَا قَالُوْا ۭ وَلَقَدْ قَالُوْا كَلِمَةَ الْكُفْرِ وَكَفَرُوْا بَعْدَ اِسْلَامِهِمْ وَهَمُّوْا بِمَا لَمْ يَنَالُوْا ۚ وَمَا نَقَمُوْٓا اِلَّآ اَنْ اَغْنٰىهُمُ اللّٰهُ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ ۚ فَاِنْ يَّتُوْبُوْا يَكُ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ۚ وَاِنْ يَّتَوَلَّوْا يُعَذِّبْهُمُ اللّٰهُ عَذَابًا اَلِيْمًا ۙ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ ۚ وَمَا لَهُمْ فِي الْاَرْضِ مِنْ وَّلِيٍّ وَّلَا نَصِيْرٍ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 And of them are those who made a covenant with Allāh: If He give us out of His grace, we will certainly give alms and be of the righteous.

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ عٰهَدَ اللّٰهَ لَئِنْ اٰتٰىنَا مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ وَلَنَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 But when He gave them out of His grace, they became niggardly of it and they turned away and they are averse.

فَلَمَّآ اٰتٰىهُمْ مِّنْ فَضْلِهٖ بَخِلُوْا بِهٖ وَتَوَلَّوْا وَّهُمْ مُّعْرِضُوْنَ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 So He requited them with hypocrisy in their hearts till the day when they meet Him, because they broke their promise with Allāh and because they lied.

فَاَعْقَبَهُمْ نِفَاقًا فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ اِلٰى يَوْمِ يَلْقَوْنَهٗ بِمَآ اَخْلَفُوا اللّٰهَ مَا وَعَدُوْهُ وَبِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْذِبُوْنَ ﴿٧٧﴾

Islām were never fought against, even though their professions were insincere — as on this occasion and on the occasion of the battle of Uḥud. "The correct rendering is that *jihād* signifies *striving*, or *exerting* oneself, and there is nothing in the word to indicate that this *striving* is to be effected by the sword or by the tongue or by any other method" (Rz).

The Prophet is commanded here to carry on a jihād against disbelievers as well as hypocrites. Hence the only significance that can be attached to these words is that he must continue to preach forcibly both to the disbelievers and the hypocrites.

1074 They were in secret alliance with the enemies of Islām and did their best to put an end to the life of the Prophet and bring about the extirpation of Islām.

1075 The advent of the Muslims in Madīnah had enriched its inhabitants. Was it not, then, a matter for wonder that those men who had gained by Islām should turn against their very benefactors?

78 Know they not that Allāh knows their hidden thoughts and their secret counsels, and that Allāh is the great Knower of the unseen things?

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوٓا أَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوٰىهُمْ وَأَنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ﴿٧٨﴾

79 Those who taunt the free givers of alms among the believers as well as those who cannot find anything (to give) but with their hard labour — they scoff at them. Allāh will pay them back their mockery; and for them is a painful chastisement.[1076]

اَلَّذِينَ يَلْمِزُونَ الْمُطَّوِّعِينَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي الصَّدَقٰتِ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ إِلَّا جُهْدَهُمْ فَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنْهُمْ ۭ سَخِرَ اللّٰهُ مِنْهُمْ ۡ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٩﴾

80 Ask forgiveness for them or ask not forgiveness for them. Even if thou ask forgiveness for them seventy times, Allāh will not forgive them. This is because they disbelieve in Allāh and His Messenger. And Allāh guides not the transgressing people.[1077]

اِسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ أَوْ لَا تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ ۭ إِنْ تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً فَلَنْ يَّغْفِرَ اللّٰهُ لَهُمْ ۭ ذٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُولِهٖ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفٰسِقِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

SECTION 11 : **The Hypocrites**

81 Those who were left behind were glad on account of their sitting behind Allāh's Messenger, and they were averse to striving in Allāh's way with their property and their persons, and said: Go not forth in the heat. Say: The Fire of hell is fiercer in heat. If only they could understand!

فَرِحَ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ بِمَقْعَدِهِمْ خِلٰفَ رَسُولِ اللّٰهِ وَكَرِهُوٓا أَنْ يُّجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ وَقَالُوا لَا تَنْفِرُوا فِي الْحَرِّ ۭ قُلْ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ أَشَدُّ حَرًّا ۭ لَوْ كَانُوا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

1076 When subscriptions were raised for the expedition to Tabūk, the wealthier members of the Muslim community gave large donations, while the poorer ones, the labourers, also paid their mite out of their hard earnings. The hypocrites taunted both, the former as making a show of their wealth, the latter as bringing in their small subscriptions only to be counted among the subscribers. For Allāh's paying them back their mockery, see 27.

1077 Spiritual relations with the hypocrites were henceforth cut off. The mention of *seventy* may not indicate the specific number here. For this use of the word see 46. It, however, appears that the Holy Prophet took it literally at the burial service of 'Abd Allāh ibn Ubayy, the recognized leader of the hypocrites. "When 'Abd Allāh ibn Ubayy died, the Holy Prophet was asked to conduct the burial service. The Holy Prophet got up, but 'Umar took hold of his garment and objected on the ground that 'Abd Allāh was a hypocrite, and referred to his hostile attitude throughout his life. The Holy Prophet replied that Allāh had given him

82 Then let them laugh a little and weep much — a recompense for what they earned.

فَلْيَضْحَكُوا قَلِيلًا وَّلْيَبْكُوا كَثِيرًا ۚ جَزَآءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

83 So if Allāh bring thee back to a party of them, then they ask thy permission to go forth, say : Never shall you go forth with me and never shall you fight an enemy with me. You chose to sit (at home) the first time ; so sit (now) with those who remain behind.[1079]

فَإِنْ رَّجَعَكَ اللّٰهُ إِلٰى طَآئِفَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ فَاسْتَأْذَنُوكَ لِلْخُرُوجِ فَقُلْ لَّنْ تَخْرُجُوا مَعِيَ أَبَدًا وَّلَنْ تُقَاتِلُوا مَعِيَ عَدُوًّا ۖ إِنَّكُمْ رَضِيتُمْ بِالْقُعُودِ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ فَاقْعُدُوا مَعَ الْخٰلِفِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

84 And never offer prayer for any one of them who dies, nor stand by his grave. Surely they disbelieved in Allāh and His Messenger and they died in transgression.[1080]

وَلَا تُصَلِّ عَلٰى أَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ مَّاتَ أَبَدًا وَّلَا تَقُمْ عَلٰى قَبْرِهٖ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُولِهٖ وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ فٰسِقُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

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a choice (referring to the words of this verse: *Ask forgiveness for them or ask not forgiveness for them*), and that he would ask forgiveness for him for over seventy times, if only by his doing so, forgiveness could be extended to the dead man. Then he offered prayers for him. Verse 84 is said to have been revealed then to stop the offering of prayers for those who were known to be hypocrites (B. 23:84).

The incident shows how kind and forgiving the Holy Prophet was to his severest enemies. 'Abd Allāh ibn Ubayy was the man who had led the hypocrite movement against him the whole of his life, and thus was not only one of his worst enemies, but at the same time a most dangerous one, because he was aware of all the movements of the Muslims and deceived them at the most critical moments. Yet the Holy Prophet forgave him entirely.

1079 It should be noted that this is the only punishment given to the hypocrites, viz., that they were not allowed to take part in future expeditions against the enemies of the Muslims. It is also related that from one of them, Tha'labah, whose story is referred to by the commentators under v. 75, the Holy Prophet and the three Caliphs who followed him refused to accept the poor-rate. V. 103 leads us to the same conclusion ; see 1092. These were the only disadvantages, if it is right to call them so, which the hypocrites suffered. They were not looked upon as members of the Muslim community, but, as citizens, they enjoyed all the rights of other citizens.

1080 The Prophet is now told that, though they professed Islām outwardly, they were disbelievers at heart, and the burial service, which was only for the Muslims, should not be extended to them. But it should be noted that the Prophet was now informed through Divine revelation that they were really disbelievers. It is, further, clear from the words of this verse that those who were known to be hypocrites were not fought against but lived to die a natural death. The case of 'Abd Allāh ibn Ubayy, who died in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet, and that of Tha'labah, who died in the reign of 'Uthmān, are sufficient to prove this, while there is not a single case on record of any one of them having been put to death.

Standing by the grave refers to the Prophet's practice of praying for the deceased standing by his grave after the burial.

85 And let not their wealth and their children excite thy admiration. Allāh only intends to chastise them thereby in this world, and (that) their souls may depart while they are disbelievers.

وَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَأَوْلَادُهُمْ ۚ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ أَنْفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

86 And when a chapter is revealed, saying, Believe in Allāh and strive hard along with His Messenger, the wealthy among them ask permission of thee and say: Leave us (behind), that we may be with those who sit (at home).

وَإِذَا أُنْزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَجَاهِدُوا مَعَ رَسُولِهِ اسْتَأْذَنَكَ أُولُو الطَّوْلِ مِنْهُمْ وَقَالُوا ذَرْنَا نَكُنْ مَعَ الْقَاعِدِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾

87 They prefer to be with those who remain behind, and their hearts are sealed so they understand not.

رَضُوا بِأَنْ يَكُونُوا مَعَ الْخَوَالِفِ وَطُبِعَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾

88 But the Messenger and those who believe with him strive hard with their property and their persons. And these it is for whom are the good things and these it is who are successful.

لَٰكِنِ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ جَاهَدُوا بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الْخَيْرَاتُ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

89 Allāh has prepared for them Gardens wherein flow rivers, to abide therein. That is the great achievement.

أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٨٩﴾

SECTION 12: **The Hypocrites**

90 And the defaulters[1081] from among the dwellers of the desert[1082] came that permission might be given to them, and they sat (at home) who lied to Allāh and His Messenger. A painful chastisement will afflict those of them who disbelieve.

وَجَاءَ الْمُعَذِّرُونَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ لِيُؤْذَنَ لَهُمْ وَقَعَدَ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ سَيُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٠﴾

1081 The word *mu'adhdhir* is the nominative form of *'adhdhara*, meaning *he was remiss, wanting, deficient in an affair, setting up an excuse for it* (LA).

1082 *Al-A'rāb* is a collective general noun (said by Az to be plural of *a'rābī* (LL), signifying *the dwellers of the desert* (*of Arabia*), *who move from place to place in search of herbage and water, whether of Arabs or their freemen*, as distinguished from *'Arab*, which signifies *those whose descent can be traced to Arabs* (LA).

91 No blame lies on the weak, nor on the sick, nor on those who can find nothing to spend, if they are sincere to Allāh and His Messenger. There is no way (to blame) against the doers of good. And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful —

لَيْسَ عَلَى الضُّعَفَآءِ وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرْضٰى وَلَا
عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ لَا يَجِدُوْنَ مَا يُنْفِقُوْنَ حَرَجٌ
اِذَا نَصَحُوْا لِلّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ ؕ مَا عَلَى
الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ مِنْ سَبِيْلٍ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۹۱﴾

92 Nor on those to whom, when they came to thee that thou shouldst mount them, thou didst say: I cannot find that on which to mount you.[1083] They went back while their eyes overflowed with tears of grief that they could not find aught to spend.

وَّلَا عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ اِذَا مَآ اَتَوْكَ لِتَحْمِلَهُمْ
قُلْتَ لَآ اَجِدُ مَآ اَحْمِلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ ۪ تَوَلَّوْا
وَّاَعْيُنُهُمْ تَفِيْضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ حَزَنًا اَلَّا
يَجِدُوْا مَا يُنْفِقُوْنَ ﴿۹۲﴾ ؕ

93 The way (to blame) is only against those who ask permission of thee, though they are rich. They have chosen to be with those who remained behind; and Allāh has sealed their hearts, so they know not.

اِنَّمَا السَّبِيْلُ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ يَسْتَاْذِنُوْنَكَ
وَهُمْ اَغْنِيَآءُ ۚ رَضُوْا بِاَنْ يَّكُوْنُوْا
مَعَ الْخَوَالِفِ ۙ وَطَبَعَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ
فَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۹۳﴾

PART XI

94 They will make excuses to you when you return to them. Say: Make no excuse, we shall not believe you; Allāh has informed us of matters relating to you. And Allāh and His Messenger will now see your actions, then you will be brought back to the Knower of the unseen and the seen, then He will inform you of what you did.[1084]

يَعْتَذِرُوْنَ اِلَيْكُمْ اِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ اِلَيْهِمْ ؕ
قُلْ لَّا تَعْتَذِرُوْا لَنْ نُّؤْمِنَ لَكُمْ قَدْ
نَبَّاَنَا اللّٰهُ مِنْ اَخْبَارِكُمْ ؕ وَسَيَرَى اللّٰهُ
عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّوْنَ اِلٰى عٰلِمِ
الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا
كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿۹۴﴾

1083 Apparently, what they wanted to join the expedition, and what the Prophet could not find for them, were *beasts* to ride upon and to carry their provisions and necessaries.

1084 Evidently these verses were revealed when the Prophet was away from

95 They will swear by Allāh to you, when you return to them, so that you may leave them alone. So leave them alone. Surely they are unclean and their refuge is hell — a recompense for what they earned.[1085]

سَيَحْلِفُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ لَكُمْ اِذَا انْقَلَبْتُمْ اِلَيْهِمْ لِتُعْرِضُوْا عَنْهُمْ ۭ فَاَعْرِضُوْا عَنْهُمْ ۭ اِنَّهُمْ رِجْسٌ ۡ وَّمَاْوٰىهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ جَزَاۗءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْسِبُوْنَ ﴿۹۵﴾

96 They will swear to you that you may be pleased with them. But if you are pleased with them, yet surely Allāh is not pleased with the transgressing people.

يَحْلِفُوْنَ لَكُمْ لِتَرْضَوْا عَنْهُمْ ۚ فَاِنْ تَرْضَوْا عَنْهُمْ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَرْضٰى عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ﴿۹۶﴾

97 The dwellers of the desert are hardest in disbelief and hypocrisy, and most disposed not to know the limits of what Allāh has revealed to His Messenger. And Allāh is Knowing, Wise.

اَلْاَعْرَابُ اَشَدُّ كُفْرًا وَّنِفَاقًا وَّاَجْدَرُ اَلَّا يَعْلَمُوْا حُدُوْدَ مَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهٖ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿۹۷﴾

98 And of the dwellers of the desert are those who take what they spend to be a fine; and they wait for an evil turn of fortune for you. On them is the evil turn. And Allāh is Hearing, Knowing.[1086]

وَمِنَ الْاَعْرَابِ مَنْ يَّتَّخِذُ مَا يُنْفِقُ مَغْرَمًا وَّيَتَرَبَّصُ بِكُمُ الدَّوَاۗىِٕرَ ۭ عَلَيْهِمْ دَاۗىِٕرَةُ السَّوْءِ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۹۸﴾

99 And of the desert Arabs are those who believe in Allāh and the Last Day, and consider what they spend and the prayers of the Messenger, as bringing them nearer to Allāh. Surely they bring them nearer (to Allāh); Allāh will bring them into His mercy. Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

وَمِنَ الْاَعْرَابِ مَنْ يُّؤْمِنُ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَيَتَّخِذُ مَا يُنْفِقُ قُرُبٰتٍ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ وَصَلَوٰتِ الرَّسُوْلِ ۭ اَلَآ اِنَّهَا قُرْبَةٌ لَّهُمْ ۭ سَيُدْخِلُهُمُ اللّٰهُ فِيْ رَحْمَتِهٖ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۹۹﴾

Madīnah, and the statements made in them are therefore prophetical, being exactly fulfilled on his return.

1085 It is related that on his return from Tabūk, the Holy Prophet forbade the Muslims to have any intercourse with the hypocrites. This injunction was in obedience to the revelation which he had received during the journey, as is clearly shown in vv. 83, 84.

1086 The hypocrites had to contribute something for the sake of appearance; they also paid the poor-rate so that they might be treated as Muslims.

Dā'irah (pl. *dawā'ir*) means *circuit*, and *a calamity* is so called because it encompasses a man on all sides; or it signifies *a turn of fortune*, from *dāra*, meaning *it turned*. *Dā'irat al-sau'* is *the calamity which befalls and destroys* (LL). It is a prophetical announcement.

SECTION 13 : **The Hypocrites**

100 And the foremost, the first of the Emigrants and the Helpers,[1087] and those who followed them in goodness — Allāh is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them Gardens wherein flow rivers, abiding therein for ever. That is the mighty achievement.

وَالسّٰبِقُوْنَ الْاَوَّلُوْنَ مِنَ الْمُهٰجِرِيْنَ
وَالْاَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِيْنَ اتَّبَعُوْهُمْ بِاِحْسَانٍ ۙ
رَّضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوْا عَنْهُ وَاَعَدَّ
لَهُمْ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ تَحْتَهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ
فِيْهَآ اَبَدًا ؕ ذٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيْمُ ﴿۱۰۰﴾

101 And of those around you of the desert Arabs, there are hypocrites ; and of the people of Madīnah (also) — they persist in hypocrisy. Thou knowest them not ;[1089] We know them. We will chastise them twice,[1090] then they will be turned back to a grievous chastisement.

وَمِمَّنْ حَوْلَكُمْ مِّنَ الْاَعْرَابِ مُنٰفِقُوْنَ ۛؕ
وَمِنْ اَهْلِ الْمَدِيْنَةِ ۛؔ مَرَدُوْا عَلَى
النِّفَاقِ ۟ لَا تَعْلَمُهُمْ ؕ نَحْنُ نَعْلَمُهُمْ ؕ
سَنُعَذِّبُهُمْ مَّرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّوْنَ اِلٰى
عَذَابٍ عَظِيْمٍ ﴿۱۰۱﴾ۚ

102 And others have acknowledged their faults,[1091] — they mixed a good deed with another that was evil. It may be that Allāh will turn to them (mercifully). Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

وَاٰخَرُوْنَ اعْتَرَفُوْا بِذُنُوْبِهِمْ خَلَطُوْا
عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَّاٰخَرَ سَيِّئًا ؕ عَسَى اللّٰهُ اَنْ
يَّتُوْبَ عَلَيْهِمْ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۱۰۲﴾

1087 *Muhājirīn* is plural of *muhājir,* meaning literally *one who flees from* or *forsakes his home,* and *anṣār* is plural of *nāṣir,* meaning *one who helps.* In the history of Islām, the former word came to signify all those companions of the Holy Prophet who, having embraced Islām at Makkah, had to flee from their homes either to Abyssinia or to Madīnah ; the latter flight, including nearly all the Makkan Muslims, is known as *the Flight,* and the Muslim era dates from it. Anṣār signifies the Madīnah Muslims who, having accepted Islām before the Flight, gave shelter to those who fled from Makkah. By " those who followed them in goodness " are meant the Muslims who came after the companions and followed their good deeds.

1089 The insincerity of the heart could not be known to a mortal — it is known only to Allāh. Events had, however, come to pass which ultimately separated the hypocrites from the Muslims after they had been mingled with them for a long time.

1090 The hypocrites were punished twice in this life. They had to take part in all contributions for the defence of the Muslim community and had to pay the poor-rate, all this against their conviction and unwillingly, and this was, no doubt, a source of great torment to them. After having suffered all this

1091, see next page.

103 Take alms out of their property — thou wouldst cleanse them and purify them thereby — and pray for them. Surely thy prayer is a relief to them. And Allāh is Hearing, Knowing.[1092]

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ إِنَّ صَلَوٰتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَّهُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٣﴾

104 Know they not that Allāh is He Who accepts repentance from His servants and takes the alms, and that Allāh — He is the Oft-returning (to mercy), the Merciful?

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوٓا أَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَأْخُذُ الصَّدَقَٰتِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٠٤﴾

105 And say, Work; so Allāh will see your work and (so will) His Messenger and the believers. And you will be brought back to the Knower of the unseen and the seen, then He will inform you of what you did.

وَقُلِ اعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَى اللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُۥ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۖ وَسَتُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَٰلِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَٰدَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

106 And others are made to await Allāh's command, whether He chastise them or turn to them (mercifully). And Allāh is Knowing, Wise.[1093]

وَءَاخَرُونَ مُرْجَوْنَ لِأَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِمَّا يُعَذِّبُهُمْ وَإِمَّا يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٠٦﴾

107 And those who built a mosque to cause harm (to Islām) and (to help) disbelief, and to cause disunion among the believers, and a refuge for him who made war against Allāh and His Messenger before. And they will certainly swear: We desired naught but good. And Allāh bears witness that they are certainly liars.[1094]

وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مَسْجِدًا ضِرَارًا وَكُفْرًا وَتَفْرِيقًۢا بَيْنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِرْصَادًا لِّمَنْ حَارَبَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ مِن قَبْلُ ۚ وَلَيَحْلِفُنَّ إِنْ أَرَدْنَآ إِلَّا الْحُسْنَىٰ ۖ وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَٰذِبُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

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torment for the sake of being reckoned Muslims, they were ultimately separated from the Muslims, for it is reported that the Holy Prophet named them while addressing a congregation in the Friday prayers, and they had to leave the assembly in the sight of the whole congregation, and this exposure to public shame was no doubt a great punishment for them.

1091 According to different reports, the number of these men varied from three to ten. They were sincere and acknowledged their fault.

1092 Because they showed sincerity in confessing their faults, they were dealt with leniently. Their alms were not to be rejected. The Prophet's acceptance of alms from them is here spoken of as purifying them of evil, while his prayer for them is described as bringing peace and quiet to them.

1093 This is generally supposed to refer to three of the believers, who held back from the expedition, viz. Ka'b ibn Mālik, Halāl ibn Umayyah and Murārah ibn Rabī' (B. 64:81). But some think that it refers to the hypocrites generally.

1094 According to I'Ab and other commentators, twelve men from among

108 Never stand in it. Certainly a mosque founded on observance of duty from the first day is more deserving that thou shouldst stand in it. In it are men who love to purify themselves. And Allāh loves those who purify themselves.[1095]

لَا تَقُمْ فِيْهِ اَبَدًا ؕ لَمَسْجِدٌ اُسِّسَ
عَلَى التَّقْوٰى مِنْ اَوَّلِ يَوْمٍ اَحَقُّ اَنْ
تَقُوْمَ فِيْهِ ؕ فِيْهِ رِجَالٌ يُّحِبُّوْنَ اَنْ
يَّتَطَهَّرُوْا ؕ وَاللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُطَّهِّرِيْنَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

109 Is he, then, who lays his foundation on duty to Allāh and (His) good pleasure better, or he who lays his foundation on the edge of a cracking hollowed bank, so it broke down with him into the Fire of hell? And Allāh guides not the unjust people.

اَفَمَنْ اَسَّسَ بُنْيَانَهٗ عَلٰى تَقْوٰى مِنَ
اللّٰهِ وَرِضْوَانٍ خَيْرٌ اَمْ مَّنْ اَسَّسَ بُنْيَانَهٗ
عَلٰى شَفَا جُرُفٍ هَارٍ فَانْهَارَ بِهٖ فِيْ نَارِ
جَهَنَّمَ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِى الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

110 The building which they have built will ever continue to be a source of disquiet in their hearts, unless their hearts be torn to pieces. And Allāh is Knowing, Wise.[1096]

لَا يَزَالُ بُنْيَانُهُمُ الَّذِىْ بَنَوْا رِيْبَةً فِىْ
قُلُوْبِهِمْ اِلَّاۤ اَنْ تَقَطَّعَ قُلُوْبُهُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ
عَلِيْمٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

SECTION 14 : **The Faithful**

111 Surely Allāh has bought from the believers their persons and their property — theirs (in return) is the Garden. They fight in Allāh's way, so they slay and are slain. It is a promise which is binding on Him in the Torah and the Gospel and the Qur'ān.[1097]

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ اشْتَرٰى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اَنْفُسَهُمْ
وَاَمْوَالَهُمْ بِاَنَّ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ ؕ يُقَاتِلُوْنَ
فِىْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ فَيَقْتُلُوْنَ وَيُقْتَلُوْنَ وَعْدًا
عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا فِى التَّوْرٰىةِ وَالْاِنْجِيْلِ وَ

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the hypocrites of the tribe of Banī Ghanam built a mosque at the instigation of Abū 'Āmir in the neighbourhood of the mosque of Qubā', with the object of causing harm to that mosque. Abū 'Āmir, who after fighting against the Holy Prophet for a long time, had fled to Syria after the battle of Hunain, had written to his friends at Madīnah that he was coming with a formidable army to crush the Prophet, and that they should build a mosque for him. But Abū 'Āmir died in Syria, and the founders desired the Holy Prophet to give it a blessing by his presence, which he was forbidden to do by Divine revelation, and the mosque was demolished (AH).

1095 Some commentators understand by this the mosque at Qubā', while the greater number regard the Prophet's mosque at Madīnah as being meant here. The words are general and every mosque raised for the service of Allāh may be included in this description.

1096 Their hearts could be torn to pieces by severe regret or by sincere repentance.

1097 The promise which is said to be binding on Allāh, as laid down in

And who is more faithful to his promise than Allāh? Rejoice therefore in your bargain which you have made. And that is the mighty achievement.

الْقُرْآنِ ۚ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ ۚ فَاسْتَبْشِرُوا بِبَيْعِكُمُ الَّذِي بَايَعْتُمْ بِهِ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١١١﴾

112 They who turn (to Allāh), who serve (Him), who praise (Him), who fast, who bow down, who prostrate themselves, who enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil, and who keep the limits of Allāh — and give good news to the believers.

التَّائِبُونَ الْعَابِدُونَ الْحَامِدُونَ السَّائِحُونَ الرَّاكِعُونَ السَّاجِدُونَ الْآمِرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّاهُونَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَالْحَافِظُونَ لِحُدُودِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾

113 It is not for the Prophet and those who believe to ask forgiveness for the polytheists, even though they should be near relatives, after it has become clear to them that they are companions of the flaming fire.[1098]

مَا كَانَ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَلَوْ كَانُوا أُولِي قُرْبَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿١١٣﴾

114 And Abraham's asking forgiveness for his sire was only owing to a promise which he had made to him; but when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of Allāh, he dissociated himself from him. Surely Abraham was tender-hearted, forbearing.

وَمَا كَانَ اسْتِغْفَارُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ إِلَّا عَنْ مَوْعِدَةٍ وَعَدَهَا إِيَّاهُ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ أَنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ لِلَّهِ تَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُ ۚ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَأَوَّاهٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١١٤﴾

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the Qur'ān, as well as in the previous books, is this, *that Allāh will grant the believers His blessings, if they exert themselves with their persons and their property in His way*: "Allāh has bought from the believers their persons and their property — theirs (in return) is the Garden". The Gospels give the same promise: "If thou wilt be perfect," said Jesus to a wealthy man, "go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Matt. 19:21). "Behold, we have forsaken all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" said Peter. Jesus' reply was: "Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold and shall inherit everlasting life" (Matt. 19:27-29). Moses' teaching contains similar promises. For instance, the promise of God, "that ye may increase mightily in the land that floweth with milk and honey," is made conditional on "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might" (Deut. 6:3-5), which is the same as exerting oneself to one's utmost in the way of God with one's person and property. It should be borne in mind that the words *they fight in Allāh's way, so they slay and are slain,* are not a part of the promise, but are expressive of the condition of the Companions, and show that they were true to their promise. The promise to spend one's person and property may be carried out in various ways under different circumstances, and the companions of the Holy Prophet were as true to this promise during the thirteen years at Makkah as during the ten years at Madīnah.

1098 It should be noted that this verse does not prohibit praying for the

115 And it is not (attributable to) Allāh that He should lead a people astray after He has guided them, so far so that He makes clear to them what they should guard against. Surely Allāh is Knower of all things.[1099]

وَمَا كَانَ اللّٰهُ لِيُضِلَّ قَوْمًا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدٰىهُمْ حَتّٰى يُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ مَّا يَتَّقُوْنَ ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿١١٥﴾

116 Surely Allāh's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He gives life and causes death. And besides Allāh you have no friend nor helper.

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيْتُ ۚ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ مِنْ وَّلِيٍّ وَّلَا نَصِيْرٍ ﴿١١٦﴾

117 Certainly Allāh has turned in mercy to the Prophet and the Emigrants and the Helpers who followed him in the hour of hardship, after the hearts of a part of them were about to deviate; then He turned to them in mercy. Surely to them He is Compassionate, Merciful;[1100]

لَقَدْ تَّابَ اللّٰهُ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ وَالْمُهٰجِرِيْنَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّبَعُوْهُ فِيْ سَاعَةِ الْعُسْرَةِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا كَادَ يَزِيْغُ قُلُوْبُ فَرِيْقٍ مِّنْهُمْ ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ بِهِمْ رَءُوْفٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿١١٧﴾

118 And (He turned in mercy) to the three who were left behind; until the earth, vast as it is, became strait

وَّعَلَى الثَّلٰثَةِ الَّذِيْنَ خُلِّفُوْا ۚ حَتّٰى إِذَا ضَاقَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ

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forgiveness of the disbelievers in general, but only such disbelievers about whom it became clear that they were doomed to the Fire. The commentators are generally of opinion that either a revelation from Allāh with regard to a person or his death in disbelief or idolatry alone settles the point. When the Prophet was asked to pray for the destruction of a people who were fighting against him, he prayed thus: "My Lord, forgive them because they know not". So long as a man is alive, however hard he may be in his disbelief, it is not forbidden to pray for his forgiveness or guidance. But when he is dead, God will deal with him as He pleases, and He is the most Merciful of all merciful ones. According to a ḥadīth, after all intercessions have taken place, the Most Merciful of all will take a handful — and the handful with God is as vast as the heavens and the earth (39:67) — out of hell and throw them into the river of Life, and these would be the people who never did any good (B.98:24). But under this verse the burial service, which is a prayer for forgiveness, is held only for Muslims, and not for those who die in disbelief.

1099 The verse establishes in clear words that Allāh never leads a people astray; and how could He lead astray, says the Holy Qur'ān, when He it is Who gives them guidance, and makes clear to them the evils they should guard against?

1100 *Taubah* on the part of Allāh means His turning to His servant and changing one state to another which is higher than it. The context, in fact, throws clear light upon the meaning of *taubah*, for Allāh's turning mercifully is in relation to the Prophet and those sincere believers who are plainly stated to have followed the Prophet in the hour of straitness, thus showing that it was in relation to those who were obedient under the severest difficulties and not to those who were disobedient; the latter being dealt with in the next verse. The expedition to Tabūk is known as the *ghazwat al-'usrah* or *the expedition of straitness*, because of the excessive heat, and scarcity of food and water and the hardships of the long journey with scanty means. Really the whole period of about twenty-one

to them and their souls were also straitened to them; and they knew that there was no refuge from Allāh but in Him. Then He turned to them in mercy that they might turn (to Him). Surely Allāh — He is the Oft-returning to mercy, the Merciful.[1101]

وَضَاقَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ وَظَنُّوٓا أَنْ لَّا مَلْجَأَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ إِلَّآ إِلَيْهِ ۚ ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَتُوبُوٓا ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١١٨﴾

SECTION 15: **What the Faithful should Do**

119 O you who believe, keep your duty to Allāh and be with the truthful.

يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصّٰدِقِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾

120 It was not proper for the people of Madīnah and those round about them of the desert Arabs to remain behind the Messenger of Allāh, nor to prefer their own lives to his life.[1102] That is because there afflicts them neither thirst nor fatigue nor hunger in Allāh's way, nor tread they a path which enrages the disbelievers, nor cause they any harm to an enemy, but a good work is written down for them on account of it. Surely Allāh wastes not the reward of the doers of good;[1103]

مَا كَانَ لِأَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهُمْ مِّنَ الْأَعْرَابِ أَنْ يَّتَخَلَّفُوا عَنْ رَّسُولِ اللّٰهِ وَلَا يَرْغَبُوا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ عَنْ نَّفْسِهِ ۚ ذٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ لَا يُصِيبُهُمْ ظَمَأٌ وَّلَا نَصَبٌ وَّلَا مَخْمَصَةٌ فِي سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ وَلَا يَطَـُٔونَ مَوْطِئًا يَّغِيظُ الْكُفَّارَ وَلَا يَنَالُونَ مِنْ عَدُوٍّ نَّيْلًا إِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُمْ بِهِ عَمَلٌ صَالِحٌ ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

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years from the preaching of the Prophet had been one of the severest difficulties for the Muslims. The party whose hearts were about to deviate is referred to in the next verse.

1101 The three men were from among the *Anṣār,* whose names have already been given in 1093. The words *were left behind* are explained as meaning either *left behind at the time of the expedition* or *left behind with respect to the commandment of Allāh concerning them,* being, it is said, the persons referred to in v. 106: "And others are made to await Allah's command, whether He chastise them or whether He turn to them mercifully". The latter explanation was given by Ka'b himself, one of the three men (AH). They remained cut off from all intercourse with the Muslims for fifty days. Ka'b was a man of importance, and when he received a letter from the king of Ghassān, offering him a position under him if he deserted the Prophet, he burned the letter, showing his contempt for the offer, and gave no reply (Ibn Hishām).

1102 The meaning is that they should neither desire rest for themselves, nor comfort, nor protection, in preference to the Prophet; in other words, they should accompany him in difficulty and distress.

1103 *Nāla min-hu* means *he harmed him; nāla min 'uduwwi-hī, he attained the object of his desire from the enemy* (LL).

121 Nor spend they any thing, small or great, nor do they traverse a valley but it is written down for them, that Allāh may reward them for the best of what they did.

وَلَا يُنْفِقُونَ نَفَقَةً صَغِيرَةً وَّلَا كَبِيرَةً وَّلَا يَقْطَعُونَ وَادِيًا إِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُمْ لِيَجْزِيَهُمُ اللّٰهُ أَحْسَنَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢١﴾

122 And the believers should not go forth all together. Why, then, does not a company from every party from among them go forth that they may apply themselves to obtain understanding in religion,[1104] and that they may warn their people, when they come back to them, that they may be cautious?

وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنْفِرُوا كَافَّةً ۚ فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ وَلِيُنْذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

SECTION 16 : **The Prophet's Great Anxiety**

123 O you who believe, fight those of the disbelievers who are near to you[1105] and let them find firmness in you.[1106] And know that Allāh is with those who keep their duty.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ يَلُونَكُمْ مِّنَ الْكُفَّارِ وَلْيَجِدُوا فِيكُمْ غِلْظَةً ۚ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

124 And whenever a chapter is revealed, there are some of them who say : Which of you has it strengthened in faith? So as for those who believe, it strengthens them in faith and they rejoice.

وَإِذَا مَا أُنْزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَقُولُ أَيُّكُمْ زَادَتْهُ هٰذِهِ إِيمَانًا ۚ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَزَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَّهُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

125 And as for those in whose hearts is a disease, it adds uncleanness to their uncleanness, and they die while they are disbelievers.[1107]

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَتْهُمْ رِجْسًا إِلَى رِجْسِهِمْ وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كٰفِرُونَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

1104 The introduction here of the subject of the study of religion shows the aim which the Qur'ān has in view. In the midst of the ordinances relating to fighting, it introduces the subject of the preparation of a missionary force, thus showing that this was the greatest necessity of Islām. It was only by means of a missionary effort that truth could be spread, and the ultimate object was not to be lost sight of, even when the community was engaged in a life-and-death struggle against overwhelming forces of the enemy.

1105 Because it was they who persecuted the Muslims. The object was to stop persecutions.

1106 So that you do not yield to them.

1107 The uncleanness of their hearts increased with new revelation, because it increased them in stubbornness, and their hearts were more and more hardened against truth.

126 See they not that they are tried once or twice in every year, yet they repent not, nor do they mind.[1108]

أَوَلَا يَرَوْنَ أَنَّهُمْ يُفْتَنُونَ فِي كُلِّ عَامٍ
مَّرَّةً أَوْ مَرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ لَا يَتُوبُونَ وَلَا
هُمْ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ﴿١٢٦﴾

127 And whenever a chapter is revealed, they look one at another: Does any one see you? Then they turn away. Allāh has turned away their hearts because they are a people who understand not.

وَإِذَا مَا أُنْزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ نَّظَرَ بَعْضُهُمْ
إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ هَلْ يَرَاكُمْ مِّنْ أَحَدٍ ثُمَّ
انْصَرَفُوا صَرَفَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ بِأَنَّهُمْ
قَوْمٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

128 Certainly a Messenger has come to you from among yourselves; grievous to him is your falling into distress, most solicitous for you, to the believers (he is) compassionate, merciful.[1108a]

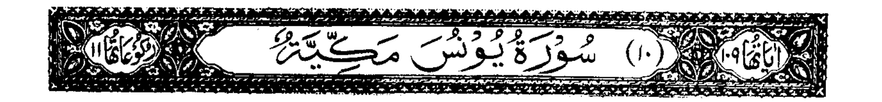
لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ
عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ
بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾

129 But if they turn away, say: Allāh is sufficient for me — there is no god but He. On Him do I rely, and He is the Lord of the mighty Throne.

فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُلْ حَسْبِيَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَٰهَ
إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَهُوَ رَبُّ
الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿١٢٩﴾

1108 These trials consisted of the expeditions which the Muslims had to undertake every now and then, and in which the hypocrites were distinguished from the true believers.

1108a This is the true picture of the heart which grieved, not for his followers alone, not for one tribe or country, but for all humanity. He grieves for the burdens of all, and he is solicitous for the welfare of all. That the whole of humanity is meant here is shown by the concluding words. There is a special relation he bears to those who follow him; to them he is, in addition, compassionate and merciful.



CHAPTER 10

Yūnus : JONAH

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 11 *sections*, 109 *verses*)

All that is said in this chapter of *Jonah*, after whom it is named, is an incidental reference to his people having benefited by the warning. There are more detailed references to Noah and Moses, but in selecting Jonah's name for the title there seems to be a hint that, as the people of Jonah benefited by his warning, so would the Arabs ultimately believe in the Prophet.

The chief feature of this chapter is that, while it asserts the truth of revelation, it also lays stress on the merciful dealing of the Divine Being with men. It opens with a statement of the truth of Divine revelation in the Holy Qur'ān, and this is the subject discussed in the first two sections. The second section closes with a demand for a sign on the part of the disbelievers, and they are told that judgment is deferred for a while; the reason being given in the third section, where it is shown that Divine dealing with men is characterized by mercy, and therefore He does not hasten punishment. The fourth section tells us that evidence of His mercy exists in nature, for He grants gifts which it is not in the power of anyone else to grant, and, as material gifts from Him are characterized by uniqueness, so is His gift of revelation, and the like of it cannot be produced by anyone else. The fifth section states that the reprobate must ultimately meet with their punishment, while the sixth again calls attention to the preponderance of the quality of mercy in the Divine Being, and the seventh contrasts the believers with the disbelievers. The eighth and ninth sections refer briefly to the histories of Noah and Moses. The tenth states, by a brief allusion to Jonah, that those who heed the warning will benefit, and the last section shows that all good is controlled by the Divine Being. Hence man must turn to Him.

This is the first chapter of the *alif lām rā* group and belongs to the last Makkan period; see 1109.

SECTION 1 **Truth of Revelation**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 I, Allāh, am the Seer.[1109] These are the verses of the Book, full of wisdom.[1110]

الٓرٰ ۚ تِلْكَ اٰيٰتُ الْكِتٰبِ الْحَكِيْمِ ①

2 Is it a wonder to the people what We have revealed to a man from among themselves: Warn the people and give good news to those who believe that for them is advancement in excellence[1110a] with their Lord? The disbelievers say: This is surely a manifest enchanter.

اَكَانَ لِلنَّاسِ عَجَبًا اَنْ اَوْحَيْنَآ اِلٰى رَجُلٍ مِّنْهُمْ اَنْ اَنْذِرِ النَّاسَ وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اَنَّ لَهُمْ قَدَمَ صِدْقٍ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ؕ قَالَ الْكٰفِرُوْنَ اِنَّ هٰذَا لَسٰحِرٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ②

3 Surely your Lord is Allāh, Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods, and He is established on the Throne of Power regulating the Affair.[1110b] There is no intercessor except after His permission. This is Allāh, your Lord, therefore serve Him. Will you not mind?

اِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللّٰهُ الَّذِىْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ فِىْ سِتَّةِ اَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوٰى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُدَبِّرُ الْاَمْرَ ؕ مَا مِنْ شَفِيْعٍ اِلَّا مِنْۢ بَعْدِ اِذْنِهٖ ؕ ذٰلِكُمُ اللّٰهُ رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوْهُ ؕ اَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ③

1109 *Alif, lām, rā* are the three letters which stand at the head of this chapter and four other chapters, viz. 11th, 12th, 14th and 15th, while the 13th chapter has *alif, lām, mīm, rā*. The abbreviation is of the same form as *alif, lām, mīm* (see 11), except that *rā* stands for ***Rā'ī***, i.e., the ***Seer***, or ***arā***, i.e., ***I see.***

From the 10th to the 16th chapter is a group of seven chapters, which all — with the exception of the last — begin with the abbreviation *alif, lām, rā*, and may be called the *alif lām rā* group. They all belong to the last Makkan period, the last four years of the Prophet's life at Makkah; and deal with the truth of prophethood with more or less reference to the histories of the earlier prophets, four of them being named after a prophet.

1110 The *kitāb*, or the *Qur'ān*, is called *ḥakīm*, *wise* or *full of wisdom*, either because it possesses wisdom, i.e. *the quality which discriminates between truth and falsehood and right and wrong*, or because it is *muḥkam*, i.e. *free from all incongruity* or *unsoundness* or *because it possesses both these qualities* (R).

1110a *Qadam* means *foot*, also *going before* another *with regard to time* or *degree*; and *ṣidq* is *truth in word* or *deed*, and *every excellent deed* is called *ṣidq* (R). *Qadama ṣidq-in* according to the same authority means *going forward* or *advancement in excellence*. It may also be translated as meaning *a footing of firmness*.

1110b For creation in six periods, see 894a, and for *'arsh*, 895. In regulating the Affair, there is a further reference to the spiritual evolution of man, as stated more clearly elsewhere: "He regulates the Affair from the heaven to the earth" (32:5). See 1959 where it is shown that *al-amr* really means the *Affair of Islām*, which according to the Divine plan was now being established on earth. For intercession, see 79.

4 To Him is your return, of all (of you). It is the promise of Allāh (made) in truth. Surely He produces the first creation, then He reproduces it, that He may reward with equity those who believe and do good. And as for those who disbelieve, for them is a drink of hot water and a painful chastisement because they disbelieved.

إِلَيْهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا ۖ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقًّا ۚ
إِنَّهُ يَبْدَؤُا الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ لِيَجْزِيَ
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ
وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ شَرَابٌ مِنْ حَمِيمٍ
وَعَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٤﴾

5 He it is Who made the sun a shining brightness, and the moon a light,[1111] and ordained for it stages that you might know the computation of years and the reckoning. Allāh created not this but with truth. He makes the signs manifest for a people who know.[1112]

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ ضِيَاءً وَالْقَمَرَ
نُورًا وَقَدَّرَهُ مَنَازِلَ لِتَعْلَمُوا عَدَدَ
السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابَ ۚ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ ذَٰلِكَ
إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ۚ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥﴾

6 Surely in the variation of the night and the day, and that which Allāh has created in the heavens and the earth, there are signs for a people who keep their duty.

إِنَّ فِي اخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَمَا خَلَقَ
اللَّهُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ
لِقَوْمٍ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٦﴾

7 Those who expect not the meeting with Us, and are pleased with this world's life and are satisfied with it, and those who are heedless of Our communications—

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا وَرَضُوا
بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَاطْمَأَنُّوا بِهَا وَالَّذِينَ
هُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا غَافِلُونَ ﴿٧﴾

8 These, their abode is the Fire because of what they earned.

أُولَٰئِكَ مَأْوَاهُمُ النَّارُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٨﴾

9 Those who believe and do good, their Lord guides them by their faith;[1113] rivers will flow beneath them in Gardens of bliss.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ
يَهْدِيهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ بِإِيمَانِهِمْ ۖ تَجْرِي
مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٩﴾

1111 *Ḍau'*, or *ḍiyā'*, signifies *that light which subsists by itself*, and *nūr*, *that which subsists through some other thing* (LL). The moon is called *nūr*, because its light is borrowed, as contrasted with the sun, which is called *ḍiyā'*.

1112 The whole of creation is, notwithstanding its variety, subject to one law, and clearly bears witness to the unity of its Maker. And just as the visible universe is subject to law, there is also a law working in the spiritual world.

1113 The light of faith, which is even here a guiding principle of man's actions, will assume a more palpable form in the life after death. Compare 57:12, where it is called the light running before them.

10 Their cry therein will be, Glory to Thee, O Allāh! and their greeting, Peace! And the last of their cry will be: Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds![1114]

دَعْوٰىهُمْ فِيْهَا سُبْحٰنَكَ اللّٰهُمَّ وَتَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيْهَا سَلٰمٌ ۚ وَاٰخِرُ دَعْوٰىهُمْ اَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿١٠﴾

SECTION 2: **Punishment of Rejection**

11 And if Allāh were to hasten for men the (consequences of) evil, as they would hasten on the good, their doom would certainly have been decreed for them. But We leave those alone, who have no hope of meeting with Us, in their inordinacy blindly wandering on.[1115]

وَلَوْ يُعَجِّلُ اللّٰهُ لِلنَّاسِ الشَّرَّ اسْتِعْجَالَهُمْ بِالْخَيْرِ لَقُضِيَ اِلَيْهِمْ اَجَلُهُمْ ۭ فَنَذَرُ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يَرْجُوْنَ لِقَاۗءَنَا فِيْ طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُوْنَ ﴿١١﴾

12 And when affliction touches a man, he calls on Us, whether lying on his side or sitting or standing; but, when We remove his affliction from him, he passes on as though he had never called on Us on account of an affliction that touched him. Thus is what they do, made fair-seeming to the extravagant.

وَاِذَا مَسَّ الْاِنْسَانَ الضُّرُّ دَعَانَا لِجَنْۢبِهٖٓ اَوْ قَاعِدًا اَوْ قَاۗىِٕمًا ۚ فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُ ضُرَّهٗ مَرَّ كَاَنْ لَّمْ يَدْعُنَآ اِلٰى ضُرٍّ مَّسَّهٗ ۭ كَذٰلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْمُسْرِفِيْنَ مَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 And certainly We destroyed generations before you when they did wrong, and their messengers came to them with clear arguments, yet they would not believe. Thus do We recompense the guilty people.

وَلَقَدْ اَهْلَكْنَا الْقُرُوْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَمَّا ظَلَمُوْا ۙ وَجَاۗءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ وَمَا كَانُوْا لِيُؤْمِنُوْا ۭ كَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْقَوْمَ الْمُجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿١٣﴾

14 Then We made you rulers in the land after them, so that We might see how you act.

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنٰكُمْ خَلٰۗىِٕفَ فِي الْاَرْضِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِهِمْ لِنَنْظُرَ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٤﴾

1114 This is the Muslim paradise, and this description is sufficient to give the lie to those who say that the picture of the Muslim paradise drawn in Makkan revelation is characterized by sensuality.

1115 *Ajal* (translated as *doom*) means the *term* of a people, the *respite* granted to them, but it also means *death*, because death brings the term of life to an end (R). People desire and pray for good things to be hastened on to them, and they are hastened on, but in His merciful dealing with men God does not hasten on the consequences of evil, so that they may repent and escape the consequences of evil.

15 And when Our clear messages are recited to them, those who have no hope of meeting with Us say: Bring a Qur'ān other than this or change it.[1116] Say: It is not for me to change it of my own accord. I follow naught but what is revealed to me. Indeed I fear, if I disobey my Lord, the chastisement of a grievous day.[1117]

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ ۙ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ لِقَاءَنَا ائْتِ بِقُرْآنٍ غَيْرِ هَٰذَا أَوْ بَدِّلْهُ ۚ قُلْ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أُبَدِّلَهُ مِنْ تِلْقَاءِ نَفْسِي ۖ إِنْ أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ ۖ إِنِّي أَخَافُ إِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّي عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٥﴾

16 Say: If Allāh had desired, I would not have recited it to you, nor would He have made it known to you. I have lived among you a lifetime before it. Do you not then understand?[1118]

قُلْ لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا تَلَوْتُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا أَدْرَاكُمْ بِهِ ۖ فَقَدْ لَبِثْتُ فِيكُمْ عُمُرًا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 Who is then more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allāh or gives the lie to His messages? Surely the guilty never succeed.

فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 And they serve besides Allāh that which can neither harm them nor profit them, and they say: These are our intercessors with Allāh. Say: Would you inform Allāh of what He knows not in the heavens and the earth? Glory be to Him, and supremely exalted is He above what they set up (with Him)!

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ هَٰؤُلَاءِ شُفَعَاؤُنَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۚ قُلْ أَتُنَبِّئُونَ اللَّهَ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

1116 They desire a revelation which should not condemn their evil ways and their idol-worship, nor contain any threats of their coming doom.

1117 The words show how true the Prophet himself was to revelation, translating every one of its precepts into practice.

1118 The Prophet's truthfulness and honesty before he received the Divine revelation were undisputed, and he had earned such renown for these qualities that he was known in the land as *al-Amīn*, i.e. *the Faithful one*, or *the Truthful one*. The argument is that if, as they admitted, he had never told a lie in his lifetime, even for the sake of a personal advantage, how could he, now that he had passed the age of youth and passions, speak falsely, and that to his own detriment? He was not the gainer, but a sufferer thereby, on account of the persecution which his preaching had brought about for him. Moreover, a man who had so long refrained from showing any interest in their lives and their modes of worship, and had all but lived the silent life of a recluse among them, could not, of his own accord, be imagined to have suddenly changed the course of his life.

19 And (all) people are but a single nation, then they disagree. And had not a word already gone forth from thy Lord, the matter would have certainly been decided between them in respect of that wherein they disagree.[1120]

وَمَا كَانَ النَّاسُ إِلَّا أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَاخْتَلَفُوا ۚ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِن رَّبِّكَ لَقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ فِيمَا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 And they say: Why is not a sign sent to him from his Lord ? Say: The unseen is only for Allāh, so wait ; surely I too with you am of those who wait.[1121]

وَيَقُولُونَ لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِ ۖ فَقُلْ إِنَّمَا الْغَيْبُ لِلَّهِ فَانتَظِرُوا إِنِّي مَعَكُم مِّنَ الْمُنتَظِرِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

SECTION 3: Merciful Dealing

21 And when We make people taste of mercy after an affliction touches them,[1122] lo ! they devise plans against Our messages. Say: Allāh is quicker to plan. Surely Our messengers write down what you plan.

وَإِذَا أَذَقْنَا النَّاسَ رَحْمَةً مِّن بَعْدِ ضَرَّاءَ مَسَّتْهُمْ إِذَا لَهُم مَّكْرٌ فِي آيَاتِنَا ۚ قُلِ اللَّهُ أَسْرَعُ مَكْرًا ۚ إِنَّ رُسُلَنَا يَكْتُبُونَ مَا تَمْكُرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 He it is Who makes you travel by land and sea ; until, when you are in the ships, and they sail on with them in a pleasant breeze, and they rejoice at it, a violent wind overtakes them and the billows surge in on them from all sides, and they deem that they are encompassed about. Then they pray to Allāh, being sincere to Him in obedience: If Thou deliver us from this, we will certainly be of the grateful ones.

هُوَ الَّذِي يُسَيِّرُكُمْ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا كُنتُمْ فِي الْفُلْكِ وَجَرَيْنَ بِهِم بِرِيحٍ طَيِّبَةٍ وَفَرِحُوا بِهَا جَاءَتْهَا رِيحٌ عَاصِفٌ وَجَاءَهُمُ الْمَوْجُ مِن كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ أُحِيطَ بِهِمْ ۙ دَعَوُا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ لَئِنْ أَنجَيْتَنَا مِنْ هَٰذِهِ لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

1120 The *word* that had gone forth is referred to in many places: " And they say, When will this threat come to pass, if you are truthful ? Say: Maybe somewhat of that which you seek to hasten on has drawn nigh to you " (27:72). And again: " Say: You have the appointment of a day which you cannot postpone by an hour, nor hasten on " (34:30); see 2037.

1121 It is clear from the context that their demand is for the punishment with which they are threatened, because they would recognize no other sign ; they are told to *wait* for the sign which would undoubtedly come.

1122 Some think that there is a reference here to the famine which prevailed for seven years at Makkah (Rz). For the famine itself see 2269. The statement here may only be a general description of ordinary afflictions which befall man, an instance of which is given in the next verse.

23 But when He delivers them, lo! they are unjustly rebellious in the earth. O men, your rebellion is against yourselves — a provision (only) of this world's life. Then to Us is your return, so We shall inform you of what you did.

فَلَمَّآ أَنْجٰهُمْ إِذَا هُمْ يَبْغُوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ۗ يٰٓأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّمَا بَغْيُكُمْ عَلٰٓى أَنْفُسِكُمْ ۙ مَّتَاعَ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَنُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 The likeness of this world's life is only as water which We send down from the clouds, then the herbage of the earth, of which men and cattle eat, grows luxuriantly thereby; until when the earth puts on its golden raiment and it becomes adorned, and its people think that they are masters of it, Our command comes to it, by night or by day, so We render it as reaped seed-produce, as though it had not flourished yesterday. Thus do We make clear the messages for a people who reflect.

إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَآءٍ أَنْزَلْنٰهُ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ فَاخْتَلَطَ بِهٖ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ مِمَّا يَأْكُلُ النَّاسُ وَالْأَنْعَامُ ۗ حَتّٰٓى إِذَآ أَخَذَتِ الْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا وَازَّيَّنَتْ وَظَنَّ أَهْلُهَآ أَنَّهُمْ قٰدِرُوْنَ عَلَيْهَآ ۙ أَتٰىهَآ أَمْرُنَا لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فَجَعَلْنٰهَا حَصِيْدًا كَأَنْ لَّمْ تَغْنَ بِالْأَمْسِ ۗ كَذٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْأٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَّتَفَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And Allāh invites to the abode of peace, and guides whom He pleases to the right path.[1123]

وَاللّٰهُ يَدْعُوْٓا إِلٰى دَارِ السَّلٰمِ ۗ وَيَهْدِيْ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ إِلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 For those who do good is good (reward) and more (than this). Neither blackness nor ignominy will cover their faces. These are the owners of the Garden; therein they will abide.[1124]

لِلَّذِيْنَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنٰى وَزِيَادَةٌ ۗ وَلَا يَرْهَقُ وُجُوْهَهُمْ قَتَرٌ وَّلَا ذِلَّةٌ ۗ أُولٰٓئِكَ أَصْحٰبُ الْجَنَّةِ ۚ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And those who earn evil, the punishment of an evil is the like thereof, and abasement will cover them — they will have none to protect them from Allāh — as if their faces had been covered with slices of the dense darkness of night. These are the companions of the Fire; therein they will abide.

وَالَّذِيْنَ كَسَبُوا السَّيِّاٰتِ جَزَآءُ سَيِّئَةٍ بِمِثْلِهَا ۙ وَتَرْهَقُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ ۗ مَا لَهُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ مِنْ عَاصِمٍ ۚ كَأَنَّمَآ أُغْشِيَتْ وُجُوْهُهُمْ قِطَعًا مِّنَ الَّيْلِ مُظْلِمًا ۗ أُولٰٓئِكَ أَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ ۚ هُمْ فِيْهَا خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾

1123 This is another description of the Muslim paradise, which is called *dār al-salām*, or *the abode of peace*. The word *salām* in *dār al-salām* is from the same root as *Islām*. Islām, in fact, makes even this world an abode of peace

1124, see next page.

28 And on the day when We gather them all together, then We shall say to those who associated others (with Allāh): Keep where you are, you and your associate-gods. Then We shall separate them one from another, and their associates will say: It was not us that you served.

وَيَوْمَ نَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ نَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا مَكَانَكُمْ أَنْتُمْ وَشُرَكَاؤُكُمْ ۚ فَزَيَّلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ ۖ وَقَالَ شُرَكَاؤُهُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ إِيَّانَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 So Allāh suffices as a witness between us and you that we were quite unaware of your serving (us).

فَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ إِنْ كُنَّا عَنْ عِبَادَتِكُمْ لَغَافِلِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 There will every soul become acquainted with what it sent before, and they will be brought back to Allāh, their true Patron, and that which they devised will escape from them.

هُنَالِكَ تَبْلُو كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَا أَسْلَفَتْ ۚ وَرُدُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ مَوْلَاهُمُ الْحَقِّ ۖ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

SECTION 4: **Uniqueness of Divine Gifts**

31 Say: Who gives you sustenance from the heaven and the earth, or who controls the hearing and the sight, and who brings forth the living from the dead, and brings forth the dead from the living? And who regulates the affair? They will say: Allāh. Say then: Will you not then guard against evil?

قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَمَّنْ يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَمَنْ يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَنْ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ ۚ فَسَيَقُولُونَ اللَّهُ ۚ فَقُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 Such then is Allāh, your true Lord. And what is there after the truth but error? How then are you turned away!

فَذَٰلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمُ الْحَقُّ ۖ فَمَاذَا بَعْدَ الْحَقِّ إِلَّا الضَّلَالُ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ تُصْرَفُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

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for a true Muslim; he makes his peace with his Lord, and he lives at peace with his fellow-men. The peace of the next life is, in fact, a continuation of the peace of mind which a Muslim finds in this very life.

1124 Throughout the Holy Qur'ān the reward of virtue is spoken of as being much more than actual recompense, while evil is either spoken of as being forgiven or as being punished only with a like punishment. Thus in 42:25 and 26: "And He it is who accepts repentance from His servants and pardons the evil deeds, and He knows what you do. And He answers those who believe and do good, and gives them more out of His grace". And in 6:161: "Whoever brings a good deed he will have ten like it, and whoever brings an evil deed he will be recompensed only with the like of it"; see 849.

33 Thus does the word of thy Lord prove true against those who transgress that they believe not.[1125]

كَذٰلِكَ حَقَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ فَسَقُوْٓا اَنَّهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ۝٣٣

34 Say: Is there anyone among your associate-gods who produces the first creation, then reproduces it? Say: Allāh produces the first creation, then He reproduces it. How are you then turned away!

قُلْ هَلْ مِنْ شُرَكَآئِكُمْ مَّنْ يَّبْدَؤُا الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيْدُهٗ ؕ قُلِ اللّٰهُ يَبْدَؤُا الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيْدُهٗ فَاَنّٰى تُؤْفَكُوْنَ ۝٣٤

35 Say: Is there any of your associate-gods who guides to the Truth? Say: Allāh guides to the Truth. Is He then Who guides to the Truth more worthy to be followed, or he who finds not the way unless he is guided? What is the matter with you? How do you judge?

قُلْ هَلْ مِنْ شُرَكَآئِكُمْ مَّنْ يَّهْدِيْٓ اِلَى الْحَقِّ ؕ قُلِ اللّٰهُ يَهْدِيْ لِلْحَقِّ ؕ اَفَمَنْ يَّهْدِيْٓ اِلَى الْحَقِّ اَحَقُّ اَنْ يُّتَّبَعَ اَمَّنْ لَّا يَهِدِّيْٓ اِلَّآ اَنْ يُّهْدٰى ۚ فَمَا لَكُمْ ۟ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُوْنَ ۝٣٥

36 And most of them follow naught but conjecture. Surely conjecture will not avail aught against the Truth. Truly Allāh is Knower of what they do.

وَمَا يَتَّبِعُ اَكْثَرُهُمْ اِلَّا ظَنًّا ؕ اِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِيْ مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْـًٔا ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِمَا يَفْعَلُوْنَ ۝٣٦

37 And this Qur'ān is not such as could be forged by those besides Allāh, but it is a verification of that which is before it and a clear explanation of the Book, there is no doubt in it, from the Lord of the worlds.[1126]

وَمَا كَانَ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنُ اَنْ يُّفْتَرٰى مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلٰكِنْ تَصْدِيْقَ الَّذِيْ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيْلَ الْكِتٰبِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ مِنْ رَّبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ۝٣٧

38 Or say they: He has forged it? Say: Then bring a chapter like it, and invite whom you can besides Allāh, if you are truthful.

اَمْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ افْتَرٰىهُ ؕ قُلْ فَاْتُوْا بِسُوْرَةٍ مِّثْلِهٖ وَادْعُوْا مَنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ۝٣٨

1125 The *word* refers to the sentence of punishment which must come to pass because they believe not, or to the fact that their disbelief is a result of their transgression.

1126 The Qur'ān explains in clear words many of the most important principles of religion which are left ambiguous or obscure in the previous books. For instance, the Bible is obscure on the important principle of resurrection or life after death; Jesus himself when questioned by the Sadducees had to resort to an argument instead of quoting chapter and verse (Matt. 22:23, etc.) Similarly the attributes of the Divine Being are not explained in clear words and the result is the doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus Christ. The Qur'ān fully explains all such points and finally settles all these questions.

39 Nay, they reject that, whose knowledge they cannot compass and whose final sequel has not yet come to them.[1127] Even thus did those before them reject; then see what was the end of the wrongdoers.

بَلْ كَذَّبُوا بِمَا لَمْ يُحِيطُوا بِعِلْمِهِ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِهِمْ تَأْوِيلُهُ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 And of them is he who believes in it, and of them is he who believes not in it. And thy Lord best knows the mischief-makers.

وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِهِ ۚ وَرَبُّكَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

SECTION 5: **The Reprobate and their Punishment**

41 And if they reject thee, say: My work is for me and your work for you. You are clear of what I do and I am clear of what you do.

وَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُلْ لِي عَمَلِي وَلَكُمْ عَمَلُكُمْ ۖ أَنْتُمْ بَرِيئُونَ مِمَّا أَعْمَلُ وَأَنَا بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

42 And of them are some who listen to thee. But canst thou make the deaf to hear, though they will not understand?

وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَسْتَمِعُونَ إِلَيْكَ ۚ أَفَأَنْتَ تُسْمِعُ الصُّمَّ وَلَوْ كَانُوا لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 And of them are some who look at thee. But canst thou show the way to the blind, though they will not see?[1128]

وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْكَ ۚ أَفَأَنْتَ تَهْدِي الْعُمْيَ وَلَوْ كَانُوا لَا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 Surely Allāh wrongs not men in aught, but men wrong themselves.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ النَّاسَ شَيْئًا وَلَٰكِنَّ النَّاسَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 And on the day when He will gather them, as though they had not stayed but an hour of the day, they will recognize one another.[1129] They perish indeed who reject the meeting with Allāh, and they follow not the right way.

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ كَأَنْ لَمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِنَ النَّهَارِ يَتَعَارَفُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ قَدْ خَسِرَ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِلِقَاءِ اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

1127 For the two significances of *ta'wīl*, see 594. By the final sequel is meant the consequence of the rejection of the Truth. This is clear from what is said in 7:53: "Wait they for aught but its final sequel? On the day when its final sequel comes about, those who neglected it before will say . . . Are there for us any intercessors so that they should intercede on our behalf?"

1128 Compare 7:179: "They have hearts with which they understand not and they have eyes with which they see not, and they have ears with which they hear not".

1129 They will either recognize each other as they were in the world, or some of them will recognize the others who remained in disbelief and error.

46 And if We show thee something of that which We promise them, or cause thee to die, yet to Us is their return, and Allāh is Witness to what they do.[1130]

وَإِمَّا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ الَّذِي نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَفَّيَنَّكَ فَإِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ ثُمَّ اللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَىٰ مَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And for every nation there is a messenger.[1131] So when their messenger comes, the matter is decided between them with justice, and they are not wronged.[1132]

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولٌ ۚ فَإِذَا جَاءَ رَسُولُهُمْ قُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And they say: When will this promise be fulfilled, if you are truthful?

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا الْوَعْدُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 Say: I control not for myself any harm, or any benefit, except what Allāh pleases.[1133] Every nation has a term. When their term comes, they cannot put it off an hour, nor can they bring it before (its time).[1134]

قُلْ لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ ۗ لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلٌ ۚ إِذَا جَاءَ أَجَلُهُمْ فَلَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ سَاعَةً وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 Say: Do you see if His chastisement overtakes you by night or by day? What then is there of it that the guilty would hasten?[1135]

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَتَاكُمْ عَذَابُهُ بَيَاتًا أَوْ نَهَارًا مَاذَا يَسْتَعْجِلُ مِنْهُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 And when it comes to pass, will you believe in it? What! now! and you hastened it on.

أَثُمَّ إِذَا مَا وَقَعَ آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ ۚ آلْآنَ وَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

52 Then will it be said to those who were unjust: Taste abiding chastise-

ثُمَّ قِيلَ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ

1130 The significance of the words "to Us is their return" is that those who are warned will be dealt with by Allāh as they deserve, and the warning will prove true. In the first part of the verse they are told that it is no concern of theirs whether the Prophet lives to punish them with his own hands or that punishment is executed by Allāh in some other way. The verse, therefore, only lays stress on their approaching doom.

1131 Compare 35:24: "And there is not a people but a warner has gone among them". Humanity will always be under the deepest obligation to the Prophet for this broad humanitarian principle; see 2055.

1132 The warning that their doom must overtake the opponents is reasserted in these words. By "between them" must be understood the Messenger and those who charge him with falsehood; the issue is between the preacher and the rejectors.

1133 These are not the words which a pretender would utter. The words are those of an honest man who, without assuming any personal pretensions, preaches

1134, 1135, see next page.

ment ; you are not requited except for what you earned.

ٱلْخُلْدِ ۚ هَلْ تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 And they ask thee : Is that true ? Say : Aye, by my Lord ! it is surely the Truth, and you will not escape.

وَيَسْتَنۢبِـُٔونَكَ أَحَقٌّ هُوَ ۖ قُلْ إِى وَرَبِّىٓ إِنَّهُۥ لَحَقٌّ ۖ وَمَآ أَنتُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

SECTION 6 : **Mercy takes Precedence of Punishment**

54 And if every soul that has done injustice had all that is in the earth, it would offer it for ransom. And they will manifest[1136] regret when they see the chastisement. And it will be decided between them with justice, and they will not be wronged.

وَلَوْ أَنَّ لِكُلِّ نَفْسٍ ظَلَمَتْ مَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ لَٱفْتَدَتْ بِهِۦ ۗ وَأَسَرُّوا۟ ٱلنَّدَامَةَ لَمَّا رَأَوُا۟ ٱلْعَذَابَ ۖ وَقُضِىَ بَيْنَهُم بِٱلْقِسْطِ ۚ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 Now surely whatever is in the heavens and the earth is Allāh's. Now surely Allāh's promise is true, but most of them know not.

أَلَآ إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّ وَعْدَ ٱللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

56 He gives life and causes death, and to Him you will be returned.

هُوَ يُحْىِۦ وَيُمِيتُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 O men, there has come to you indeed an admonition from your Lord and a healing for what is in the breasts ; and a guidance and a mercy for the believers.[1137]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ قَدْ جَآءَتْكُم مَّوْعِظَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَشِفَآءٌ لِّمَا فِى ٱلصُّدُورِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

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truth in all sincerity. The Holy Prophet is repeatedly made to disclaim any control of good and evil, so that he offers no low temptation to his followers. Truth must be accepted for its own sake, not for any hope of worldly gain or fear of worldly loss.

1134 The verse does not teach fatalism. It lays down a truth which no historian can deny. To every nation, as to every individual, is granted a term of life, and nations live and die like individuals.

1135 The coming of the doom by night or by day signifies its coming at a time when people are engaged in their revelries or occupied with their business transactions, so as to be utterly inattentive to the real value of life. There is a gentle remonstrance conveyed in the words : "What then is there of it that the guilty would hasten ?" The doom approaches ; why then should a people hasten on its approach by their guiltiness ?

1136 *Asarra* is one of the words which have contrary meanings. It means *he concealed it* as well as *he manifested it*.

1137 They demanded punishment again and again, but they are told that Allāh has sent to them that in which they will find a healing and a guidance and a mercy for them, viz. the Holy Qur'ān. Compare 29 : 51, where, in answer to a demand for a sign which should destroy them, the disbelievers are told : "Is it not enough for them that We have revealed to you the Book which is recited to them ? Surely there is mercy in this and a reminder for a people who believe".

58 Say: In the grace of Allāh and in His mercy, in that they should rejoice. It is better than that which they hoard.[1138]

قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللّٰهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهٖ فَبِذٰلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوْا ؕ هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُوْنَ ﴿۵۸﴾

59 Say: See you what Allāh has sent down for you of sustenance, then you make (a part) of it unlawful and (a part) lawful. Say: Has Allāh commanded you or do you forge a lie against Allāh?[1139]

قُلْ اَرَءَيْتُمْ مَّآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ مِّنْ رِّزْقٍ فَجَعَلْتُمْ مِّنْهُ حَرَامًا وَّحَلٰلًا ؕ قُلْ آٰللّٰهُ اَذِنَ لَكُمْ اَمْ عَلَى اللّٰهِ تَفْتَرُوْنَ ﴿۵۹﴾

60 And what think those who forge lies against Allāh of the day of Resurrection? Surely Allāh is Bountiful to men, but most of them give not thanks.

وَمَا ظَنُّ الَّذِيْنَ يَفْتَرُوْنَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَذُوْ فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿۶۰﴾

SECTION 7: **Good News for the Faithful**

61 And thou art not (engaged) in any affair and thou recitest not concerning it any portion of the Qur'ān, and you do no work, but We are Witness of you when you are engaged therein. And not the weight of an atom in the earth or in the heaven is hidden from thy Lord, nor anything less than that nor greater, but it is (all) in a clear book.[1140]

وَمَا تَكُوْنُ فِيْ شَاْنٍ وَّمَا تَتْلُوْا مِنْهُ مِنْ قُرْاٰنٍ وَّلَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ مِنْ عَمَلٍ اِلَّا كُنَّا عَلَيْكُمْ شُهُوْدًا اِذْ تُفِيْضُوْنَ فِيْهِ ؕ وَمَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْ رَّبِّكَ مِنْ مِّثْقَالِ ذَرَّةٍ فِي الْاَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَآءِ وَلَآ اَصْغَرَ مِنْ ذٰلِكَ وَلَآ اَكْبَرَ اِلَّا فِيْ كِتٰبٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿۶۱﴾

62 Now surely the friends of Allāh, they have no fear nor do they grieve —[1141]

اَلَآ اِنَّ اَوْلِيَآءَ اللّٰهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ ﴿۶۲﴾

1138 Men hoard wealth, but they are told that the spiritual values of life — the grace of Allāh and His mercy — are much better.

1139 Just as Allāh gave them the means of their physical sustenance, He has also sent His grace and mercy for their spiritual welfare through revelation. Yet they deprive themselves of the spiritual sustenance as if it were unlawful. Or the reference may be to their declaring certain things to be unlawful for them out of reverence for their idols.

1140 The clear book mentioned here is not, of course, a collection of written or printed sheets bound together. It is the book of the Divine law which makes every deed, good or evil, great or small, bring its reward. That there can be something less than an atom is one of those wonderful scientific disclosures of which the Holy Qur'ān is full; in modern scientific language, the atom can be broken into pieces.

1141 The friends of Allāh are those who help the Divine cause and invite people to faith in God. They attain to that spiritual height where fear and grief

63 Those who believe and keep their duty.

الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوْا وَكَانُوْا يَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 For them is good news[1142] in this world's life and in the Hereafter. There is no changing the words of Allāh.[1143] That is the mighty achievement.

لَهُمُ الْبُشْرٰى فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْاٰخِرَةِ ۭ لَا تَبْدِيْلَ لِكَلِمٰتِ اللّٰهِ ۭ ذٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيْمُ ﴿٦٤﴾

65 And let not their speech grieve thee. Surely might belongs wholly to Allāh. He is the Hearer, the Knower.

وَلَا يَحْزُنْكَ قَوْلُهُمْ ۘ اِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلّٰهِ جَمِيْعًا ۭ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 Now, surely, whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is Allāh's.[1144] And what do follow those who call on associates besides Allāh? They follow naught but conjecture, and they only lie.

اَلَآ اِنَّ لِلّٰهِ مَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْاَرْضِ ۭ وَمَا يَتَّبِعُ الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ شُرَكَاۗءَ ۭ اِنْ يَّتَّبِعُوْنَ اِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَاِنْ هُمْ اِلَّا يَخْرُصُوْنَ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 He it is Who made for you the night that you might rest therein and the day giving light. Surely in this are signs for a people who hear.

هُوَ الَّذِيْ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الَّيْلَ لِتَسْكُنُوْا فِيْهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا ۭ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَّسْمَعُوْنَ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 They say: Allāh has taken a son (to Himself). Glory be to Him! He is the Self-sufficient. His is what is in the heavens and what is in the earth. You have no authority for this. Say you against Allāh what you know not?

قَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللّٰهُ وَلَدًا سُبْحٰنَهٗ ۭ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ ۭ لَهٗ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۭ اِنْ عِنْدَكُمْ مِّنْ سُلْطٰنٍۢ بِهٰذَا ۭ اَتَقُوْلُوْنَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 Say: Those who forge a lie against Allāh will not succeed.

قُلْ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَفْتَرُوْنَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ لَا يُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿٦٩﴾

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are unknown. There is also a prophecy of the ultimate triumph of Truth, for when a man attains his object, all his fear is gone and he no more grieves for the sacrifices he has made; v. 64 makes it clear.

1142 The Holy Prophet said: "There has remained nothing of prophethood except *mubashsharāt*. Asked what is meant by *mubashsharāt*, he replied, *Good visions*" (B. 92:5). Elsewhere *good visions* are said to be a part of prophethood (B. 92:4), which shows that, as the prophets were informed of the triumph of Truth, so will their followers be given this good news in their visions. The upholders of the Divine cause, we are thus told, will not only be successful — they will also receive the good news of their ultimate triumph in good visions.

1143 The *words of Allāh* here signify the *prophecies*. It is the prophecy of the good reward for the faithful that is mentioned immediately before these words, and the meaning of there being no change is that the prophetic word must be fulfilled; compare similar words used in 6:34, 116 and 18:27.

1144 In the previous verse, the Prophet is told not to be grieved at what the

70 A little enjoyment in this world, then to Us is their return, then We shall make them taste severe chastisement because they disbelieved.

مَتَاعٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ إِلَيْنَا مَرْجِعُهُمْ ثُمَّ نُذِيقُهُمُ الْعَذَابَ الشَّدِيدَ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

SECTION 8 : **Noah and Moses**

71 And recite to them the story of Noah, when he said to his people : O my people, if my staying (here) and my reminding (you) by the messages of Allāh is hard on you, on Allāh do I rely ; so decide upon your course of action and (gather) your associates. Then let not your course of action be dubious to you, so have it executed against me and give me no respite.[1145]

وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ نُوحٍ إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ يَا قَوْمِ إِنْ كَانَ كَبُرَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَقَامِي وَتَذْكِيرِي بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَعَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ فَأَجْمِعُوا أَمْرَكُمْ وَشُرَكَاءَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُنْ أَمْرُكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ غُمَّةً ثُمَّ اقْضُوا إِلَيَّ وَلَا تُنْظِرُونِ ﴿٧١﴾

72 But if you turn back, I ask for no reward from you. My reward is only with Allāh, and I am commanded to be of those who submit.

فَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَمَا سَأَلْتُكُمْ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ ۖ وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾

73 But they rejected him, so We delivered him and those with him in the ark, and We made them rulers and drowned those who rejected Our messages. See, then, what was the end of those who were warned.

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَمَنْ مَعَهُ فِي الْفُلْكِ وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ خَلَائِفَ وَأَغْرَقْنَا الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا ۖ فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُنْذَرِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 Then, after him, We sent messengers to their people. They came to them with clear arguments, but they would not believe what they had rejected before. Thus do We seal the hearts of those who exceed the limits.[1146]

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ رُسُلًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِمْ فَجَاءُوهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَمَا كَانُوا لِيُؤْمِنُوا بِمَا كَذَّبُوا بِهِ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نَطْبَعُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

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disbelievers said. "Might belongs wholly to Allāh," he is there told, and, therefore, no force in the world could frustrate the Divine purpose. The same

1145, 1146, see next page.

75 Then after them We sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh and his chiefs with Our signs, but they were arrogant, and they were a guilty people.

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ مُّوْسٰى وَهٰرُوْنَ اِلٰى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَا۟ئِهٖ بِاٰيٰتِنَا فَاسْتَكْبَرُوْا وَكَانُوْا قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 So when the truth came to them from Us, they said : This is surely clear enchantment !

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِنَا قَالُوْٓا اِنَّ هٰذَا لَسِحْرٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 Moses said : Say you (this) of the truth when it has come to you ? Is it enchantment? And the enchanters never succeed.

قَالَ مُوْسٰٓى اَتَقُوْلُوْنَ لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَكُمْ ؕ اَسِحْرٌ هٰذَا ؕ وَلَا يُفْلِحُ السّٰحِرُوْنَ ﴿٧٧﴾

78 They said : Hast thou come to us to turn us away from that which we found our fathers following, and (that) greatness in the land may be for you two ? And we are not going to believe in you.

قَالُوْٓا اَجِئْتَنَا لِتَلْفِتَنَا عَمَّا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ اٰبَآءَنَا وَتَكُوْنَ لَكُمَا الْكِبْرِيَآءُ فِي الْاَرْضِ ؕ وَمَا نَحْنُ لَكُمَا بِمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿٧٨﴾

79 And Pharaoh said : Bring to me every skilful enchanter.

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ ائْتُوْنِيْ بِكُلِّ سٰحِرٍ عَلِيْمٍ ﴿٧٩﴾

80 So when the enchanters came. Moses said to them : Cast what you are going to cast.

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ السَّحَرَةُ قَالَ لَهُمْ مُّوْسٰٓى اَلْقُوْا مَآ اَنْتُمْ مُّلْقُوْنَ ﴿٨٠﴾

81 So when they had cast down, Moses said : What you have brought is deception. Surely Allāh will make it naught. Surely Allāh allows not the work of mischief-makers to thrive.

فَلَمَّآ اَلْقَوْا قَالَ مُوْسٰى مَا جِئْتُمْ بِهِ السِّحْرُ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَيُبْطِلُهٗ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُصْلِحُ عَمَلَ الْمُفْسِدِيْنَ ﴿٨١﴾

82 And Allāh will establish the truth by His words, though the guilty be averse.

وَيُحِقُّ اللّٰهُ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمٰتِهٖ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُجْرِمُوْنَ ﴿٨٢﴾

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idea is here expressed in the words "Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is Allāh's".

1145 See 901 for Noah's history. The challenge of Noah to his opponents was, in fact, being reproduced now as a challenge to the opponents of the Holy Prophet. And these opponents did, in fact, decide upon their course of action in their great council hall, perhaps a year or two later, and surrounded the Prophet's house in accordance with that decision. But the Prophet escaped unnoticed from among them and they were unable to lay their hands on him.

1146 They do not ponder over the truth, but, having rejected once, go on opposing its progress without reflecting on it. This condition is described as *the sealing of the heart,* because the heart, being made for reflection, would no doubt be fitly described as being sealed when it ceases to reflect.

SECTION 9: **End of Opposition to Moses**

83 But, on account of the fear of Pharaoh and their chiefs persecuting them, none believed in Moses except a few of his people. And Pharaoh was truly high-handed in the land; and surely he was extravagant.[1147]

فَمَآ اٰمَنَ لِمُوْسٰٓى اِلَّا ذُرِّيَّةٌ مِّنْ قَوْمِهٖ عَلٰى خَوْفٍ مِّنْ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَا۟ئِهِمْ اَنْ يَّفْتِنَهُمْ ۗ وَاِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ لَعَالٍ فِى الْاَرْضِ ۚ وَاِنَّهٗ لَمِنَ الْمُسْرِفِيْنَ ﴿۸۳﴾

84 And Moses said: O my people, if you believe in Allāh, then rely on Him if you submit (to Him).

وَقَالَ مُوْسٰى يٰقَوْمِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ اٰمَنْتُمْ بِاللّٰهِ فَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلُوْٓا اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمِيْنَ ﴿۸۴﴾

85 They said: On Allāh we rely; our Lord, make us not a trial for the unjust people.

فَقَالُوْا عَلَى اللّٰهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا ۚ رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِّلْقَوْمِ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿۸۵﴾

86 And deliver us by Thy mercy from the disbelieving people.

وَنَجِّنَا بِرَحْمَتِكَ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿۸۶﴾

87 And We revealed to Moses and his brother: Take for your people houses to abide in Egypt and make your houses places of worship[1149] and keep up prayer. And give good news to the believers.

وَاَوْحَيْنَآ اِلٰى مُوْسٰى وَاَخِيْهِ اَنْ تَبَوَّاٰ لِقَوْمِكُمَا بِمِصْرَ بُيُوْتًا وَّاجْعَلُوْا بُيُوْتَكُمْ قِبْلَةً وَّاَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿۸۷﴾

88 And Moses said: Our Lord, surely Thou hast given Pharaoh and his chiefs finery and riches in this world's life, our Lord, that they may lead (people) astray from Thy way.[1150] Our

وَقَالَ مُوْسٰى رَبَّنَآ اِنَّكَ اٰتَيْتَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَاَهٗ زِيْنَةً وَّاَمْوَالًا فِى الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ۙ

1147 The Israelites believed in Moses as the verses that follow show. By *his people*, therefore, are meant Pharaoh's wife (66:11) and a believer (40:28). The word *dhurriyyah* means offspring, and according to I'Ab means here *qalīl* or *a few*.

1149 The *qiblah* is that facing which one prays, and therefore it indicates *a place of worship*. The Israelites were obliged to pray in their houses because they did not enjoy full religious liberty in Egypt and had no public places of worship.

1150 The *lām* here — translated as *that* — is really what is called *lām 'aqibat* or the *lām* used to indicate the end. The significance is, not that God had granted them riches to mislead people, but that this was the end for which they used their riches.

Lord, destroy their riches and harden their hearts, so that they believe not till they see the painful chastisement.[1151]

رَبَّنَا لِيُضِلُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِكَ ۚ رَبَّنَا اطْمِسْ عَلَىٰ أَمْوَالِهِمْ وَاشْدُدْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُوا حَتَّىٰ يَرَوُا الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ ﴿٨٨﴾

89 He said: Your prayer is accepted; so continue in the right way and follow not the path of those who know not.

قَالَ قَدْ أُجِيبَتْ دَّعْوَتُكُمَا فَاسْتَقِيمَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعَانِّ سَبِيلَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾

90 And We brought the Children of Israel across the sea. Then Pharaoh and his hosts followed them for oppression and tyranny, till, when drowning overtook him, he said: I believe that there is no god but He in Whom the Children of Israel believe, and I am of those who submit.[1152]

وَجَاوَزْنَا بِبَنِي إِسْرَاءِيلَ الْبَحْرَ فَأَتْبَعَهُمْ فِرْعَوْنُ وَجُنُودُهُ بَغْيًا وَعَدْوًا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَدْرَكَهُ الْغَرَقُ ۙ قَالَ آمَنْتُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا الَّذِي آمَنَتْ بِهِ بَنُوا إِسْرَاءِيلَ وَأَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾

91 What! Now! And indeed before (this) thou didst disobey and thou wast of the mischief-makers!

آلْـٰٔنَ وَقَدْ عَصَيْتَ قَبْلُ وَكُنْتَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

92 But this day We shall save thee in thy body that thou mayest be a sign to those after thee. And surely most of the people are heedless of Our signs.[1153]

فَالْيَوْمَ نُنَجِّيكَ بِبَدَنِكَ لِتَكُونَ لِمَنْ خَلْفَكَ آيَةً ۚ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا لَغَافِلُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

SECTION 10: **Those who heed Warning will benefit**

93 And certainly We lodged the Children of Israel in a goodly abode and provided them with good things.

وَلَقَدْ بَوَّأْنَا بَنِي إِسْرَاءِيلَ مُبَوَّأَ صِدْقٍ وَّرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ ۚ فَمَا اخْتَلَفُوا

1151 Pharaoh and his people did not care for either arguments or signs. Moses therefore now prays for their punishment. Shadda *'alai-hi* also means *he assaulted him,* and God's assaulting their hearts would mean *depriving them of that which their hearts desired.*

1152 In the agonies of death pronounced atheists have sometimes recognized the existence of God.

1153 That the body was really cast ashore, though the Bible does not mention it, is clear from the fact that the body of Rameses II, who is regarded as the Pharaoh of Moses, has been discovered as preserved among the mummies in Egypt (*En. Br.* Art. Mummy). This is another instance of the insufficiency

Then they differed not till the knowledge came to them.[1154] Surely thy Lord will judge between them on the day of Resurrection concerning that in which they differed.

حَتّٰى جَآءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ ؕ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِيْ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ فِيْمَا كَانُوْا فِيْهِ يَخْتَلِفُوْنَ ﴿۹۳﴾

94 But if thou art in doubt[1155] as to that which We have revealed to thee, ask those who read the Book[1156] before thee. Certainly the Truth has come to thee from thy Lord, so be not thou of the doubters.

فَاِنْ كُنْتَ فِيْ شَكٍّ مِّمَّاۤ اَنْزَلْنَاۤ اِلَيْكَ فَسْـَٔلِ الَّذِيْنَ يَقْرَءُوْنَ الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ ۚ لَقَدْ جَآءَكَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِيْنَ ﴿۹۴﴾

95 And be not of those who reject the messages of Allāh, (for) then thou wilt be of the losers.

وَلَا تَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ فَتَكُوْنَ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ ﴿۹۵﴾

96 Surely those against whom the word of thy Lord has proved true will not believe,

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِمْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿۹۶﴾

97 Though every sign should come to them, till they see the painful chastisement.

وَلَوْ جَآءَتْهُمْ كُلُّ اٰيَةٍ حَتّٰى يَرَوُا الْعَذَابَ الْاَلِيْمَ ﴿۹۷﴾

98 And why was there not a town which believed, so that their belief should have profited them, but the people of Jonah? When they believed, We removed from them the chastise-

فَلَوْلَا كَانَتْ قَرْيَةٌ اٰمَنَتْ فَنَفَعَهَاۤ اِيْمَانُهَاۤ اِلَّا قَوْمَ يُوْنُسَ ؕ لَمَّاۤ اٰمَنُوْا كَشَفْنَا

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of the Bible narrative and of the truth of the Quranic statement where it supplements the Bible. The discovery now made could not have been known to the Holy Prophet; it was not known to any person in the world till very recently.

1154 The first part of this passage is taken by some to refer to the Israelites who were with, and came after, Moses, and by others, among whom is I'Ab, to the Madīnah Jews (Rz). In the latter case it is a prophetical announcement as to the Jewish attitude towards the Prophet later on when he fled to Madīnah.

1155 It should be noted that the person addressed in the Holy Qur'ān is not always the Prophet, though the form may be singular, as here. It is very often the reader. Nor do the words *revealed to thee* show that the Prophet is meant, for the Holy Qur'ān is in many places spoken of as being revealed to all the people, as, for instance, "*That which has been revealed to us*" (2:136), and "*We have revealed to you a Book*" (21:10). The opening words of the next section make it clear that the reader is addressed, because there we have: "Say, O people, if you are in doubt as to my religion" (v. 104). Throughout the Holy Qur'ān the Holy Prophet appears as having the greatest certainty about the word which was revealed to him, so much so that he never entertained the slightest doubt about the truth of the promises of future success and triumph when, to the material eye, there appeared nothing around but failure and disappointment.

1156, see next page.

ment of disgrace in this world's life, and We gave them provision for a while.[1157]

عَنْهُمْ عَذَابَ الْخِزْيِ فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَتَّعْنٰهُمْ إِلٰى حِيْنٍ ﴿٩٨﴾

99 And if thy Lord had pleased, all those who are in the earth would have believed, all of them. Wilt thou then force men till they are believers?[1158]

وَلَوْ شَآءَ رَبُّكَ لَاٰمَنَ مَنْ فِي الْاَرْضِ كُلُّهُمْ جَمِيْعًا ۭ اَفَاَنْتَ تُكْرِهُ النَّاسَ حَتّٰى يَكُوْنُوْا مُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿٩٩﴾

100 And it is not for any soul to believe except by Allāh's permission. And He casts uncleanness on those who will not understand.[1159]

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ اَنْ تُؤْمِنَ اِلَّا بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ۭ وَيَجْعَلُ الرِّجْسَ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ لَا يَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

101 Say: Behold what is in the heavens and the earth! And signs and warners avail not a people who believe not.[1160]

قُلِ انْظُرُوْا مَاذَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۭ وَمَا تُغْنِي الْاٰيٰتُ وَالنُّذُرُ عَنْ قَوْمٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿١٠١﴾

102 What do they wait for, then, but the like of the days of those who passed away before them? Say: Wait then: I, too, am with you of those who wait.

فَهَلْ يَنْتَظِرُوْنَ اِلَّا مِثْلَ اَيَّامِ الَّذِيْنَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۭ قُلْ فَانْتَظِرُوْٓا اِنِّيْ مَعَكُمْ مِّنَ الْمُنْتَظِرِيْنَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

103 Then We deliver Our messengers and those who believe — even so (now); it is binding on Us to deliver the believers.

ثُمَّ نُنَجِّيْ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كَذٰلِكَ ۚ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا نُنْجِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

In the very next verse the words are, *be not of those who reject the messages of Allāh,* which shows clearly that it is the Prophet's opponents who are addressed here.

1156 That is, ask them whether previous revelation does not contain clear prophecies of the advent of the Prophet.

1157 Compare Jonah 3:10: "And God saw their works that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that He had said that He would do unto them, and He did it not". References to Jonah are contained in the Holy Qur'ān in 6:87; 10:98; 21:87; 37:139-148; 68:48-50. He bears a resemblance to the Holy Prophet in that his people benefited by the warning, as did the Arabs by the warning of the Prophet, though after much opposition. Jonah is thus the type of a prophet whose people were dealt with mercifully.

1158 Compare 2:256: "There is no compulsion in religion". The reference is to the great zeal of the Holy Prophet and his over-exerting himself in preaching the Truth: "Maybe thou wilt kill thyself with grief, sorrowing after them, if they believe not in this announcement" (18:6).

1159 Those who will not understand the truth will find uncleanness cast on them. That is only natural. The word *rijs* also means *punishment* (LL), and the significance, in that case, is that those who care not for the warning must receive the punishment.

1160 There is an abundance of signs in nature itself but man heeds them not.

SECTION 11 : **Divine Judgment.**

104 Say : O people, if you are in doubt as to my religion, (know that) I serve not those whom you serve besides Allāh, but I serve Allāh, Who causes you to die ; and I am commanded to be of the believers,

قُلْ يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِيْ شَكٍّ
مِّنْ دِيْنِيْ فَلَاۤ اَعْبُدُ الَّذِيْنَ تَعْبُدُوْنَ
مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلٰكِنْ اَعْبُدُ اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْ
يَتَوَفّٰىكُمْ ۚۖ وَاُمِرْتُ اَنْ اَكُوْنَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿۱۰۴﴾

105 And that thou set thy purpose towards the Religion uprightly ; and be not of the polytheists.

وَاَنْ اَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّيْنِ حَنِيْفًا ۚ وَلَا
تَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ﴿۱۰۵﴾

106 And call not besides Allāh on that which can neither benefit thee nor harm thee ; for if thou dost, thou shalt then be of the unjust.

وَلَا تَدْعُ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُكَ
وَلَا يَضُرُّكَ ۚ فَاِنْ فَعَلْتَ فَاِنَّكَ اِذًا
مِّنَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿۱۰۶﴾

107 And if Allāh afflicts thee with harm, there is none to remove it but He ; and if He intends good to thee, there is none to repel His grace. He brings it to whom He pleases of His servants. And He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.

وَاِنْ يَّمْسَسْكَ اللّٰهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ
لَهٗۤ اِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَاِنْ يُّرِدْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَلَا
رَآدَّ لِفَضْلِهٖ ۗ يُصِيْبُ بِهٖ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ
مِنْ عِبَادِهٖ ۗ وَهُوَ الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿۱۰۷﴾

108 Say : O people, the Truth has indeed come to you from your Lord ; so whoever goes aright, goes aright only for the good of his own soul ; and whoever errs, errs only against it. And I am not a custodian over you.

قُلْ يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَآءَكُمُ الْحَقُّ
مِنْ رَّبِّكُمْ ۚ فَمَنِ اهْتَدٰى فَاِنَّمَا
يَهْتَدِيْ لِنَفْسِهٖ ۚ وَمَنْ ضَلَّ فَاِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ
عَلَيْهَا ۚ وَمَاۤ اَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِوَكِيْلٍ ﴿۱۰۸﴾ ط

109 And follow what is revealed to thee and be patient till Allāh give judgment, and He is the Best of the judges.

وَاتَّبِعْ مَا يُوْحٰۤى اِلَيْكَ وَاصْبِرْ حَتّٰى
يَحْكُمَ اللّٰهُ ۚۖ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحٰكِمِيْنَ ﴿۱۰۹﴾ ع

اٰيَاتُهَا ١٢٣ (١١) سُوْرَةُ هُوْدٍ مَكِّيَّةٌ رُكُوْعَاتُهَا ١٠

CHAPTER 11

HŪD

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 10 *sections,* 123 *verses*)

The name of this chapter is taken from that of the Prophet Hūd, whose history is referred to herein. He seems to have been the first prophet to a people living in the Arabian peninsula.

The opponents are warned first, and the truth of the revelation is asserted in the second section, and the opponents are challenged to produce ten chapters like it. A cruel and persecuting enemy is then warned of the evil fate of previous people. The third and fourth sections deal with the history of Noah, the fifth with that of Hūd, the sixth with that of Ṣāliḥ, the seventh with that of Abraham and Lot, and the eighth with that of Shu‘aib. The ninth section compares the wrongdoers and the righteous, and the tenth comforts the believers.

The chapter seems to be a complement to the last, which deals mostly with abstract questions relating to the truth of revelation, while this illustrates the truth of those questions by referring to the histories of former prophets. It is wholly a Makkan revelation, and must be placed at about the same period as the last chapter.

SECTION 1 **A Warning**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 I, Allāh, am the Seer. A Book, whose verses are characterized by wisdom, then they are made plain, from One Wise, Aware :

الۤرٰ كِتٰبٌ اُحْكِمَتْ اٰيٰتُهٗ ثُمَّ فُصِّلَتْ
مِنْ لَّدُنْ حَكِيْمٍ خَبِيْرٍ ۙ ①

2 That you should serve none but Allāh. Surely I am to you from Him a warner and a giver of good news.

اَلَّا تَعْبُدُوْۤا اِلَّا اللّٰهَ ؕ اِنَّنِيْ لَكُمْ مِّنْهُ
نَذِيْرٌ وَّ بَشِيْرٌ ۙ ②

3 And ask forgiveness of your Lord, then turn to Him. He will provide you with a goodly provision to an appointed term, and will bestow His grace on every one endowed with grace.[1161] And if you turn away, I fear for you the chastisement of a great day.

وَّ اَنِ اسْتَغْفِرُوْا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوْبُوْۤا اِلَيْهِ
يُمَتِّعْكُمْ مَّتَاعًا حَسَنًا اِلٰۤى اَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى
وَّ يُؤْتِ كُلَّ ذِيْ فَضْلٍ فَضْلَهٗ ؕ وَ اِنْ
تَوَلَّوْا فَاِنِّيْۤ اَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ كَبِيْرٍ ③

4 To Allāh is your return, and He is Possessor of power over all things.

اِلَى اللّٰهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ ۚ وَ هُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ④

5 Now surely they cover up their breasts[1162] to conceal (their enmity) from Him. Now surely, when they put their garments as a covering,[1163] He knows what they hide and what they make public. Surely He is Knower of what is in the breasts.

اَلَاۤ اِنَّهُمْ يَثْنُوْنَ صُدُوْرَهُمْ لِيَسْتَخْفُوْا
مِنْهُ ؕ اَلَا حِيْنَ يَسْتَغْشُوْنَ ثِيَابَهُمْ ۙ
يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّوْنَ وَ مَا يُعْلِنُوْنَ ۚ اِنَّهٗ
عَلِيْمٌۢ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ ⑤

1161 *One endowed with grace* signifies one on whom Allāh bestows His grace. The *dhī faḍl* here is the possessor of spiritual blessings in addition to the material benefits spoken of in the preceding words.

1162 *Thanā ṣadra-hū* (lit., *he folded his breast* or *bosom*) means *he concealed enmity in his breast* or *bosom* (LL). This meaning is made clear in the words that follow.

1163 *He covered himself with his garment, in order that he might not see nor hear* (LL). According to R, the meaning is that *they make their garments a covering over their ears, and this signifies their holding back from lending an ear*, or *it is an allusion to their running away.*

PART XII

6 And there is no animal in the earth but on Allāh is the sustenance of it, and He knows its resting-place and its depository. All is in a clear record.

وَمَا مِنْ دَآبَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللّٰهِ
رِزْقُهَا وَيَعْلَمُ مُسْتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا ط
كُلٌّ فِي كِتٰبٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٦﴾

7 And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods; and His Throne of Power is ever on water[1164] that He might manifest (the good qualities in) you whoever of you is best in deeds.[1165] And if thou sayest, You shall surely be raised up after death, those who disbelieve say: This is nothing but clear deceit.[1166]

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي
سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ وَّكَانَ عَرْشُهُ عَلَى الْمَآءِ
لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ط وَلَئِنْ قُلْتَ إِنَّكُمْ
مَّبْعُوثُونَ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْمَوْتِ لَيَقُولَنَّ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوٓا إِنْ هٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٧﴾

8 And if We delay for them the chastisement for a stated period,[1167] they will certainly say: What prevents it? Now surely on the day when it will come to them, it will not be averted from them, and that which thev scoffed at will beset them.

وَلَئِنْ أَخَّرْنَا عَنْهُمُ الْعَذَابَ إِلٰٓى أُمَّةٍ
مَّعْدُودَةٍ لَّيَقُولُنَّ مَا يَحْبِسُهُ ط أَلَا يَوْمَ
يَأْتِيهِمْ لَيْسَ مَصْرُوفًا عَنْهُمْ وَحَاقَ
بِهِمْ مَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٨﴾ ع

1164 The meaning of *'arsh* has been explained in 895. For *kāna,* see 271. What is the relation between *water* and the *manifestation of the Power* of God, for which the *'arsh* stands? This is explained by the Qur'ān itself: "And We have made of water everything living" (21:30). Man is the highest developed form of life, and life is due to water. The great power of God which is manifested in the creation of man is thus connected with water. And as physical life grows out of water, so spiritual life grows out of revelation, which is so often compared with rain or water. God's great power has thus been made manifest through water, and hence with the creation of the heavens and the earth is mentioned the fact that God's Throne of Power is ever on the waters. The words that follow make it clearer still; see the next note.

1165 The two words *balā-hu* and *ibtalā-hu* are synonymous and mean originally *the manifestation of good qualities* and *mean qualities* (T). The object of the creation of man and all that has been brought into existence is that the great qualities with which man is endowed should be manifested. But that manifestation, we are told in the words that follow, takes place, not in this life, but in the life after death. This truth is expressed in the words, *if thou sayest, You shall surely be raised up after death.* For the use of the words *balā* and *ibtalā,* in the sense of the manifestation of the great and good qualities with which man is endowed, see 990.

1166 The word *siḥr* is used here clearly in the sense of *deceit* or *falsehood;* see 148.

1167 The stated period of time is thus referred to in 8:33: "But Allāh was not going to chastise them while thou wast among them".

SECTION 2 : **Truth of Revelation**

9 And if We make man taste mercy from Us, then withdraw it from him, he is surely despairing, ungrateful.

وَلَئِنْ أَذَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنَّا رَحْمَةً ثُمَّ نَزَعْنَاهَا مِنْهُ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَيَئُوسٌ كَفُورٌ ﴿٩﴾

10 And if We make him taste a favour after distress has afflicted him, he says: The evils are gone away from me. Certainly he is exultant, boastful,

وَلَئِنْ أَذَقْنَاهُ نَعْمَاءَ بَعْدَ ضَرَّاءَ مَسَّتْهُ لَيَقُولَنَّ ذَهَبَ السَّيِّئَاتُ عَنِّي ۚ إِنَّهُ لَفَرِحٌ فَخُورٌ ﴿١٠﴾

11 Except those who are patient and do good. For them is forgiveness and a great reward.

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ كَبِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾

12 Then, may it be that thou wilt give up part of what is revealed to thee and thy breast will be straitened by it, because they say: Why has not a treasure been sent down for him or an angel come with him?[1167a] Thou art only a warner. And Allāh is in charge of all things.

فَلَعَلَّكَ تَارِكٌ بَعْضَ مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَضَائِقٌ بِهِ صَدْرُكَ أَنْ يَقُولُوا لَوْلَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْهِ كَنْزٌ أَوْ جَاءَ مَعَهُ مَلَكٌ ۚ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ نَذِيرٌ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ﴿١٢﴾

13 Or, say they: He has forged it. Say: Then bring ten forged chapters like it, and call upon whom you can besides Allāh, if you are truthful.[1168]

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ ۖ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِعَشْرِ سُوَرٍ مِثْلِهِ مُفْتَرَيَاتٍ وَادْعُوا مَنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

1167a This passage does not signify that the Prophet intended to give up any part of the revelation; on the other hand, it is a strong statement indicating that he could not do it. It is a peculiar use of the word *la 'alla*. Rz says: "You say of a person when you intend to show his remoteness from a thing: Maybe (Ar., *la'alla-ka*) you have power to do such a thing".

1168 This challenge is contained in four different chapters of the Holy Qur'ān. (1) In 17:88: "Say: If men and jinn should combine together to bring the like of this Qur'ān, they could not bring the like of it, though some of them were aiders of others". This is the earliest in point of revelation. Then in the verse under discussion, the demand is reduced to ten chapters. Lastly in 10:38 and 2:23 they are challenged to produce a single chapter like the Qur'ān. Another point worth noting is that, while in some places men and jinn are challenged, in others the word *shuhadā'*, which means their *great* or *learned men*, is substituted for *jinn*, thus showing that *jinn* in such places means only ***their great men***; see 36 for full explanation.

14 But if they answer you not, then know that it is revealed by Allāh's knowledge, and that there is no God but He. Will you then submit ?[1169]

فَإِلَّمْ يَسْتَجِيبُوا لَكُمْ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا أُنْزِلَ بِعِلْمِ اللَّهِ وَأَنْ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Whoever desires this world's life and its finery — We repay them their deeds therein, and they are not made to suffer loss in it.

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا نُوَفِّ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ فِيهَا وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يُبْخَسُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

16 These are they for whom there is nothing but Fire in the Hereafter. And what they work therein is fruitless and their deeds are vain.[1170]

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا النَّارُ ۖ وَحَبِطَ مَا صَنَعُوا فِيهَا وَبَاطِلٌ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 Is he then (like these) who has with him clear proof from his Lord, and a witness from Him recites it, and before it (is) the Book of Moses, a guide and a mercy ? These believe in it. And whoever of the parties disbelieves in it, the Fire is his promised place. So be not in doubt about it. Surely it is the truth from thy Lord, but most men believe not.[1171]

أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَيَتْلُوهُ شَاهِدٌ مِنْهُ وَمِنْ قَبْلِهِ كِتَابُ مُوسَىٰ إِمَامًا وَرَحْمَةً ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ ۚ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهِ مِنَ الْأَحْزَابِ فَالنَّارُ مَوْعِدُهُ ۚ فَلَا تَكُ فِي مِرْيَةٍ مِنْهُ ۚ إِنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 And who is more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allāh ? These will be brought before their Lord, and the witnesses will say : These are they who lied against their Lord. Now surely the curse of Allāh is on the wrongdoers,[1172]

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ وَيَقُولُ الْأَشْهَادُ هَٰؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ أَلَا لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

1169 The disbelievers are addressed here, the meaning being that, if the false gods or the leaders do not answer their devotees when they call on them to assist them in producing a like of the Qur'ān, then at least no doubt should be left in their minds that the Qur'ān is not the work of the Prophet, but a revelation from the Divine Being.

1170 That is, their works and other deeds will not result in any good to them.

1171 The several statements made in this verse require to be explained. *He who has with him clear proof from his Lord* applies to every believer in the truth of the Holy Qur'ān ; the words *these believe* in it, occurring farther on, make this clear. The *witness from Allāh,* who recites it, is the Holy Prophet, who is called a witness elsewhere, as being an exemplar for the believers. Besides being a clear proof in itself, the Holy Qur'ān has a furtner evidence of its truth in the book of Moses, which is, therefore, called a guide and a mercy, because it contains clear prophecies of the truth of the Prophet. The meaning of the whole passage is:

1172, see next page.

19 Who hinder (men) from the path of Allāh and desire to make it crooked. And they are disbelievers in the Hereafter.

الَّذِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا ۚ وَهُمْ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ هُمْ كٰفِرُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 These will not escape in the earth,[1173] nor have they guardians besides Allāh. The chastisement will be doubled for them. They could not bear to hear, and they did not see.[1174]

أُولٰٓئِكَ لَمْ يَكُونُوا مُعْجِزِينَ فِي الْاَرْضِ وَمَا كَانَ لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللّٰهِ مِنْ اَوْلِيَآءَ ۘ يُضٰعَفُ لَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ ۚ مَا كَانُوا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ السَّمْعَ وَمَا كَانُوا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 These are they who have lost their souls, and that which they forged is gone from them.

أُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَّا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 Truly in the Hereafter they are the greatest losers.

لَا جَرَمَ اَنَّهُمْ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ هُمُ الْاَخْسَرُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 Surely those who believe and do good and humble themselves before their Lord, these are the owners of the Garden; therein they will abide.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ وَاَخْبَتُوٓا اِلٰى رَبِّهِمْ ۙ اُولٰٓئِكَ اَصْحٰبُ الْجَنَّةِ ۚ هُمْ فِيهَا خٰلِدُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 The likeness of the two parties is as the blind and the deaf, and the seer and the hearer. Are they equal in condition? Will you not then mind?

مَثَلُ الْفَرِيقَيْنِ كَالْاَعْمٰى وَالْاَصَمِّ وَالْبَصِيرِ وَالسَّمِيعِ ۚ هَلْ يَسْتَوِيٰنِ مَثَلًا ۚ اَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

SECTION 3 : **History of Noah**

25 And certainly We sent Noah to his people: Surely I am a plain warner to you,

وَلَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا اِلٰى قَوْمِهٖٓ ۫ اِنِّيْ لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 To serve none but Allāh. Verily I fear for you the chastisement of a painful day.

اَنْ لَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا اِلَّا اللّٰهَ ۚ اِنِّيٓ اَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ اَلِيمٍ ﴿٢٦﴾

He who, being a believer in the truth of the Holy Qur'ān, has clear proof from his Lord, and who has an exemplar for him in the person of the Holy Prophet, and has additional testimony of his truth in the book of Moses, is not like him who loves this world and cares not for the Truth? The latter statement, being included in the previous verses, is omitted here.

1172 The witnesses are according to some *the angels*; according to others, *the prophets* — and this is corroborated by 4:41; according to still others *the believers*.

1173 They would not escape the chastisement, if Allāh intended to punish them in this world. *A'jaza-hū*, of which *mu'jiz* is the noun form, may also be translated as *he found him without strength* or *ability*, or *he frustrated his power* or *purpose*.

1174 This only shows their great hatred of the truth. They could not bear even to hear what the Prophet said, and they ran away when he spoke.

27 But the chiefs of his people who disbelieved said: We see thee not but a mortal like us, and we see not that any follow thee but those who are the meanest of us at first thought. Nor do we see in you any superiority over us; nay, we deem you liars.

فَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن قَوْمِهِ مَا نَرَاكَ إِلَّا بَشَرًا مِّثْلَنَا وَمَا نَرَاكَ اتَّبَعَكَ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ هُمْ أَرَاذِلُنَا بَادِيَ الرَّأْيِ وَمَا نَرَىٰ لَكُمْ عَلَيْنَا مِن فَضْلٍ بَلْ نَظُنُّكُمْ كَاذِبِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 He said: O my people, see you if I have with me clear proof from my Lord, and He has granted me mercy from Himself and it has been made obscure to you. Can we compel you to (accept) it while you are averse to it?

قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِن كُنتُ عَلَىٰ بَيِّنَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّي وَآتَانِي رَحْمَةً مِّنْ عِندِهِ فَعُمِّيَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنُلْزِمُكُمُوهَا وَأَنتُمْ لَهَا كَارِهُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 And, O my people, I ask you not for wealth (in return) for it. My reward is only with Allāh, and I am not going to drive away those who believe. Surely they will meet their Lord, but I see you a people who are ignorant.

وَيَا قَوْمِ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مَالًا إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا بِطَارِدِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّهُم مُّلَاقُو رَبِّهِمْ وَلَٰكِنِّي أَرَاكُمْ قَوْمًا تَجْهَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 And, O my people, who will help me against Allāh, if I drive them away? Will you not then mind?

وَيَا قَوْمِ مَن يَنصُرُنِي مِنَ اللَّهِ إِن طَرَدتُّهُمْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And I say not to you that I have the treasures of Allāh; and I know not the unseen; nor do I say that I am an angel. Nor do I say about those whom your eyes scorn that Allāh will not grant them (any) good — Allāh knows best what is in their souls — for then indeed I should be of the wrongdoers.

وَلَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِندِي خَزَائِنُ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ وَلَا أَقُولُ إِنِّي مَلَكٌ وَلَا أَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ تَزْدَرِي أَعْيُنُكُمْ لَن يُؤْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ خَيْرًا اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ إِنِّي إِذًا لَّمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 They said: O Noah, indeed thou hast disputed with us and prolonged dispute with us, so bring upon us that which thou threatenest us with, if thou art truthful.

قَالُوا يَا نُوحُ قَدْ جَادَلْتَنَا فَأَكْثَرْتَ جِدَالَنَا فَأْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَا إِن كُنتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 He said: Only Allāh will bring it on you, if He please, and you will not escape:

قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَأْتِيكُم بِهِ اللَّهُ إِن شَاءَ وَمَا أَنتُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 And my advice will not profit you, if I intend to give you good advice, if Allāh intends to destroy you. He is your Lord ; and to Him you will be brought back.

وَلَا يَنفَعُكُمْ نُصْحِيٓ إِنْ أَرَدتُّ أَنْ أَنصَحَ لَكُمْ إِن كَانَ اللّٰهُ يُرِيدُ أَن يُغْوِيَكُمْ ۚ هُوَ رَبُّكُمْ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 Or say they : He has forged it ? Say : If I have forged it, on me is my guilt ; and I am free of that of which you are guilty.[1176]

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرٰىهُ ۖ قُلْ إِنِ افْتَرَيْتُهُ فَعَلَيَّ إِجْرَامِي وَأَنَا بَرِيٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

SECTION 4 : **History of Noah**

36 And it was revealed to Noah : None of thy people will believe except those who have already believed, so grieve not at what they do :

وَأُوحِيَ إِلٰى نُوحٍ أَنَّهُ لَن يُؤْمِنَ مِن قَوْمِكَ إِلَّا مَن قَدْ اٰمَنَ فَلَا تَبْتَئِسْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 And make the ark under Our eyes and Our revelation, and speak not to Me on behalf of those who are unjust. Surely they will be drowned.

وَاصْنَعِ الْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيِنَا وَلَا تُخَاطِبْنِي فِي الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ۚ إِنَّهُم مُّغْرَقُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 And he began to make the ark. And whenever the chiefs of his people passed by him, they laughed at him. He said : If you laugh at us, surely we, too, laugh at you as you laugh (at us).[1177]

وَيَصْنَعُ الْفُلْكَ وَكُلَّمَا مَرَّ عَلَيْهِ مَلَأٌ مِّن قَوْمِهِ سَخِرُوا مِنْهُ ۚ قَالَ إِن تَسْخَرُوا مِنَّا فَإِنَّا نَسْخَرُ مِنكُمْ كَمَا تَسْخَرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 So you shall know who it is on whom will come a chastisement which will disgrace him, and on whom a lasting chastisement will fall.

فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ مَن يَأْتِيهِ عَذَابٌ يُخْزِيهِ وَيَحِلُّ عَلَيْهِ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 At length when Our command came and water gushed forth from the valley,[1178] We said : Carry in it two of

حَتّٰىٓ إِذَا جَآءَ أَمْرُنَا وَفَارَ التَّنُّورُ

1176 The change shows positively that the disbelievers of Makkah are meant, and the reference is to their calling the Qur'ān a forgery. This shows that the histories of the prophets are referred to in the Holy Qur'ān as a warning for the Prophet's opponents.

1177 The *laughing* of the righteous at the wicked is not to be taken literally.

1178, see next page.

قُلْنَا احْمِلْ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلٍّ زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ وَأَهْلَكَ إِلَّا مَنْ سَبَقَ عَلَيْهِ الْقَوْلُ وَمَنْ آمَنَ ۚ وَمَا آمَنَ مَعَهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

all things, a pair,[1179] and thine own family — except those against whom the word has already gone forth — and those who believe. And there believed not with him but a few.

وَقَالَ ارْكَبُوا فِيهَا بِسْمِ اللَّهِ مَجْرَاهَا وَمُرْسَاهَا ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّي لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٤١﴾

41 And he said: Embark in it, in the name of Allāh be its sailing and its anchoring. Surely my Lord is Forgiving, Merciful.

وَهِيَ تَجْرِي بِهِمْ فِي مَوْجٍ كَالْجِبَالِ وَنَادَىٰ نُوحٌ ابْنَهُ وَكَانَ فِي مَعْزِلٍ يَا بُنَيَّ ارْكَبْ مَعَنَا وَلَا تَكُنْ مَعَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

42 And it moved on with them amid waves like mountains.[1180] And Noah called out to his son, and he was aloof: O my son, embark with us and be not with the disbelievers.

You laugh at a thing to show your contempt for it; even as the disbelieving people showed their contempt for the making of the ark, the believer in Divine promise shows his contempt for their opposition and their plans to destroy him. Kf gives another significance: *If you think us ignorant on account of what we are doing, we consider you ignorant on account of your disbelief . . . because your thinking us ignorant is due really to your own ignorance.*

1178 *Fār al-tannūr* is translated by Sale as meaning *the oven poured forth water,* by Palmer *the oven boiled,* and by Rodwell *the earth's surface boiled up,* all three at the same time adding a note that the word *tannūr* also signifies *a reservoir* (Palmer), or *a reservoir of water* (Rodwell), or *a place whence waters spring forth* or *where they are collected* (Sale). But it is, I think, more a misconception of the word *fāra* which has led to the error, than that of the word *tannūr. Fāra* means *it* (*the water*) *boiled,* or *it* (*the fire*) *raged,* but neither of these significances is applicable here, as the *oven* could not *boil,* nor could it *rage,* because *tannūr* does not mean *fire.* But it has also another significance. LL says: "*Fāra,* said of water, signifies also *it welled* or *came forth from the earth* or *ground* (Mgh); it *appeared, spouting forth from the spring* or *source* (T)". Hence also *fawwārah* signifies *a spring* or *source of water.* And *tannūr,* according to the same authority, means *the highest part of the earth* or *ground* . . . (T); *any place from which water pours forth, a place where the water of a valley collects* (Q). Now these two significances of the two words *fāra* and *tannūr* so suit each other, and each so suits the context, that they would appeal even to a man of ordinary intelligence. We know, from v. 43, where Noah's son is made to say: "I will betake myself for refuge to a mountain," that there must have been a valley.

1179 Each of a pair is called in Arabic a *zauj,* and hence the dual form *zaujain* means only *a pair,* and accordingly by *two zaujain* are meant *one male and one female of each pair.* By *all things* are apparently meant all things needed by Noah, and not all things existing in the world, which was too extensive for Noah to travel over.

1180 It should be borne in mind that the Qur'ān does not give any countenance to the story that the deluge covered the whole surface of the earth. On the other hand, it repeatedly speaks of Noah as having been sent to *his*

43 He said: I will betake myself for refuge to a mountain that will save me from the water. He said: There is none safe to-day from Allāh's command, but he on whom He has mercy.[1182] And a wave intervened between them, so he was among the drowned.

قَالَ سَاٰوِيْۤ اِلٰى جَبَلٍ يَّعْصِمُنِيْ مِنَ الْمَآءِ ؕ قَالَ لَا عَاصِمَ الْيَوْمَ مِنْ اَمْرِ اللّٰهِ اِلَّا مَنْ رَّحِمَ ۚ وَحَالَ بَيْنَهُمَا الْمَوْجُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْمُغْرَقِيْنَ ﴿۴۳﴾

44 And it was said: O earth, swallow thy water, and O cloud, clear away. And the water was made to abate, and the affair was decided, and it rested on the Jūdī,[1183] and it was said: Away with the iniquitous people!

وَقِيْلَ يٰۤاَرْضُ ابْلَعِيْ مَآءَكِ وَيٰسَمَآءُ اَقْلِعِيْ وَغِيْضَ الْمَآءُ وَقُضِيَ الْاَمْرُ وَاسْتَوَتْ عَلَى الْجُوْدِيِّ وَقِيْلَ بُعْدًا لِّلْقَوْمِ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿۴۴﴾

45 And Noah cried to his Lord and said: My Lord, surely my son is of my family, and Thy promise is true, and Thou art the Justest of the judges.

وَنَادٰى نُوْحٌ رَّبَّهٗ فَقَالَ رَبِّ اِنَّ ابْنِيْ مِنْ اَهْلِيْ وَاِنَّ وَعْدَكَ الْحَقُّ وَاَنْتَ اَحْكَمُ الْحٰكِمِيْنَ ﴿۴۵﴾

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people, i.e. to a single tribe, and according to the Divine law the punishment must have overtaken his people, who not only rejected the truth, but also sought to destroy Noah and his followers. The mention of the water flowing from the valley also shows that it was only a tract of land that was deluged, and not the entire earth. The taking in of a pair of all things does not mean that Noah had travelled over the whole earth and taken a pair of every living animal wherever it could be found: in that case he would have spent perhaps a thousand years in collecting pairs of all living creatures on earth, and then without success. The order is clearly to take in pairs of all those things that he considered necessary for himself and those who were with him in the ark. The Bible narrative, which makes God " bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven ", and then makes Noah collect and lodge in an ark a pair of each of the thousands of animals and birds, cannot be accepted.

1182 *Man raḥima* may either mean *He Who has mercy,* referring to Allāh, the significance being that only the Merciful One can save from the punishment, or the phrase may mean *he on whom He has mercy.* The meaning in the latter case is: Nothing can protect from the chastisement sent by Allāh, but he only will be protected on whom Allāh has mercy.

1183 The Greek name of this mountain is said to be Gordyoei, being one of those mountains which divide Armenia on the south from Mesopotamia. Sale says: " The tradition which affirms the ark to have rested on those mountains must have been very ancient, since it is a tradition of the Chaldeans themselves ". And again: " The relics of the ark were also to be seen in the time of Epiphanius, if we are to believe him (Epiph. Haeres, 18); we are also told that the Emperor Heraclius went from the town of Thamanin up to the mountain Al-Jūdī, and saw the place of the ark (Elmacin, I. i.c.l.). Formerly there also existed a famous monastery, called the monastery of the ark, on one of those mountains ".

46 He said: O Noah, he is not of thy family; he is (an embodiment of) unrighteous conduct.[1184] So ask not of Me that of which thou hast no knowledge. I admonish thee lest thou be of the ignorant.

قَالَ يٰنُوۡحُ اِنَّهٗ لَيۡسَ مِنۡ اَهۡلِكَ ۚ اِنَّهٗ عَمَلٌ غَيۡرُ صَالِحٍ ٭ۖ فَلَا تَسۡـَٔلۡنِ مَا لَيۡسَ لَكَ بِهٖ عِلۡمٌ ؕ اِنِّىۡۤ اَعِظُكَ اَنۡ تَكُوۡنَ مِنَ الۡجٰهِلِيۡنَ ﴿۴۶﴾

47 He said: My Lord, I seek refuge in Thee from asking of Thee that of which I have no knowledge. And unless Thou forgive me and have mercy on me, I shall be of the losers.

قَالَ رَبِّ اِنِّىۡۤ اَعُوۡذُ بِكَ اَنۡ اَسۡـَٔلَكَ مَا لَيۡسَ لِىۡ بِهٖ عِلۡمٌ ؕ وَاِلَّا تَغۡفِرۡ لِىۡ وَتَرۡحَمۡنِىۡۤ اَكُنۡ مِّنَ الۡخٰسِرِيۡنَ ﴿۴۷﴾

48 It was said: O Noah, descend with peace from Us and blessings on thee and on nations (springing) from those with thee. And there are nations whom We afford provisions, then a painful punishment from Us afflicts them.

قِيۡلَ يٰنُوۡحُ اهۡبِطۡ بِسَلٰمٍ مِّنَّا وَبَرَكٰتٍ عَلَيۡكَ وَعَلٰٓى اُمَمٍ مِّمَّنۡ مَّعَكَ ؕ وَاُمَمٌ سَنُمَتِّعُهُمۡ ثُمَّ يَمَسُّهُمۡ مِّنَّا عَذَابٌ اَلِيۡمٌ ﴿۴۸﴾

49 These are announcements relating to the unseen which We reveal to thee; thou didst not know them — (neither) thou nor thy people — before this. So be patient. Surely, the (good) end is for the dutiful.[1185]

تِلۡكَ مِنۡ اَنۡۢبَآءِ الۡغَيۡبِ نُوۡحِيۡهَاۤ اِلَيۡكَ ۚ مَا كُنۡتَ تَعۡلَمُهَاۤ اَنۡتَ وَلَا قَوۡمُكَ مِنۡ قَبۡلِ هٰذَا ۛؕ فَاصۡبِرۡ ۛؕ اِنَّ الۡعَاقِبَةَ لِلۡمُتَّقِيۡنَ ﴿۴۹﴾

SECTION 5: **History of Hūd**

50 And to ʻĀd (We sent) their brother Hūd.[1185a] He said: O my people, serve Allāh, you have no god save Him. You are only fabricators.

وَاِلٰى عَادٍ اَخَاهُمۡ هُوۡدًا ؕ قَالَ يٰقَوۡمِ اعۡبُدُوا اللّٰهَ مَا لَـكُمۡ مِّنۡ اِلٰهٍ غَيۡرُهٗ ؕ اِنۡ اَنۡتُمۡ اِلَّا مُفۡتَرُوۡنَ ﴿۵۰﴾

1184 When it is meant to speak of a person as the very embodiment of a certain quality, he is designated not as the possessor of that quality, but as that quality itself. Thus you speak of a person as being *karm*, lit. *excellence*, or *jūd*, lit. *charity*, meaning he is the very embodiment of excellence or charity. In 2:177 it is said *righteousness is he who believes*, the meaning apparently being that such a person is the embodiment of righteousness. ***Inna-hū ʻamal-un ghairu ṣāliḥ-in*** thus means that *he is an embodiment of unrighteous deeds*.

1185 The announcement relating to the unseen is not the history of Noah, but the fate of the opponents of the Holy Prophet, as read in that history. The words that follow — *be patient* — are a clear indication, for patient waiting was

1185a, see next page.

51 O my people, I ask of you no reward for it. My reward is only with Him Who created me. Do you not then understand?

يٰقَوْمِ لَآ اَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ اَجْرًا ؕ اِنْ اَجْرِیَ اِلَّا عَلَی الَّذِیْ فَطَرَنِیْ ؕ اَفَلَا تَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿۵۱﴾

52 And, O my people, ask forgiveness of your Lord, then turn to Him, He will send on you clouds pouring down abundance of rain and add strength to your strength, and turn not back, guilty.

وَ يٰقَوْمِ اسْتَغْفِرُوْا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوْبُوْۤا اِلَيْهِ يُرْسِلِ السَّمَآءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّدْرَارًا وَّ يَزِدْكُمْ قُوَّةً اِلٰی قُوَّتِكُمْ وَ لَا تَتَوَلَّوْا مُجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿۵۲﴾

53 They said: O Hūd, thou hast brought us no clear argument, and we are not going to desert our gods for thy word, and we are not believers in thee.

قَالُوْا يٰهُوْدُ مَا جِئْتَنَا بِبَيِّنَةٍ وَّ مَا نَحْنُ بِتَارِكِیْۤ اٰلِهَتِنَا عَنْ قَوْلِكَ وَ مَا نَحْنُ لَكَ بِمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿۵۳﴾

54 We say naught but that some of our gods have smitten thee with evil. He said: Surely I call Allāh to witness, and do you, too, bear witness that I am innocent of what you associate (with Allāh)

اِنْ نَّقُوْلُ اِلَّا اعْتَرٰىكَ بَعْضُ اٰلِهَتِنَا بِسُوْٓءٍ ؕ قَالَ اِنِّیْۤ اُشْهِدُ اللّٰهَ وَ اشْهَدُوْۤا اَنِّیْ بَرِیْٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿۵۴﴾

55 Besides Him. So scheme against me all together, then give me no respite.

مِنْ دُوْنِهٖ فَكِيْدُوْنِیْ جَمِيْعًا ثُمَّ لَا تُنْظِرُوْنِ ﴿۵۵﴾

56 Surely I put my trust in Allāh, my Lord and your Lord. There is no living creature but He grasps it by its forelock. Surely my Lord is on the right path.[1186]

اِنِّیْ تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَی اللّٰهِ رَبِّیْ وَ رَبِّكُمْ ؕ مَا مِنْ دَآبَّةٍ اِلَّا هُوَ اٰخِذٌۢ بِنَاصِيَتِهَا ؕ اِنَّ رَبِّیْ عَلٰی صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ﴿۵۶﴾

57 But if you turn away, then indeed I have delivered to you that with which I am sent to you. And my Lord will bring another people in your place, and you cannot do Him any harm. Surely my Lord is the Preserver of all things.

فَاِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقَدْ اَبْلَغْتُكُمْ مَّاۤ اُرْسِلْتُ بِهٖۤ اِلَيْكُمْ ؕ وَ يَسْتَخْلِفُ رَبِّیْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ۚ وَ لَا تَضُرُّوْنَهٗ شَيْـًٔا ؕ اِنَّ رَبِّیْ عَلٰی كُلِّ شَیْءٍ حَفِيْظٌ ﴿۵۷﴾

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needed for the fate of the Prophet's opponents, not for anything relating to Noah's history. At the end of the last section there is also a similar reference to the opponents of the Holy Prophet; compare also the 26th chapter, in which the history of every prophet is concluded with the words: "Surely there is a sign in this, but most of them believe not", where the fate of the opponents of the Holy Prophet is indicated as being identical with the fate of those who opposed earlier prophets.

1185a For 'Ād and their prophet Hūd, see 903.

1186 *My Lord is on the right path* signifies that He does not deviate from justice so that He should destroy the righteous or that the iniquitous should escape His punishment.

58 And when Our commandment came to pass, We delivered Hūd and those who believed with him with mercy from Us; and We delivered them from a hard chastisement.

وَلَمَّا جَآءَ اَمْرُنَا نَجَّيْنَا هُوْدًا وَّالَّذِيْنَ
اٰمَنُوْا مَعَهٗ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنَّا ۚ وَنَجَّيْنٰهُمْ مِّنْ
عَذَابٍ غَلِيْظٍ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 And such were 'Ād. They denied the messages of their Lord, and disobeyed His messengers and followed the bidding of every insolent opposer (of truth).

وَتِلْكَ عَادٌ ۟ جَحَدُوْا بِاٰيٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَعَصَوْا
رُسُلَهٗ وَاتَّبَعُوْٓا اَمْرَ كُلِّ جَبَّارٍ عَنِيْدٍ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 And they were overtaken by a curse in this world and on the day of Resurrection. Now surely 'Ād disbelieved in their Lord. Now surely, away with 'Ād, the people of Hūd!

وَاُتْبِعُوْا فِيْ هٰذِهِ الدُّنْيَا لَعْنَةً وَّيَوْمَ
الْقِيٰمَةِ ؕ اَلَآ اِنَّ عَادًا كَفَرُوْا رَبَّهُمْ ؕ
اَلَا بُعْدًا لِّعَادٍ قَوْمِ هُوْدٍ ﴿٦٠﴾

SECTION 6 : **History of Ṣāliḥ**

61 And to Thamūd (We sent) their brother Ṣāliḥ. He said: O my people, serve Allāh, you have no god other than Him. He brought you forth from the earth and made you dwell in it, so ask forgiveness of Him, then turn to Him. Surely my Lord is Nigh, Answering.

وَاِلٰى ثَمُوْدَ اَخَاهُمْ صٰلِحًا ۘ قَالَ يٰقَوْمِ
اعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ اِلٰهٍ غَيْرُهٗ ؕ
هُوَ اَنْشَاَكُمْ مِّنَ الْاَرْضِ وَاسْتَعْمَرَكُمْ
فِيْهَا فَاسْتَغْفِرُوْهُ ثُمَّ تُوْبُوْٓا اِلَيْهِ ؕ
اِنَّ رَبِّيْ قَرِيْبٌ مُّجِيْبٌ ﴿٦١﴾

62 They said: O Ṣāliḥ, thou wast among us a centre of (our) hopes before this. Dost thou forbid us to worship what our fathers worshipped? And surely we are in grave doubt about that to which thou callest us.

قَالُوْا يٰصٰلِحُ قَدْ كُنْتَ فِيْنَا مَرْجُوًّا قَبْلَ
هٰذَآ اَتَنْهٰنَآ اَنْ نَّعْبُدَ مَا يَعْبُدُ اٰبَآؤُنَا
وَاِنَّنَا لَفِيْ شَكٍّ مِّمَّا تَدْعُوْنَآ اِلَيْهِ مُرِيْبٍ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 He said: O my people, see you if I have clear proof from my Lord and He has granted me mercy from Himself — who will then help me against Allāh, if I disobey Him? So you would add to me naught but perdition.

قَالَ يٰقَوْمِ اَرَءَيْتُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُ عَلٰى بَيِّنَةٍ
مِّنْ رَّبِّيْ وَاٰتٰىنِيْ مِنْهُ رَحْمَةً فَمَنْ
يَّنْصُرُنِيْ مِنَ اللّٰهِ اِنْ عَصَيْتُهٗ ۫ فَمَا
تَزِيْدُوْنَنِيْ غَيْرَ تَخْسِيْرٍ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 And, O my people, this is Allāh's she-camel,[1186a] a sign for you, so leave her to pasture on Allāh's earth and touch her not with evil, lest a near chastisement overtake you.

وَ يٰقَوۡمِ هٰذِهٖ نَاقَةُ اللّٰهِ لَكُمۡ اٰيَةً فَذَرُوۡهَا تَاۡكُلۡ فِيۡۤ اَرۡضِ اللّٰهِ وَ لَا تَمَسُّوۡهَا بِسُوۡٓءٍ فَيَاۡخُذَكُمۡ عَذَابٌ قَرِيۡبٌ ﴿۶۴﴾

65 But they hamstrung her, so he said: Enjoy yourselves in your houses for three days. That is a promise not to be belied.

فَعَقَرُوۡهَا فَقَالَ تَمَتَّعُوۡا فِيۡ دَارِكُمۡ ثَلٰثَةَ اَيَّامٍ ؕ ذٰلِكَ وَعۡدٌ غَيۡرُ مَكۡذُوۡبٍ ﴿۶۵﴾

66 So when Our commandment came to pass, We saved Ṣāliḥ and those who believed with him by mercy from Us from the disgrace of that day. Surely thy Lord — He is the Strong, the Mighty.

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ اَمۡرُنَا نَجَّيۡنَا صٰلِحًا وَّ الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا مَعَهٗ بِرَحۡمَةٍ مِّنَّا وَ مِنۡ خِزۡيِ يَوۡمِئِذٍ ؕ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ الۡقَوِيُّ الۡعَزِيۡزُ ﴿۶۶﴾

67 And the cry[1186b] overtook those who did wrong, so they were motionless bodies in their abodes,

وَ اَخَذَ الَّذِيۡنَ ظَلَمُوا الصَّيۡحَةُ فَاَصۡبَحُوۡا فِيۡ دِيَارِهِمۡ جٰثِمِيۡنَ ﴿۶۷﴾

68 As though they had never dwelt therein. Now surely Thamūd disbelieved in their Lord. So away with Thamūd!

كَاَنۡ لَّمۡ يَغۡنَوۡا فِيۡهَا ؕ اَلَاۤ اِنَّ ثَمُوۡدَاۡ كَفَرُوۡا رَبَّهُمۡ ؕ اَلَا بُعۡدًا لِّثَمُوۡدَ ﴿۶۸﴾

SECTION 7: **Abraham and Lot**

69 And certainly Our messengers came to Abraham with good news. They said: Peace! Peace! said he. And he made no delay in bringing a roasted calf.[1187]

وَ لَقَدۡ جَآءَتۡ رُسُلُنَاۤ اِبۡرٰهِيۡمَ بِالۡبُشۡرٰى قَالُوۡا سَلٰمًا ؕ قَالَ سَلٰمٌ فَمَا لَبِثَ اَنۡ جَآءَ بِعِجۡلٍ حَنِيۡذٍ ﴿۶۹﴾

1186a See 911, 914. For the she-camel, see 913.

1186b It was an earthquake; see 915.

1187 Compare Gen. 18:1-7. According to the Bible (Gen. 18:8), they ate the roasted calf and other food provided by Abraham. But the contrary, as Rodwell notes, was maintained by the Rabbins, and he directs attention to Is. Baba Mezia, fol. 86: "They made as though they ate". Whether they were angels or men, is not made clear here or anywhere else in the Holy Qur'ān. But owing to the

70 But when he saw that their hands reached not to it, he mistrusted them and conceived fear of them. They said: Fear not; we have been sent to Lot's people.[1188]

فَلَمَّا رَاٰۤ اَیۡدِیَهُمۡ لَا تَصِلُ اِلَیۡهِ نَکِرَهُمۡ وَ اَوۡجَسَ مِنۡهُمۡ خِیۡفَةً ؕ قَالُوۡا لَا تَخَفۡ اِنَّاۤ اُرۡسِلۡنَاۤ اِلٰی قَوۡمِ لُوۡطٍ ﴿۷۰﴾

71 And his wife was standing (by), so she wondered. Then We gave her the good news of Isaac, and beyond Isaac, of Jacob.[1189]

وَ امۡرَاَتُهٗ قَآئِمَةٌ فَضَحِکَتۡ فَبَشَّرۡنٰهَا بِاِسۡحٰقَ ۙ وَ مِنۡ وَّرَآءِ اِسۡحٰقَ یَعۡقُوۡبَ ﴿۷۱﴾

72 She said: O wonder![1190] Shall I bear a son when I am an extremely old woman, and this my husband an extremely old man? This is a wonderful thing indeed!

قَالَتۡ یٰوَیۡلَتٰۤی ءَاَلِدُ وَ اَنَا عَجُوۡزٌ وَّ هٰذَا بَعۡلِیۡ شَیۡخًا ؕ اِنَّ هٰذَا لَشَیۡءٌ عَجِیۡبٌ ﴿۷۲﴾

73 They said: Wonderest thou at Allāh's commandment? The mercy of Allāh and His blessings on you, O people of the house![1191] Surely He is Praised, Glorious.

قَالُوۡۤا اَتَعۡجَبِیۡنَ مِنۡ اَمۡرِ اللّٰهِ رَحۡمَتُ اللّٰهِ وَ بَرَکٰتُهٗ عَلَیۡکُمۡ اَهۡلَ الۡبَیۡتِ ؕ اِنَّهٗ حَمِیۡدٌ مَّجِیۡدٌ ﴿۷۳﴾

74 So when fear departed from Abraham and good news came to him,

فَلَمَّا ذَهَبَ عَنۡ اِبۡرٰهِیۡمَ الرَّوۡعُ وَ

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fact that they did not partake of food, and the fact that they brought to Abraham news of a son and of the destruction of Lot's people, they are generally looked upon as angels who appeared in the similitude of men.

1188 Elsewhere it is made clear that the news of the birth of a son was given to Abraham first: "So he conceived fear of them. They said, Fear not. And they gave him good news of a son possessing knowledge. Then his wife came up in great grief, and she struck her face and said, An old barren woman!" (51:28, 29). This explains Sarah's wonder as stated in v. 71. It was after receiving the good news of the birth of a son that Abraham was informed of the destruction of Lot's people. The statement made further on in v. 71 that Sarah was given the good news of the birth of a son is by way of reassurance on her expression of wonder, and to give the further news of a son's son, Jacob.

1189 Compare Gen. 18:10-12. The mention of a son's son (Jacob) was to show that that son should have progeny. It should be borne in mind that *warā'*, which ordinarily signifies *beyond, behind* or *before,* also means a son's son (T). Elsewhere Jacob is expressly called *nāfilah* (21:72) which means a *grandson.*

1190 The original words are *yā wailatā,* and they are expressive of grief and sorrow. It should be remembered, however, that according to the best authorities *wail* is used to express *wonder,* whether the occasion be one of weal or woe. "And *wail* does occur in the sense of *wonder*" (T). According to AH, *it is a word which is frequently used by women when anything causing wonder occurs to them.*

1191 *Ahl al-bait* includes the wife of a person; in fact, it is Abraham's wife that is primarily addressed here. The same phrase in the case of the Holy Prophet (33:33) includes his wives as well as his children.

he began to plead with Us for Lot's people.[1192]

جَآءَتْهُ الْبُشْرٰى يُجَادِلُنَا فِيْ قَوْمِ لُوْطٍ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 Surely Abraham was forbearing, tender-hearted, oft-returning (to Allāh).

اِنَّ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ لَحَلِيْمٌ اَوَّاهٌ مُّنِيْبٌ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 O Abraham, cease from this. Surely the decree of thy Lord has gone forth and there must come to them a chastisement that cannot be averted.

يٰۤاِبْرٰهِيْمُ اَعْرِضْ عَنْ هٰذَا ۚ اِنَّهٗ قَدْ جَآءَ اَمْرُ رَبِّكَ ۚ وَاِنَّهُمْ اٰتِيْهِمْ عَذَابٌ غَيْرُ مَرْدُوْدٍ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 And when Our messengers came to Lot, he was grieved for them, and he was unable to protect them,[1193] and said : This is a distressful day !

وَلَمَّا جَآءَتْ رُسُلُنَا لُوْطًا سِيْٓءَ بِهِمْ وَضَاقَ بِهِمْ ذَرْعًا وَّقَالَ هٰذَا يَوْمٌ عَصِيْبٌ ﴿٧٧﴾

78 And his people came to him, (as if) driven on towards him, and they were used to the doing of evil deeds before. He said : O my people, these are my daughters — they are purer for you ; so guard against (the punishment of) Allāh and disgrace me not about my guests. Is there not among you any right-minded man ?[1194]

وَجَآءَهٗ قَوْمُهٗ يُهْرَعُوْنَ اِلَيْهِ ؕ وَمِنْ قَبْلُ كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ السَّيِّاٰتِ ؕ قَالَ يٰقَوْمِ هٰۤؤُلَآءِ بَنَاتِيْ هُنَّ اَطْهَرُ لَكُمْ فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَلَا تُخْزُوْنِ فِيْ ضَيْفِيْ ؕ اَلَيْسَ مِنْكُمْ رَجُلٌ رَّشِيْدٌ ﴿٧٨﴾

79 They said : Certainly thou knowest that we have no claim on thy daughters, and thou knowest what we desire.

قَالُوْا لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَا لَنَا فِيْ بَنٰتِكَ مِنْ حَقٍّ ۚ وَاِنَّكَ لَتَعْلَمُ مَا نُرِيْدُ ﴿٧٩﴾

80 He said : Would that I had the power to repel you ! — rather I shall have recourse to a strong support.[1194a]

قَالَ لَوْ اَنَّ لِيْ بِكُمْ قُوَّةً اَوْ اٰوِيْۤ اِلٰى رُكْنٍ شَدِيْدٍ ﴿٨٠﴾

1192 Compare Gen. 18 : 21-23.

1193 Dhar', which primarily signifies *stretching forth the arm,* is used in the sense of *power* or *ability* (T). The meaning of the phrase here is that *he was unable to do the thing,* or *he lacked strength to accomplish the affair* (LL).

1194 Lot, it appears from Gen. 19 : 9, was a stranger in the city : "This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge," and the messengers being strangers, the townsmen would not allow him to keep them. Lot offered his daughters as hostages so that he might be allowed to keep his guests with him, for according to 15 : 70 he had not permission to allow any stranger to come under his roof : "Have we not forbidden thee from other people?" i.e. from giving shelter to them. This may have been due to the constant danger of tribal fighting. Another view is that Lot offered his daughters for marriage, as thus he would not be a stranger among them but would be one of them. Some commentators have suggested that Lot did not point to his real daughters, but to women of the tribe, because a prophet would speak of the women of his tribe as his daughters

1194a, see next page.

81 They said: O Lot, we are the messengers of thy Lord. They shall not reach thee. So travel with thy people for a part of the night — and let none of you turn back — except thy wife.[1195] Surely whatsoever befalls them shall befall her. Surely their appointed time is the morning. Is not the morning nigh?

قَالُوا يٰلُوطُ إِنَّا رُسُلُ رَبِّكَ لَنْ يَّصِلُوٓا إِلَيْكَ فَأَسْرِ بِأَهْلِكَ بِقِطْعٍ مِّنَ الَّيْلِ وَلَا يَلْتَفِتْ مِنْكُمْ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا امْرَأَتَكَ ۖ إِنَّهُ مُصِيبُهَا مَآ أَصَابَهُمْ ۖ إِنَّ مَوْعِدَهُمُ الصُّبْحُ ۖ أَلَيْسَ الصُّبْحُ بِقَرِيبٍ ﴿٨١﴾

82 So when Our decree came to pass, We turned them upside down,[1196] and rained on them stones,[1197] as decreed,[1198] one after another,

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ أَمْرُنَا جَعَلْنَا عَالِيَهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا حِجَارَةً مِّنْ سِجِّيلٍ مَّنْضُودٍ ﴿٨٢﴾

83 Marked (for punishment) with thy Lord. And it is not far off from the wrongdoers.[1199]

مُّسَوَّمَةً عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ۖ وَمَا هِيَ مِنَ الظّٰلِمِينَ بِبَعِيدٍ ﴿٨٣﴾

SECTION 8: **History of Shu'aib**

84 And to Midian (We sent) their brother Shu'aib. He said: O my people, serve Allāh, you have no other god save Him. And give not short measure and weight. I see you in prosperity, and I fear for you the chastisement of an all-encompassing day:

وَإِلٰى مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا ۖ قَالَ يٰقَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ إِلٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ ۖ وَلَا تَنْقُصُوا الْمِكْيَالَ وَالْمِيزَانَ إِنِّيٓ أَرٰىكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ وَّإِنِّيٓ أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ مُّحِيطٍ ﴿٨٤﴾

(Rz, JB), and in that case he did no more than point to the natural relation of man and woman. The answer of his people seems, however, to relate to his daughters.

1194a Allāh is the strong support to Whom the righteous have recourse when they are in trouble. The particle *au* signifies *or*, as well as *rather*, in the latter case being the equivalent of *bal* (LL).

1195 Compare Gen. 19:26.

1196 It was a severe earthquake, which so utterly demolished the cities as to turn them upside down. In 15:73 it is called *ṣaiḥah*, i.e., *the rumbling* that precedes an earthquake; see 918.

1197 The raining down of stones might have been the result of a volcanic eruption which was accompanied by an earthquake.

1198 The word *sijjīl* is derived from the root *sajala*, meaning *he poured forth* (water), from which a large number of derivatives have followed, as usual in Arabic. *Sajjala* means *he wrote a paper* or *a scroll*, or *decided judicially*. *Sijjīl* means *what had been written* or *decreed for them* (LL).

1199 The concluding words indicate a reversion to the subject of the punishment of the opponents of the Holy Prophet. *It* refers to the *punishment*.

85 And, O my people, give full measure and weight justly, and defraud not men of their things, and act not corruptly in the land, making mischief :

وَيٰقَوْمِ اَوْفُوا الْمِكْيَالَ وَالْمِيْزَانَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ اَشْيَآءَهُمْ وَلَا تَعْثَوْا فِي الْاَرْضِ مُفْسِدِيْنَ ﴿٨٥﴾

86 What remains with Allāh is better for you, if you are believers. And I am not a keeper over you.[1200]

بَقِيَّتُ اللّٰهِ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ۚ وَمَآ اَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ بِحَفِيْظٍ ﴿٨٦﴾

87 They said : O Shu'aib, does thy prayer enjoin thee that we should forsake what our fathers worshipped or that we should not do what we please with regard to our property ? Forsooth thou art the forbearing, the right-directing one !

قَالُوْا يٰشُعَيْبُ اَصَلٰوتُكَ تَاْمُرُكَ اَنْ نَّتْرُكَ مَا يَعْبُدُ اٰبَآؤُنَآ اَوْ اَنْ نَّفْعَلَ فِيْٓ اَمْوَالِنَا مَا نَشٰٓؤُا ۭ اِنَّكَ لَاَنْتَ الْحَلِيْمُ الرَّشِيْدُ ﴿٨٧﴾

88 He said : O my people, see you if I have a clear proof from my Lord and He has given me a goodly sustenance from Himself. And I desire not to act in opposition to you, in that which I forbid you. I desire nothing but reform, so far as I am able. And with none but Allāh is the direction of my affair to a right issue. In Him I trust and to Him I turn.

قَالَ يٰقَوْمِ اَرَءَيْتُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُ عَلٰى بَيِّنَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّيْ وَرَزَقَنِيْ مِنْهُ رِزْقًا حَسَنًا ۭ وَمَآ اُرِيْدُ اَنْ اُخَالِفَكُمْ اِلٰى مَآ اَنْهٰكُمْ عَنْهُ ۭ اِنْ اُرِيْدُ اِلَّا الْاِصْلَاحَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ ۭ وَمَا تَوْفِيْقِيْٓ اِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ ۭ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَاِلَيْهِ اُنِيْبُ ﴿٨٨﴾

89 And, O my people, let not opposition to me make you guilty so that there may befall you the like of that which befell the people of Noah, or the people of Hūd, or the people of Ṣāliḥ. Nor are the people of Lot far off from you.

وَيٰقَوْمِ لَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شِقَاقِيْٓ اَنْ يُّصِيْبَكُمْ مِّثْلُ مَآ اَصَابَ قَوْمَ نُوْحٍ اَوْ قَوْمَ هُوْدٍ اَوْ قَوْمَ صٰلِحٍ ۭ وَمَا قَوْمُ لُوْطٍ مِّنْكُمْ بِبَعِيْدٍ ﴿٨٩﴾

90 And ask forgiveness of your Lord, then turn to Him. Surely my Lord is Merciful, Loving-kind.

وَاسْتَغْفِرُوْا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوْبُوْٓا اِلَيْهِ ۭ اِنَّ رَبِّيْ رَحِيْمٌ وَّدُوْدٌ ﴿٩٠﴾

1200 *Baqiyyat Allāh* would properly signify *that part of man's doing which remains with Allāh*, i.e., *the righteous* or *good works, of which the recompense remains*, the word conveying the same significance as *bāqiyāt* in 18:46 and 19:76. But it may also mean *what Allāh leaves to you after you have paid the dues of others.*

91 They said : O Shu'aib, we understand not much of what thou sayest and surely we see thee to be weak among us. And were it not for thy family, we would surely stone thee, and thou art not mighty against us.

قَالُوْا يٰشُعَيْبُ مَا نَفْقَهُ كَثِيْرًا مِّمَّا تَقُوْلُ
وَاِنَّا لَنَرٰىكَ فِيْنَا ضَعِيْفًا ۚ وَلَوْلَا رَهْطُكَ
لَرَجَمْنٰكَ ۫ وَمَآ اَنْتَ عَلَيْنَا بِعَزِيْزٍ ﴿۹۱﴾

92 He said : O my people, is my family more esteemed by you than Allāh ? And you neglect Him as a thing cast behind your backs ! Surely my Lord encompasses what you do.

قَالَ يٰقَوْمِ اَرَهْطِيْٓ اَعَزُّ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ؕ
وَاتَّخَذْتُمُوْهُ وَرَآءَكُمْ ظِهْرِيًّا ؕ اِنَّ
رَبِّيْ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ مُحِيْطٌ ﴿۹۲﴾

93 And, O my people, act according to your ability, I too am acting. You will come to know soon who it is on whom will light the punishment that will disgrace him, and who it is that is a liar. And watch, surely I too am watching with you.

وَيٰقَوْمِ اعْمَلُوْا عَلٰى مَكَانَتِكُمْ اِنِّيْ عَامِلٌ ؕ
سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ۙ مَنْ يَّاْتِيْهِ عَذَابٌ
يُّخْزِيْهِ وَمَنْ هُوَ كَاذِبٌ ؕ وَارْتَقِبُوْٓا
اِنِّيْ مَعَكُمْ رَقِيْبٌ ﴿۹۳﴾

94 And when Our decree came to pass, We delivered Shu'aib and those who believed with him by mercy from Us. And the cry overtook those who were iniquitous, so they were motionless bodies in their abodes,

وَلَمَّا جَآءَ اَمْرُنَا نَجَّيْنَا شُعَيْبًا وَّالَّذِيْنَ
اٰمَنُوْا مَعَهٗ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنَّا وَاَخَذَتِ
الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوا الصَّيْحَةُ فَاَصْبَحُوْا
فِيْ دِيَارِهِمْ جٰثِمِيْنَ ﴿۹۴﴾

95 As though they had never dwelt in them. So away with Midian, just as Thamūd perished !

كَاَنْ لَّمْ يَغْنَوْا فِيْهَا ؕ اَلَا بُعْدًا لِّمَدْيَنَ
كَمَا بَعِدَتْ ثَمُوْدُ ﴿۹۵﴾

SECTION 9 : **The Iniquitous and the Righteous**

96 And certainly We sent Moses with Our signs and a clear authority,

وَلَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَا مُوْسٰى بِاٰيٰتِنَا
وَسُلْطٰنٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿۹۶﴾

97 To Pharaoh and his chiefs, but they followed the bidding of Pharaoh ; and Pharaoh's bidding was not right-directing.

اِلٰى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَا۟ئِهٖ فَاتَّبَعُوْٓا اَمْرَ
فِرْعَوْنَ ۚ وَمَآ اَمْرُ فِرْعَوْنَ بِرَشِيْدٍ ﴿۹۷﴾

98 He will lead his people on the day of Resurrection, and bring them down to the Fire. And evil the place to which they are brought !

يَقْدُمُ قَوْمَهٗ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ فَاَوْرَدَهُمُ
النَّارَ ؕ وَبِئْسَ الْوِرْدُ الْمَوْرُوْدُ ﴿۹۸﴾

99 And they are overtaken by a curse in this (world), and on the day of Resurrection. Evil the gift which shall be given!

وَأُتْبِعُوا فِي هَٰذِهِ لَعْنَةً وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۚ بِئْسَ الرِّفْدُ الْمَرْفُودُ ﴿٩٩﴾

100 This is an account of the towns which we relate to thee. Of them are some that stand and (others) mown down.

ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْقُرَىٰ نَقُصُّهُ عَلَيْكَ ۖ مِنْهَا قَائِمٌ وَحَصِيدٌ ﴿١٠٠﴾

101 And We wronged them not but they wronged themselves. And their gods whom they called upon besides Allāh availed them naught when the decree of thy Lord came to pass. And they added to them naught but ruin.

وَمَا ظَلَمْنَاهُمْ وَلَٰكِنْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ۖ فَمَا أَغْنَتْ عَنْهُمْ آلِهَتُهُمُ الَّتِي يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ لَمَّا جَاءَ أَمْرُ رَبِّكَ ۖ وَمَا زَادُوهُمْ غَيْرَ تَتْبِيبٍ ﴿١٠١﴾

102 And such is the punishment of thy Lord, when He punishes the towns while they are iniquitous. Surely His punishment is painful, severe.

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَخْذُ رَبِّكَ إِذَا أَخَذَ الْقُرَىٰ وَهِيَ ظَالِمَةٌ ۚ إِنَّ أَخْذَهُ أَلِيمٌ شَدِيدٌ ﴿١٠٢﴾

103 Surely there is a sign in this for him who fears the chastisement of the Hereafter. That is a day on which people will be gathered together, and that is a day to be witnessed.

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِمَنْ خَافَ عَذَابَ الْآخِرَةِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ يَوْمٌ مَجْمُوعٌ لَهُ النَّاسُ وَذَٰلِكَ يَوْمٌ مَشْهُودٌ ﴿١٠٣﴾

104 And We delay it not but for an appointed term.

وَمَا نُؤَخِّرُهُ إِلَّا لِأَجَلٍ مَعْدُودٍ ﴿١٠٤﴾

105 On the day when it comes, no soul will speak except by His permission; so (some) of them will be unhappy and (others) happy.

يَوْمَ يَأْتِ لَا تَكَلَّمُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ ۚ فَمِنْهُمْ شَقِيٌّ وَسَعِيدٌ ﴿١٠٥﴾

106 Then as for those who are unhappy, they will be in the Fire; for them therein will be sighing and groaning —

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ شَقُوا فَفِي النَّارِ لَهُمْ فِيهَا زَفِيرٌ وَشَهِيقٌ ﴿١٠٦﴾

107 Abiding therein so long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as thy Lord please. Surely thy Lord is Doer of what He intends.[1201]

خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا مَا دَامَتِ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ رَبُّكَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ فَعَّالٌ لِمَا يُرِيدُ ﴿١٠٧﴾

1201 This limitation on the duration of abiding in hell — *except as thy Lord please* — is given twice in the Holy Qur'ān, here and in 6:129, and it shows clearly that the punishment of hell is not everlasting. A comparison with the verse that follows makes it clearer. There, too, we have that those in paradise will abide there as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as thy Lord

108 And as for those who are made happy, they will be in the Garden abiding therein so long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as thy Lord please — a gift never to be cut off.[1202]

وَ اَمَّا الَّذِیْنَ سُعِدُوْا فَفِی الْجَنَّةِ خٰلِدِیْنَ فِیْهَا مَا دَامَتِ السَّمٰوٰتُ وَ الْاَرْضُ اِلَّا مَا شَآءَ رَبُّكَ ؕ عَطَآءً غَیْرَ مَجْذُوْذٍ ۝۱۰۸

109 So be not thou in doubt as to that which these worship. They worship only as their fathers worshipped before. And surely We shall pay them in full their due undiminished.

فَلَا تَكُ فِیْ مِرْیَةٍ مِّمَّا یَعْبُدُ هٰۤؤُلَآءِ ؕ مَا یَعْبُدُوْنَ اِلَّا كَمَا یَعْبُدُ اٰبَآؤُهُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلُ ؕ وَ اِنَّا لَمُوَفُّوْهُمْ نَصِیْبَهُمْ غَیْرَ مَنْقُوْصٍ ۝۱۰۹

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please, but the statement is immediately followed by another: *A gift never to be cut off.* This shows that in fact there is no limitation upon the eternity of paradise, and the words *except as thy Lord please* have been used, in the case of paradise, only to express the unbounded power and greatness of the Divine Being and the fact that it is due to God's pleasure that they are there. In the case of hell, however, the words *except as thy Lord please* are followed by a statement which corroborates the limitation thus placed, for, *Fa''āl,* as an attribute of the Divine Being, indicates that He does even those things which seem impossible to others, the word being an intensive form of *fā'il,* meaning *doer.* It should be noted further that in both cases it is *Rabb,* lit., *the Nourisher to perfection,* Whose will is to be exercised. The end is in both cases the same. Man is ultimately to be brought to perfection, but this cannot be, unless those in hell are taken out of it and set on the road to spiritual progress, *thrown into the river of Life,* as a ḥadīth has it.

Various sayings of the Holy Prophet corroborate the statement made above. For instance, the concluding portion of a ḥadīth which is met with in one of the most reliable collections runs thus: "Then will Allāh say: The angels and the prophets and the faithful have all in their turn interceded for the sinners, and now there remains none to intercede for them except the most Merciful of all the merciful ones. So He will take out a handful from the Fire and bring out a people *who never worked any good*" (B. 97:24). According to this ḥadīth, such people are called *Ṭulaqā al-Raḥmān,* or *the freed ones of the Beneficent,* Who exercises His mercy towards those who have done nothing to deserve it. There are also other sayings in the *Kanz al-'Ummāl:* "Surely a day will come over hell when it will be like a field of corn that has dried up after flourishing for a while"; and again: "Surely a day will come over hell when there will not be a single human being in it" (vol. vii, p. 245). There is also a saying of 'Umar on record: "Even if the dwellers in hell may be numberless as the sands of the desert, a day will surely come when they will be taken out of it" (FB).

One question, however, remains to be answered, and that is the use of the word *abad,* which is generally considered as meaning *for ever.* The abiding in hell for *abad* is mentioned thrice in the Holy Qur'ān, in 4:169, 33:65 and 72:23. It is, however, stated by all lexicologists that *abad* signifies *a long time* (LL), being synonymous with *dahr ṭawīl* or *a long time* (Mgh), as also *time without end* (T). It is due to its significance as *a long time* that it has a plural form *ābād,* which it could not have if *eternity* were its only significance. The Qur'ān makes this use of the word clear by stating in 78:23 that the disbelievers will remain in hell for *aḥqāb,* i.e. *long ages,* the word being plural of *ḥuqbah,* which means *seventy* or *eighty* years (see 2645).

1202 In accordance with what is said here in connection with the heavenly life, that it is a gift which shall never be cut off, we have in 15:48: "Nor shall they be ever ejected from it".

SECTION 10 : **Believers Comforted**

110 And We certainly gave the Book to Moses, but differences arose therein.[1203] And had not a word gone forth from thy Lord, the matter would have been decided between them. And they are surely in a disquieting doubt about it.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتٰبَ فَاخْتُلِفَ فِيهِ ۚ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ لَقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مُرِيبٍ ﴿١١٠﴾

111 And thy Lord will surely pay back to all their deeds in full. He indeed is Aware of what they do.

وَإِنَّ كُلًّا لَّمَّا لَيُوَفِّيَنَّهُمْ رَبُّكَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١١١﴾

112 Continue then in the right way as thou art commanded, as also (should) those who turn (to Allāh) with thee. And be not inordinate, (O men). Surely He is Seer of what you do.

فَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ وَمَنْ تَابَ مَعَكَ وَلَا تَطْغَوْا ۚ إِنَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١١٢﴾

113 And incline not to those who do wrong, lest the fire touch you ; and you have no protectors besides Allāh, then you would not be helped.[1204]

وَلَا تَرْكَنُوا إِلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا فَتَمَسَّكُمُ النَّارُ ۙ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ أَوْلِيَاءَ ثُمَّ لَا تُنْصَرُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾

114 And keep up prayer at the two ends of the day and in the first hours of the night. Surely good deeds take away evil deeds. This is a reminder for the mindful.[1205]

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلٰوةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَزُلَفًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ ۚ إِنَّ الْحَسَنٰتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ۚ ذٰلِكَ ذِكْرٰى لِلذّٰكِرِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾

115 And be patient, for surely Allāh wastes not the reward of the doers of good.

وَاصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١١٥﴾

1203 I*khtalafa* means also *khālafa*, i.e. *he acted in opposition to*, or *disagreed with* (see 213 for full explanation), and thus the words may mean that the Jews acted against it.

1204 Not only is man forbidden to do any wrong himself, but he should keep himself at a safe distance from wrong and refrain from leaning towards the wrongdoers.

1205 The times of prayer are clearly indicated in this verse. Of the two ends of the day, the first is the *fajr*, or the prayer *before sunrise*, and the second includes the *ẓuhr*, or *the early afternoon*, and the *'aṣr*, or *the later afternoon*, prayers. In the first hours of the night we have the *maghrib*, or *the after sunset prayer*, and the *'ishā'*, or the prayer *before going to bed*. The two afternoon prayers and the two after sunset prayers, which are spoken of together, may under exceptional circumstances be said together.

فَلَوْلَا كَانَ مِنَ الْقُرُوْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ
أُولُوْا بَقِيَّةٍ يَّنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْفَسَادِ فِي
الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا قَلِيْلًا مِّمَّنْ أَنْجَيْنَا مِنْهُمْ
وَاتَّبَعَ الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا مَا أُتْرِفُوْا فِيْهِ
وَكَانُوْا مُجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿١١٦﴾

116 Why were there not then among the generations before you those possessing understanding,[1206] forbidding mischief in the earth, except a few among them whom We delivered? And the unjust pursued the enjoyment of plenty, and they were guilty.

وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ لِيُهْلِكَ الْقُرٰى بِظُلْمٍ
وَّأَهْلُهَا مُصْلِحُوْنَ ﴿١١٧﴾

117 And thy Lord would not destroy the towns unjustly, while their people acted well.[1207]

وَلَوْ شَآءَ رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ النَّاسَ أُمَّةً
وَّاحِدَةً وَّلَا يَزَالُوْنَ مُخْتَلِفِيْنَ ﴿١١٨﴾

118 And if thy Lord had pleased, He would have made people a single nation.[1208] And they cease not to differ,

إِلَّا مَنْ رَّحِمَ رَبُّكَ ۚ وَلِذٰلِكَ خَلَقَهُمْ ۚ
وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لَأَمْلَئَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ
مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِيْنَ ﴿١١٩﴾

119 Except those on whom thy Lord has mercy; and for this did He create them.[1209] And the word of thy Lord is fulfilled: I shall fill hell with jinn and men, all together.[1210]

1206 The phrase *ulū baqiyyah* is interpreted in a number of ways: *persons possessed of excellence*, or *possessing a relic of judgment and intelligence*, or *persons of understanding and discrimination*, or *persons of obedience* (LL). For the word *baqiyyah*, see 1200.

1207 We are told here that God does not destroy people unjustly; He destroys them only when they act corruptly and make mischief in the land. He would not destroy them *if they act well*, whatever their beliefs. Most of the commentators take the word *ẓulm* here as meaning *shirk*, the significance being that God would not destroy people, even though they were guilty of *shirk*, provided they *acted well*. The translation in this case would be, *thy Lord would not destroy the towns for wrong beliefs, while their people acted well*. It should be noted that the word *ẓulm* is very broad in its significance. According to R, *ẓulm* is of three kinds: (1) as between man and Allāh, the greatest of which is *kufr* or *disbelief* and *shirk* or *polytheism*; this would, of course, include all wrong beliefs with regard to the Divine Being; (2) as between man and man, which would include all kinds of transgressions involving a violation of the rights of others; (3) as between man and his own self, which would include all kinds of guilty action injurious not to others but to man's own self.

1208 God does not force men to one particular belief; He has given them the choice to accept or reject the truth.

1209 Here it is clearly stated that Allāh created all men to have mercy on them. By His mercy He guides some to the right path, while to others, who go over to evil and make themselves deserving of hell, mercy will come only after suffering. It is by their own hands that they get into distress and difficulty, while Allāh has mercy on them in extricating them from it.

1210 Because they went against the ways which Allāh had mercifully shown to them, therefore they must pass through another ordeal, so that they may be purged of evil and made fit for spiritual progress.

120 And all We relate to thee of the account of the messengers is to strengthen thy heart therewith. And in this has come to thee the truth and an admonition and a reminder for the believers.

وَكُلًّا نَّقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ اَنْۢبَآءِ الرُّسُلِ مَا نُثَبِّتُ بِهٖ فُؤَادَكَ ۚ وَجَآءَكَ فِيْ هٰذِهِ الْحَقُّ وَمَوْعِظَةٌ وَّذِكْرٰى لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

121 And say to those who believe not: Act according to your power, surely we too are acting;

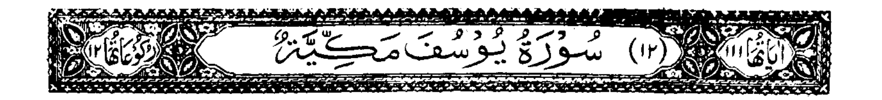
وَقُلْ لِّلَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ اعْمَلُوْا عَلٰى مَكَانَتِكُمْ ۭ اِنَّا عٰمِلُوْنَ ﴿١٢١﴾

122 And wait, surely we are waiting (also).

وَانْتَظِرُوْا ۚ اِنَّا مُنْتَظِرُوْنَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

123 And Allāh's is the unseen in the heavens and the earth, and to Him the whole affair will be returned. So serve Him and put thy trust in Him. And thy Lord is not heedless of what you do.

وَلِلّٰهِ غَيْبُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَاِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُ الْاَمْرُ كُلُّهٗ فَاعْبُدْهُ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَيْهِ ۭ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٢٣﴾



CHAPTER 12

Yūsuf : **JOSEPH**

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 12 *sections*, 111 *verses*)

This chapter receives its title from the story with which it deals. The entire chapter gives a continuous account of the history of Joseph, the first three verses and the concluding section both pointing to the purpose which underlies the story. It is not, in fact, a mere narrative, but foretells the ultimate triumph of the Holy Prophet, who was to be turned out of his native city, and also the final submission of those who were plotting against his very life.

The chapter deals with three kinds of vision, viz., the vision of a prophet (Joseph), which pointed to his ultimate triumph and the triumph of Truth (vv. 4 and 100); the vision of a king, relating to the material welfare of those under his care (vv. 43-49), and the visions of ordinary men, relating to their own adversity or prosperity (vv. 36-41). The grander the purpose, the longer the vision takes for its due fulfilment; Joseph's vision took a whole lifetime, the king's vision fourteen years, while the visions of ordinary men come to immediate fulfilment. The Holy Prophet doubtless obtained consolation from these facts, as he had before him a very grand object — the reformation, first of the Arabs and then of the whole world.

In the arrangement of the chapters, the connection of this chapter with the one preceding it is clear. That chapter deals with the histories of several well-known prophets and the fate of their opponents. This prophetically states that the mutual dealings of the Holy Prophet and his enemies would be similar to the dealings of Joseph and his brethren, there being persecution on one side and entire forgiveness and merciful dealing on the other.

The chapter belongs to the same period as the other chapters of this group.

SECTION 1 **Joseph's Vision**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 I, Allāh, am the Seer. These are the verses of the Book that makes manifest.

الٓرٰ ۟ تِلْكَ اٰيٰتُ الْكِتٰبِ الْمُبِيْنِ ①

2 Surely We have revealed it — an Arabic Qur'ān — that you may understand.

اِنَّآ اَنْزَلْنٰهُ قُرْءٰنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُوْنَ ②

3 We narrate to thee the best of narratives,[1211] in that We have revealed to thee this Qur'ān, though before this thou wast of those unaware.[1212]

نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ اَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِمَآ اَوْحَيْنَآ اِلَيْكَ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ ۖ وَاِنْ كُنْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِهٖ لَمِنَ الْغٰفِلِيْنَ ③

4 When Joseph said to his father: O my father, I saw eleven stars and the sun and the moon — I saw them making obeisance to me.[1213]

اِذْ قَالَ يُوْسُفُ لِاَبِيْهِ يٰٓاَبَتِ اِنِّيْ رَاَيْتُ اَحَدَ عَشَرَ كَوْكَبًا وَّالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ رَاَيْتُهُمْ لِيْ سٰجِدِيْنَ ④

5 He said: O my son, relate not thy dream to thy brethren, lest they devise a plan against thee. The devil indeed is an open enemy to man.

قَالَ يٰبُنَيَّ لَا تَقْصُصْ رُءْيَاكَ عَلٰٓى اِخْوَتِكَ فَيَكِيْدُوْا لَكَ كَيْدًا ؕ اِنَّ الشَّيْطٰنَ لِلْاِنْسَانِ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِيْنٌ ⑤

6 And thus will thy Lord choose thee and teach thee the interpretation of sayings, and make His favour com-

وَكَذٰلِكَ يَجْتَبِيْكَ رَبُّكَ وَيُعَلِّمُكَ مِنْ تَاْوِيْلِ الْاَحَادِيْثِ وَيُتِمُّ نِعْمَتَهٗ عَلَيْكَ

1211 It is called the best narrative because it is the best picture of the dealing of the Quraish with the Prophet, and the Prophet's dealing with them. It was in the very words of Joseph to his brothers — *there is no reproof against you this day* (v. 92) — that the Holy Prophet forgave the people of Makkah all the atrocities they had committed against him, atrocities which had but one end in view — the extirpation of Islām and the destruction of the Prophet and his followers.

1212 The Prophet's "unawareness" relates to his own future, of which this chapter gives a clear indication in the incidents of Joseph's life, viz. that he was to be expelled from his home as Joseph was expelled, but that his countrymen would ultimately come to him in submission, asking pardon for their faults, as Joseph's brothers had done. But "unawareness" here may also refer to all those things that are related in the Qur'ān, because the Prophet knew nothing of them before revelation. This is also stated in 42:52: "And thus did We reveal to thee an inspired Book by Our command; thou didst not know what the Book was, nor what faith was, but We made it a light, guiding thereby whom We please of Our servants".

1213, see next page.

plete to thee and to the Children of Jacob, as He made it complete before to thy fathers, Abraham and Isaac. Surely thy Lord is Knowing, Wise.

وَعَلَىٰٓ ءَالِ يَعْقُوبَ كَمَآ أَتَمَّهَا عَلَىٰٓ أَبَوَيْكَ مِن قَبْلُ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ وَإِسْحَٰقَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦﴾

SECTION 2 : **Plot against Joseph by his Brothers**

7 Verily in Joseph and his brethren there are signs for the inquirers.[1214]

لَّقَدْ كَانَ فِى يُوسُفَ وَإِخْوَتِهِۦٓ ءَايَٰتٌ لِّلسَّآئِلِينَ ﴿٧﴾

8 When they said: Certainly Joseph and his brother[1215] are dearer to our father than we, though we are a (strong) company. Surely our father is in manifest error —

إِذْ قَالُوا۟ لَيُوسُفُ وَأَخُوهُ أَحَبُّ إِلَىٰٓ أَبِينَا مِنَّا وَنَحْنُ عُصْبَةٌ ۚ إِنَّ أَبَانَا لَفِى ضَلَٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٨﴾

9 Slay Joseph or banish him to some (other) land, so that your father's regard may be exclusively for you, and after that you may be a righteous people.[1216]

ٱقْتُلُوا۟ يُوسُفَ أَوِ ٱطْرَحُوهُ أَرْضًا يَخْلُ لَكُمْ وَجْهُ أَبِيكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا۟ مِنۢ بَعْدِهِۦ قَوْمًا صَٰلِحِينَ ﴿٩﴾

10 A speaker among them said: Slay not Joseph, but, if you are going to do anything, cast him down to the bottom of the well. Some of the travellers may pick him up.[1217]

قَالَ قَآئِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ لَا تَقْتُلُوا۟ يُوسُفَ وَأَلْقُوهُ فِى غَيَٰبَتِ ٱلْجُبِّ يَلْتَقِطْهُ بَعْضُ ٱلسَّيَّارَةِ إِن كُنتُمْ فَٰعِلِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

11 They said: O our father, why dost thou not trust us with Joseph, and surely we are his sincere well-wishers?

قَالُوا۟ يَٰٓأَبَانَا مَا لَكَ لَا تَأْمَنَّا عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ وَإِنَّا لَهُۥ لَنَٰصِحُونَ ﴿١١﴾

1213 Compare Gen. 37:9: "And behold the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me".

1214 By inquirers are meant people who inquired about the Holy Prophet, who was at this time being persecuted most severely by the people of Makkah. They are told in plain words that the story of the Prophet and his opponents was the story of Joseph and his brothers.

1215 Benjamin, his brother by the same mother, is meant here.

1216 The conspiracy of the Quraish against the Holy Prophet is referred to in the Qur'ān in the following words: "And when those who disbelieved devised plans against thee, that they might confine thee or slay thee or drive thee away" (8:30).

1217 "And Reuben said unto them: Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness and lay no hand upon him" (Gen. 37:22).

12 Send him with us to-morrow that he may enjoy himself and play, and we shall surely guard him well.

أَرْسِلْهُ مَعَنَا غَدًا يَّرْتَعْ وَيَلْعَبْ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحٰفِظُوْنَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 He said: Indeed it grieves me that you should take him away and I fear lest the wolf devour him, while you are heedless of him.

قَالَ إِنِّيْ لَيَحْزُنُنِيْٓ أَنْ تَذْهَبُوْا بِهٖ وَأَخَافُ أَنْ يَّأْكُلَهُ الذِّئْبُ وَأَنْتُمْ عَنْهُ غٰفِلُوْنَ ﴿١٣﴾

14 They said: If the wolf should devour him, while we are a (strong) company, we should then certainly be losers.

قَالُوْا لَئِنْ أَكَلَهُ الذِّئْبُ وَنَحْنُ عُصْبَةٌ إِنَّآ إِذًا لَّخٰسِرُوْنَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 So when they took him away and agreed to put him down at the bottom of the pit, We revealed to him: Thou wilt certainly inform them of this affair of theirs while they perceive not.[1218]

فَلَمَّا ذَهَبُوْا بِهٖ وَأَجْمَعُوْٓا أَنْ يَّجْعَلُوْهُ فِيْ غَيٰبَتِ الْجُبِّ ۚ وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِ لَتُنَبِّئَنَّهُمْ بِأَمْرِهِمْ هٰذَا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُوْنَ ﴿١٥﴾

16 And they came to their father at nightfall, weeping.

وَجَآءُوْٓ أَبَاهُمْ عِشَآءً يَّبْكُوْنَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 They said: O our father, we went off racing one with another and left Joseph by our goods, so the wolf devoured him. And thou wilt not believe us, though we are truthful.

قَالُوْا يٰٓأَبَانَآ إِنَّا ذَهَبْنَا نَسْتَبِقُ وَتَرَكْنَا يُوْسُفَ عِنْدَ مَتَاعِنَا فَأَكَلَهُ الذِّئْبُ ۚ وَمَآ أَنْتَ بِمُؤْمِنٍ لَّنَا وَلَوْ كُنَّا صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 And they came with false blood on his shirt. He said: Nay, your souls have made a matter light for you. So patience is goodly. And Allāh is He Whose help is sought against what you describe.[1219]

وَجَآءُوْ عَلٰى قَمِيْصِهٖ بِدَمٍ كَذِبٍ ۭ قَالَ بَلْ سَوَّلَتْ لَكُمْ أَنْفُسُكُمْ أَمْرًا ۭ فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيْلٌ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلٰى مَا تَصِفُوْنَ ﴿١٨﴾

1218 The essential difference between the two versions of this story, one given in the Bible and the other in the Qur'ān, is this, that while the Bible narrates it as a simple story, the Holy Qur'ān preserves in it the spiritual element, which alone can justify its record in a book meant for the spiritual guidance of man. Here is a boy, whose age does not exceed seventeen years, who, though to all appearance lost for ever, receives a Divine revelation and promise that he will one day be the master of his present oppressors. It is this circumstance in the life of a prophet, which really enables him to face all distresses and difficulties, viz., the deep conviction of the ultimate triumph of truth, which is produced by revelation from on high.

1219 The Qur'ān represents Jacob as doubting from the very first the sincerity of Joseph's brothers, but not so the Bible. Again, according to the Holy Qur'ān, Joseph relates his vision to his father, who is at once apprehensive of the envy of his brothers, if they are apprised of it; but according to the Bible, Jacob himself rebuked Joseph for his dream. Besides several discrepancies, the Bible narrative represents Jacob as an ordinary mortal, while the Holy Qur'ān represents him as a prophet. The former makes him grieve for the loss of a

19 And there came travellers, and they sent their water-drawer and he let down his bucket. He said : O good news ! This is a youth. And they concealed him as an article of merchandise, and Allāh was Cognizant of what they did.

وَجَآءَتْ سَيَّارَةٌ فَأَرْسَلُوْا وَارِدَهُمْ
فَأَدْلٰى دَلْوَهٗ ۚ قَالَ يٰبُشْرٰى هٰذَا غُلٰمٌ ۚ
وَأَسَرُّوْهُ بِضَاعَةً ۚ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌ
بِمَا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 And they sold him for a small price, a few pieces of silver, and they showed no desire for him.[1220]

وَشَرَوْهُ بِثَمَنٍ بَخْسٍ دَرَاهِمَ مَعْدُوْدَةٍ ۚ
وَكَانُوْا فِيْهِ مِنَ الزّٰهِدِيْنَ ﴿٢٠﴾

SECTION 3 : **Joseph's Firmness under Temptation**

21 And the Egyptian who bought him[1221] said to his wife : Make his stay honourable. Maybe he will be useful to us, or we may adopt him as a son. And thus We established Joseph in the land, and that We might teach him the interpretation of sayings. And Allāh has full control over His affair, but most people know not.

وَقَالَ الَّذِى اشْتَرٰىهُ مِنْ مِّصْرَ
لِامْرَاَتِهٖٓ اَكْرِمِىْ مَثْوٰىهُ عَسٰٓى اَنْ
يَّنْفَعَنَآ اَوْ نَتَّخِذَهٗ وَلَدًا ۚ وَكَذٰلِكَ مَكَّنَّا
لِيُوْسُفَ فِى الْاَرْضِ وَلِنُعَلِّمَهٗ مِنْ تَاْوِيْلِ
الْاَحَادِيْثِ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ غَالِبٌ عَلٰٓى اَمْرِهٖ وَلٰكِنَّ
اَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 And when he attained his maturity, We gave him wisdom and knowledge. And thus do We reward the doers of good.[1222]

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ اَشُدَّهٗٓ اٰتَيْنٰهُ حُكْمًا وَّعِلْمًا ۚ
وَكَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِى الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾

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beloved son as any other mortal would, but the latter shows that he had from the first hope: "And Allāh is He Whose help is sought against what you describe". And throughout the story this hope is the bright ray, without which the story would be a gloomy description, devoid of all value as a spiritual lesson. There are traces left still in the Bible narrative which show that the account as now met with in Genesis does not truly depict the character of Jacob, for in Gen. 37:11 we are told: "And his brethren envied him, but his father observed the saying", i.e. kept the vision in his heart, which shows that he was convinced of its truth. Thus the Qur'ān, in fact, removes the inconsistencies of the Bible narrative.

1220 Compare Gen. 37:28: "Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver". Those who sold him were either Joseph's brothers or the merchants who found him in the pit; according to the story as related in Genesis, Joseph's brothers sold him to the Midianites, who again sold him in Egypt.

1221 "And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and a captain of the guard" (Gen. 37:36).

1222 "And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man" (Gen. 39:2).

23 And she in whose house he was, sought to seduce him,[1223] and made fast the doors and said: Come. He said: Allāh forbid! Surely my Lord made good my abode. The wrong-doers never prosper.

وَرَاوَدَتْهُ الَّتِيْ هُوَ فِيْ بَيْتِهَا عَنْ نَّفْسِهٖ
وَغَلَّقَتِ الْاَبْوَابَ وَقَالَتْ هَيْتَ لَكَ ؕ قَالَ
مَعَاذَ اللّٰهِ اِنَّهٗ رَبِّيْۤ اَحْسَنَ مَثْوَايَ ؕ اِنَّهٗ
لَا يُفْلِحُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿۲۳﴾

24 And certainly she desired him, and he would have desired her, were it not that he had seen the manifest evidence of his Lord. Thus (it was) that We might turn away from him evil and indecency. Surely he was one of Our chosen servants.[1225]

وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهٖ ۚ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَاۤ اَنْ رَّاٰ
بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهٖ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ السُّوْٓءَ
وَالْفَحْشَآءَ ؕ اِنَّهٗ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُخْلَصِيْنَ ﴿۲۴﴾

25 And they raced with one another to the door, and she rent his shirt from behind, and they met her husband at the door. She said: What is the punishment for one who intends evil to thy wife, except imprisonment or a painful chastisement?

وَاسْتَبَقَا الْبَابَ وَقَدَّتْ قَمِيْصَهٗ مِنْ
دُبُرٍ وَّاَلْفَيَا سَيِّدَهَا لَدَا الْبَابِ ؕ قَالَتْ
مَا جَزَآءُ مَنْ اَرَادَ بِاَهْلِكَ سُوْٓءًا اِلَّاۤ
اَنْ يُّسْجَنَ اَوْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ﴿۲۵﴾

26 He said: She sought to seduce me. And a witness of her own family bore witness: If his shirt is rent in front, she speaks the truth and he is of the liars.

قَالَ هِيَ رَاوَدَتْنِيْ عَنْ نَّفْسِيْ وَشَهِدَ
شَاهِدٌ مِّنْ اَهْلِهَا ۚ اِنْ كَانَ قَمِيْصُهٗ قُدَّ
مِنْ قُبُلٍ فَصَدَقَتْ وَهُوَ مِنَ الْكٰذِبِيْنَ ﴿۲۶﴾

27 And if his shirt is rent behind, she tells a lie and he is of the truthful.

وَاِنْ كَانَ قَمِيْصُهٗ قُدَّ مِنْ دُبُرٍ فَكَذَبَتْ
وَهُوَ مِنَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿۲۷﴾

28 So when he saw his shirt rent behind, he said: Surely it is a device of you women. Your device is indeed great![1226]

فَلَمَّا رَاٰ قَمِيْصَهٗ قُدَّ مِنْ دُبُرٍ قَالَ اِنَّهٗ
مِنْ كَيْدِكُنَّ ؕ اِنَّ كَيْدَكُنَّ عَظِيْمٌ ﴿۲۸﴾

29 O Joseph, turn aside from this. And (O my wife), ask forgiveness for thy sin. Surely thou art one of the sinful.

يُوْسُفُ اَعْرِضْ عَنْ هٰذَا ٚ وَاسْتَغْفِرِيْ
لِذَنْۢبِكِ ۚۖ اِنَّكِ كُنْتِ مِنَ الْخٰطِـِٕيْنَ ﴿۲۹﴾

1223 *Rāwada-hū* means *he endeavoured to turn him from a thing.*

1225 This does not show that Joseph had any desire for her; but that the temptation was so strong that, if he had not been strengthened by great faith in God, he would have fallen a prey to mortal weakness.

1226 The vindication of Joseph's character on this occasion, and the production of the evidence of the shirt, are not related in the Bible; but without

SECTION 4 : **Joseph is Imprisoned**

30 And women in the city said: The chief's[1227] wife seeks to seduce her slave. He has indeed affected her deeply[1228] with (his) love. Truly we see her in manifest error.

وَقَالَ نِسْوَةٌ فِي الْمَدِيْنَةِ امْرَاَتُ الْعَزِيْزِ
تُرَاوِدُ فَتٰىهَا عَنْ نَّفْسِهٖ ۚ قَدْ شَغَفَهَا حُبًّا ۗ
اِنَّا لَنَرٰىهَا فِيْ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 So when she heard of their device,[1229] she sent for them and prepared for them a repast,[1230] and gave each of them a knife, and said (to Joseph): Come out to them. So when they saw him, they deemed him great, and cut their hands (in amazement), and said: Holy Allāh! This is not a mortal![1231] This is but a noble angel.

فَلَمَّا سَمِعَتْ بِمَكْرِهِنَّ اَرْسَلَتْ اِلَيْهِنَّ
وَاَعْتَدَتْ لَهُنَّ مُتَّكَاً وَّاٰتَتْ كُلَّ
وَاحِدَةٍ مِّنْهُنَّ سِكِّيْنًا وَّقَالَتِ اخْرُجْ
عَلَيْهِنَّ ۚ فَلَمَّا رَاَيْنَهٗۤ اَكْبَرْنَهٗ وَقَطَّعْنَ
اَيْدِيَهُنَّ وَقُلْنَ حَاشَ لِلّٰهِ مَا هٰذَا
بَشَرًا ۗ اِنْ هٰذَاۤ اِلَّا مَلَكٌ كَرِيْمٌ ﴿٣١﴾

32 She said: This is he about whom you blamed me. And certainly I sought to seduce him, but he was firm in continence. And if he do not what I bid him, he shall certainly be imprisoned, and he shall certainly be of the abject.

قَالَتْ فَذٰلِكُنَّ الَّذِيْ لُمْتُنَّنِيْ فِيْهِ ۗ
وَلَقَدْ رَاوَدْتُّهٗ عَنْ نَّفْسِهٖ فَاسْتَعْصَمَ ۗ
وَلَئِنْ لَّمْ يَفْعَلْ مَاۤ اٰمُرُهٗ لَيُسْجَنَنَّ وَ
لَيَكُوْنًا مِّنَ الصّٰغِرِيْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 He said: My Lord, the prison is dearer to me than that to which they invite me. And if Thou turn not away their device from me, I shall yearn towards them and be of the ignorant.

قَالَ رَبِّ السِّجْنُ اَحَبُّ اِلَيَّ مِمَّا يَدْعُوْنَنِيْۤ
اِلَيْهِ ۚ وَاِلَّا تَصْرِفْ عَنِّيْ كَيْدَهُنَّ اَصْبُ
اِلَيْهِنَّ وَاَكُنْ مِّنَ الْجٰهِلِيْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾

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it the episode of leaving the garment becomes meaningless. It seems to be a clear omission. The next section proves that Joseph was not cast into prison for being guilty of having committed an outrage against his master's wife.

1227 *Al-'Azīz* stands for Potiphar (Kf). *'Azīz* really means *mighty, powerful, strong,* and might as such be applied to such a dignitary as the captain of the guard, which rank was held by Potiphar. The king himself is spoken of as *malik* (king) in v. 43, and Joseph, who was only a dignitary, and not the king, is called *al-'Azīz* in v. 78.

1228 *Shaghafa-hā* literally means *he has affected her so that the love of him has entered beneath the shighāf,* i.e. *the pericardium of her heart* (LL).

1229 The secret imputation of the women is called here their *makr* or *device.* Some think that she knew that certain women had circulated the news with the object of getting a chance to see Joseph, and hence it is called their *device.*

1230 *Muttaka'a* means originally *a place in which one reclines,* then *that upon which one reclines in eating, drinking,* or *talking,* and also *food,* or *repast,*

1231, see next page.

34 So his Lord accepted his prayer and turned away their device from him. Surely He is the Hearer, the Knower.

فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهٗ رَبُّهٗ فَصَرَفَ عَنْهُ كَيْدَهُنَّ ۗ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿۳۴﴾

35 Then it occurred to them after they had seen the signs that they should imprison him till a time.[1232]

ثُمَّ بَدَا لَهُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا رَاَوُا الْاٰيٰتِ لَيَسْجُنُنَّهٗ حَتّٰى حِيْنٍ ﴿۳۵﴾

SECTION 5: **Joseph's Preaching in the Prison**

36 And two youths entered the prison with him.[1233] One of them said: I saw myself pressing wine. And the other said: I saw myself carrying bread on my head, of which birds were eating. Inform us of its interpretation; surely we see thee to be of the doers of good.[1234]

وَدَخَلَ مَعَهُ السِّجْنَ فَتَيٰنِ ۗ قَالَ اَحَدُهُمَاۤ اِنِّيْۤ اَرٰىنِيْۤ اَعْصِرُ خَمْرًا ۚ وَقَالَ الْاٰخَرُ اِنِّيْۤ اَرٰىنِيْۤ اَحْمِلُ فَوْقَ رَاْسِيْ خُبْزًا تَاْكُلُ الطَّيْرُ مِنْهُ ۗ نَبِّئْنَا بِتَاْوِيْلِهٖ ۚ اِنَّا نَرٰىكَ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿۳۶﴾

37 He said: The food with which you are fed shall not come to you, but I shall inform you of its interpretation before it comes to you. This is of what my Lord has taught me. Surely I have forsaken the religion of a people who believe not in Allāh, and are deniers of the Hereafter.

قَالَ لَا يَاْتِيْكُمَا طَعَامٌ تُرْزَقٰنِهٖۤ اِلَّا نَبَّاْتُكُمَا بِتَاْوِيْلِهٖ قَبْلَ اَنْ يَّاْتِيَكُمَا ۗ ذٰلِكُمَا مِمَّا عَلَّمَنِيْ رَبِّيْ ۗ اِنِّيْ تَرَكْتُ مِلَّةَ قَوْمٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَهُمْ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ هُمْ كٰفِرُوْنَ ﴿۳۷﴾

38 And I follow the religion of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. It beseems us not to associate aught with Allāh. This is by Allāh's grace upon us and on mankind, but most people give not thanks.

وَاتَّبَعْتُ مِلَّةَ اٰبَآءِيْۤ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ وَاِسْحٰقَ وَيَعْقُوْبَ ۗ مَا كَانَ لَنَاۤ اَنْ نُّشْرِكَ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۗ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ فَضْلِ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى النَّاسِ وَلٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿۳۸﴾

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which last is considered to be the meaning here (LL). The commentators add that *muttaka'a* is the particular food which requires to be cut with a knife and suggest that to be the reason for handing over knives to them.

1231 The Egyptians were a superstitious and polytheistic people, and anything strange, or any human being about whom they witnessed anything wonderful, was considered by them to be a god. Hence, when they saw Joseph they thought he was not a mortal.

1232 There is nothing to show that Joseph was cast into prison on a charge of having committed an outrage on Potiphar's wife. As he was proved guiltless of that charge, it is very likely that some other accusation was brought against him, and more probably an autocratic ruler needed no excuse for putting an innocent man into prison. By *signs* must be understood the *signs of Joseph's innocence*.

1233, 1234, see next page.

39 O my two fellow-prisoners, are sundry lords better or Allāh the One, the Supreme ?

يٰصَاحِبَيِ السِّجْنِ ءَاَرْبَابٌ مُّتَفَرِّقُوْنَ خَيْرٌ اَمِ اللّٰهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ ﴿۳۹﴾

40 You serve not besides Him but names which you have named, you and your fathers — Allāh has sent down no authority for them. Judgment is only Allāh's. He has commanded that you serve none but Him. This is the right religion, but most people know not.

مَا تَعْبُدُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِهٖۤ اِلَّاۤ اَسْمَآءً سَمَّيْتُمُوْهَاۤ اَنْتُمْ وَاٰبَآؤُكُمْ مَّاۤ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطٰنٍ ؕ اِنِ الْحُكْمُ اِلَّا لِلّٰهِ ؕ اَمَرَ اَلَّا تَعْبُدُوْۤا اِلَّاۤ اِيَّاهُ ؕ ذٰلِكَ الدِّيْنُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۴۰﴾

41 O my two fellow-prisoners, as for one of you, he will serve wine for his lord to drink ; and as for the other, he will be crucified, so that the birds will eat from his head. The matter is decreed concerning which you inquired.

يٰصَاحِبَيِ السِّجْنِ اَمَّاۤ اَحَدُكُمَا فَيَسْقِيْ رَبَّهٗ خَمْرًا ۚ وَاَمَّا الْاٰخَرُ فَيُصْلَبُ فَتَاْكُلُ الطَّيْرُ مِنْ رَّاْسِهٖ ؕ قُضِيَ الْاَمْرُ الَّذِيْ فِيْهِ تَسْتَفْتِيٰنِ ﴿۴۱﴾

42 And he said to him whom he knew would be delivered of the two : Remember me with thy lord. But the devil caused him to forget mentioning (it) to his lord, so he remained in the prison a few years.[1235]

وَقَالَ لِلَّذِيْ ظَنَّ اَنَّهٗ نَاجٍ مِّنْهُمَا اذْكُرْنِيْ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ۫ فَاَنْسٰهُ الشَّيْطٰنُ ذِكْرَ رَبِّهٖ فَلَبِثَ فِي السِّجْنِ بِضْعَ سِنِيْنَ ﴿۴۲﴾

SECTION 6 : **The King's Vision Interpreted by Joseph**

43 And the King said : I have seen seven fat kine which seven lean ones devoured ; and seven green ears and (seven) others dry.[1236] O chiefs, explain to me my dream, if you can interpret the dream.

وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ اِنِّيْۤ اَرٰى سَبْعَ بَقَرٰتٍ سِمَانٍ يَّاْكُلُهُنَّ سَبْعٌ عِجَافٌ وَّسَبْعَ سُنْۢبُلٰتٍ خُضْرٍ وَّاُخَرَ يٰبِسٰتٍ ؕ يٰۤاَيُّهَا الْمَلَاُ اَفْتُوْنِيْ فِيْ رُءْيَايَ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ لِلرُّءْيَا تَعْبُرُوْنَ ﴿۴۳﴾

1233 Compare Gen. 40th chapter, which, however, omits Joseph's preaching. The two youths were the butler and the baker.

1234 It should be noted that in the case of the four dreams mentioned in this chapter, viz. the two recorded here and Joseph's dream mentioned in v. 4 and Pharaoh's dream mentioned in v. 43, the word used for seeing a vision is the same word *arā* (from *ru'yat,* meaning *to see*), as is used for the seeing of ordinary things.

1235, 1236, see next page.

44 They said: Confused dreams, and we know not the interpretation of dreams.

قَالُوٓا أَضْغَاثُ أَحْلَامٍ ۚ وَمَا نَحْنُ
بِتَأْوِيلِ الْأَحْلَامِ بِعٰلِمِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 And of the two, he who had found deliverance and remembered after a long time said: I will inform you of its interpretation, so send me.

وَقَالَ الَّذِي نَجَا مِنْهُمَا وَادَّكَرَ بَعْدَ
أُمَّةٍ أَنَا أُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِتَأْوِيلِهِ فَأَرْسِلُونِ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 Joseph, O truthful one, explain to us seven fat kine which seven lean ones devoured, and seven green ears and (seven) others dry, that I may go back to the people so that they may know.

يُوسُفُ أَيُّهَا الصِّدِّيقُ أَفْتِنَا فِي سَبْعِ
بَقَرٰتٍ سِمَانٍ يَأْكُلُهُنَّ سَبْعٌ عِجَافٌ
وَسَبْعِ سُنْبُلٰتٍ خُضْرٍ وَأُخَرَ يٰبِسٰتٍ ۙ
لَعَلِّي أَرْجِعُ إِلَى النَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 He said: You shall sow for seven years as usual, then that which you reap, leave it in its ear, except a little which you eat.

قَالَ تَزْرَعُونَ سَبْعَ سِنِينَ دَأَبًا ۚ فَمَا
حَصَدْتُمْ فَذَرُوهُ فِي سُنْبُلِهِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
مِمَّا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 Then after that will come seven years of hardship, which will eat away all you have beforehand stored for them, except a little which you have preserved.

ثُمَّ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِ ذٰلِكَ سَبْعٌ شِدَادٌ
يَأْكُلْنَ مَا قَدَّمْتُمْ لَهُنَّ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا
مِمَّا تُحْصِنُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 Then after that will come a year in which people will have rain and in which they will press (grapes).

ثُمَّ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِ ذٰلِكَ عَامٌ فِيهِ
يُغَاثُ النَّاسُ وَفِيهِ يَعْصِرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

SECTION 7 : **Joseph Cleared of the Charges**

50 And the king said: Bring him to me. So when the messenger came to him, he said: Go back to thy lord and ask him, what is the case of the women who cut their hands. Surely my Lord knows their device.

وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ ائْتُونِي بِهِ ۚ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُ
الرَّسُولُ قَالَ ارْجِعْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَسْئَلْهُ
مَا بَالُ النِّسْوَةِ الّٰتِي قَطَّعْنَ أَيْدِيَهُنَّ ۚ
إِنَّ رَبِّي بِكَيْدِهِنَّ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 (The king) said: What was your affair when you sought to seduce Joseph? They said: Holy Allāh!

قَالَ مَا خَطْبُكُنَّ إِذْ رٰوَدْتُّنَّ يُوسُفَ
عَنْ نَفْسِهِ ۚ قُلْنَ حَاشَ لِلّٰهِ مَا عَلِمْنَا

1235 The word *biḍ'-un* is applied to indicate a number from three (according to some, one) to ten (LL).

1236 Compare Gen. 41: 1-31.

We knew of no evil on his part. The chief's wife said: Now has the truth become manifest. I sought to seduce him and he is surely of the truthful.

عَلَيْهِ مِنْ سُوْٓءٍ ؕ قَالَتِ امْرَاَتُ الْعَزِيْزِ
الْـٰٔنَ حَصْحَصَ الْحَقُّ ۫ اَنَا رَاوَدْتُّهٗ
عَنْ نَّفْسِهٖ وَ اِنَّهٗ لَمِنَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿۵۱﴾

52 This is that he might know that I have not been unfaithful to him in secret, and that Allāh guides not the device of the unfaithful.[1238]

ذٰلِكَ لِيَعْلَمَ اَنِّيْ لَمْ اَخُنْهُ بِالْغَيْبِ وَ
اَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَهْدِيْ كَيْدَ الْخَآئِنِيْنَ ﴿۵۲﴾

PART XIII

53 And I call not myself sinless; surely (man's) self is wont to command evil, except those on whom my Lord has mercy. Surely my Lord is Forgiving, Merciful.[1239]

وَ مَآ اُبَرِّئُ نَفْسِيْ ۚ اِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَاَمَّارَةٌۢ
بِالسُّوْٓءِ اِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّيْ ؕ اِنَّ رَبِّيْ
غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۵۳﴾

54 And the king said: Bring him to me, I will choose him for myself. So when he talked with him, he said: Surely thou art in our presence to-day dignified, trusted.

وَ قَالَ الْمَلِكُ ائْتُوْنِيْ بِهٖٓ اَسْتَخْلِصْهُ
لِنَفْسِيْ ۚ فَلَمَّا كَلَّمَهٗ قَالَ اِنَّكَ الْيَوْمَ
لَدَيْنَا مَكِيْنٌ اَمِيْنٌ ﴿۵۴﴾

55 He said: Place me (in authority) over the treasures of the land; surely I am a good keeper, knowing well.

قَالَ اجْعَلْنِيْ عَلٰى خَزَآئِنِ الْاَرْضِ ۚ
اِنِّيْ حَفِيْظٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۵۵﴾

1238 These are the words of Joseph, who explains his conduct in preferring to remain in prison until his innocence was established.

1239 These are also the words of Joseph. When a man addressed Jesus as *good master*, he said: "Why callest thou me good" (Mark 10:18). The righteous never attribute any good to themselves, but attribute all good to the Great Source of goodness — God. Man's self is here called *ammārah*, i.e. *one wont to command evil*. It is, in fact, the lowest stage in the spiritual growth of man. It is what may be called his animal self; low desires and animal passions rule the mind of man and he is capable of doing any evil without feeling any pangs at all. He submits to his carnal desires like the brute. The next stage is called the *lawwāmah*, which is referred to in 75:2 as the *self-accusing spirit*, when the slightest departure from the path of rectitude at once rouses the pangs of conscience. The third stage is the stage of perfection — the *muṭma'innah*, or *the soul at rest*, when it is in perfect peace, having attained the goal of perfection; see 2732. Those who have attained the second stage in the spiritual advancement and those who have attained the goal of perfection are spoken of as *those on whom my Lord has mercy*.

56 And thus did We give to Joseph power in the land — he had mastery in it wherever he liked. We bestow Our mercy on whom We please, and We waste not the reward of the doers of good.

وَكَذٰلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ يَتَبَوَّأُ مِنْهَا حَيْثُ يَشَاءُ ۚ نُصِيبُ بِرَحْمَتِنَا مَنْ نَشَاءُ ۖ وَلَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 And certainly the reward of the Hereafter is better for those who believe and guard against evil.

وَلَأَجْرُ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

SECTION 8 : **Joseph helps his Brothers**

58 And Joseph's brethren came and went in to him, and he knew them, while they recognized him not.

وَجَاءَ إِخْوَةُ يُوسُفَ فَدَخَلُوا عَلَيْهِ فَعَرَفَهُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُ مُنْكِرُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 And when he furnished them with their provision, he said: Bring to me a brother of yours from your father. See you not that I give full measure and that I am the best of hosts?

وَلَمَّا جَهَّزَهُمْ بِجَهَازِهِمْ قَالَ ائْتُونِي بِأَخٍ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَبِيكُمْ ۚ أَلَا تَرَوْنَ أَنِّي أُوفِي الْكَيْلَ وَأَنَا خَيْرُ الْمُنْزِلِينَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 But if you bring him not to me, you shall have no measure (of corn) from me, nor shall you come near me.

فَإِنْ لَمْ تَأْتُونِي بِهِ فَلَا كَيْلَ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي وَلَا تَقْرَبُونِ ﴿٦٠﴾

61 They said: We shall strive to make his father yield about him, and we are sure to do (it).

قَالُوا سَنُرَاوِدُ عَنْهُ أَبَاهُ وَإِنَّا لَفَاعِلُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

62 And he said to his servants: Put their money[1240] into their bags that they may recognize it when they go back to their family, so that they may come back.

وَقَالَ لِفِتْيَانِهِ اجْعَلُوا بِضَاعَتَهُمْ فِي رِحَالِهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَعْرِفُونَهَا إِذَا انْقَلَبُوا إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 So when they returned to their father, they said: O our father, the measure is withheld from us, so send with us our brother that we may get the measure, and we will surely guard him.

فَلَمَّا رَجَعُوا إِلَىٰ أَبِيهِمْ قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا مُنِعَ مِنَّا الْكَيْلُ فَأَرْسِلْ مَعَنَا أَخَانَا نَكْتَلْ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

1240 *Biḍā'ah* means *merchandise,* or *a portion of one's property which one sends for traffic* (LL). *Money* is also called *biḍā'ah,* because it is a man's stock with which he can traffic.

64 He said: Can I trust you with him, except as I trusted you with his brother before. So Allāh is the Best Keeper, and He is the most Merciful of those who show mercy.

قَالَ هَلْ اٰمَنُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ اِلَّا كَمَآ اَمِنْتُكُمْ عَلٰٓى اَخِيْهِ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۭ فَاللّٰهُ خَيْرٌ حِفْظًا ۠ وَّهُوَ اَرْحَمُ الرّٰحِمِيْنَ ﴿٦٤﴾

65 And when they opened their goods, they found their money returned to them. They said: O our father, what (more) can we desire? This is our property returned to us, and we shall bring corn for our family and guard our brother, and have in addition the measure of a camel-load. This is an easy measure.

وَلَمَّا فَتَحُوْا مَتَاعَهُمْ وَجَدُوْا بِضَاعَتَهُمْ رُدَّتْ اِلَيْهِمْ ۭ قَالُوْا يٰٓاَبَانَا مَا نَبْغِيْ ۭ هٰذِهٖ بِضَاعَتُنَا رُدَّتْ اِلَيْنَا ۚ وَنَمِيْرُ اَهْلَنَا وَنَحْفَظُ اَخَانَا وَنَزْدَادُ كَيْلَ بَعِيْرٍ ۭ ذٰلِكَ كَيْلٌ يَّسِيْرٌ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 He said: I will by no means send him with you, until you give me a firm covenant in Allāh's name that you will bring him back to me, unless you are completely surrounded. And when they gave him their covenant, he said: Allāh is Guardian over what we say.

قَالَ لَنْ اُرْسِلَهٗ مَعَكُمْ حَتّٰى تُؤْتُوْنِ مَوْثِقًا مِّنَ اللّٰهِ لَتَاْتُنَّنِيْ بِهٖٓ اِلَّآ اَنْ يُّحَاطَ بِكُمْ ۚ فَلَمَّآ اٰتَوْهُ مَوْثِقَهُمْ قَالَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى مَا نَقُوْلُ وَكِيْلٌ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 And he said: O my sons, enter not by one gate but enter by different gates.[1241] And I can avail you naught against Allāh. Judgment is only Allāh's. On Him I rely, and on Him let the reliant rely.

وَقَالَ يٰبَنِيَّ لَا تَدْخُلُوْا مِنْۢ بَابٍ وَّاحِدٍ وَّادْخُلُوْا مِنْ اَبْوَابٍ مُّتَفَرِّقَةٍ ۭ وَمَآ اُغْنِيْ عَنْكُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۭ اِنِ الْحُكْمُ اِلَّا لِلّٰهِ ۭ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ ۚ وَعَلَيْهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُتَوَكِّلُوْنَ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 And when they entered as their father had bidden them, it availed them naught against Allāh, but (it was only) a desire in the soul of Jacob, which he satisfied. And surely he was possessed of knowledge, because We had given him knowledge, but most people know not.[1242]

وَلَمَّا دَخَلُوْا مِنْ حَيْثُ اَمَرَهُمْ اَبُوْهُمْ ۭ مَا كَانَ يُغْنِيْ عَنْهُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ اِلَّا حَاجَةً فِيْ نَفْسِ يَعْقُوْبَ قَضٰىهَا ۭ وَاِنَّهٗ لَذُوْ عِلْمٍ لِّمَا عَلَّمْنٰهُ وَلٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٦٨﴾

1241 Jacob, it seems, had come to know by Divine revelation that Joseph was there, and therefore he ordered them to enter by different gates so that Joseph

1242, see next page.

SECTION 9: **The Youngest Brother**

69 And when they went in to Joseph, he lodged his brother with himself, saying: I am thy brother, so grieve not at what they do.

وَلَمَّا دَخَلُوا عَلَىٰ يُوسُفَ آوَىٰ إِلَيْهِ أَخَاهُ قَالَ إِنِّي أَنَا أَخُوكَ فَلَا تَبْتَئِسْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 Then when he furnished them with their provision, (some one) placed the drinking-cup in his brother's bag.[1243] Then a crier cried out:[1244] O caravan, you are surely thieves!

فَلَمَّا جَهَّزَهُمْ بِجَهَازِهِمْ جَعَلَ السِّقَايَةَ فِي رَحْلِ أَخِيهِ ثُمَّ أَذَّنَ مُؤَذِّنٌ أَيَّتُهَا الْعِيرُ إِنَّكُمْ لَسَارِقُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

71 They said, while they turned towards them: What is it that you miss?

قَالُوا وَأَقْبَلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ مَاذَا تَفْقِدُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

72 They said: We miss the king's drinking-cup, and he who brings it shall have a camel-load, and I am responsible for it.

قَالُوا نَفْقِدُ صُوَاعَ الْمَلِكِ وَلِمَنْ جَاءَ بِهِ حِمْلُ بَعِيرٍ وَأَنَا بِهِ زَعِيمٌ ﴿٧٢﴾

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might find his brother. The next verse makes it clear when it says: *And surely he was possessed of knowledge because We had given him knowledge.*

1242 The Bible narrative represents Jacob as being quite ignorant in the matter.

1243 Though the Bible narrative ascribes the placing of the cup to Joseph, the Qur'ān does not say so. It is evident that the furnishing of provisions was not done by Joseph himself. It was somebody else who carried out the orders and furnished the provisions; from the preceding section it is clear that Joseph's servants did so, and when he had to return the money, he had to give an order to that effect to his servants. On this occasion no such order was given. And therefore it was by the king's servants that the king's drinking-cup was placed in the bag of Joseph's brother. It is not stated here whether it was done intentionally or was put there by mistake; the words may imply either.

Was it not one of Joseph's own brethren who did this act so that Benjamin might also be removed from Jacob? There is a clear hint to this possibility in v. 77, where Joseph accuses them of having done some guilty deed: "You are in an evil condition", and a still clearer hint in v. 89, where Joseph says: "Know you how you treated Joseph and his brother, when you were ignorant?" Besides the episode of the cup, there is nothing in the Holy Qur'ān to show that they were guilty of any mischief against Benjamin. I am therefore strongly of opinion that it was one of Joseph's own brethren who put the cup in Benjamin's bag, so as to get him involved in trouble, and remove him from the presence of Jacob, who loved him most after Joseph.

1244 It is a mistake to suppose that the crier was the very person who had placed the cup there. As v. 72 makes it clear, it was the king's drinking-cup; in other words it was not Joseph's personal property, but the property of the king, or government property. It is clear that the men who provided corn were different from those who had charge of the king's property.

73 They said: By Allāh! You know for certain that we have not come to make mischief in the land, and we are not thieves.

قَالُوْا تَاللّٰهِ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ مَّا جِئْنَا لِنُفْسِدَ
فِي الْاَرْضِ وَمَا كُنَّا سٰرِقِيْنَ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 They said: But what is the penalty for this, if you are liars?

قَالُوْا فَمَا جَزَآؤُهٗٓ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ كٰذِبِيْنَ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 They said: The penalty for this — the person in whose bag it is found, he himself is the penalty for it. Thus do we punish the wrongdoers.

قَالُوْا جَزَآؤُهٗ مَنْ وُّجِدَ فِيْ رَحْلِهٖ فَهُوَ
جَزَآؤُهٗ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 So he began with their sacks before the sack of his brother,[1245] then he brought it out from his brother's sack. Thus did We plan for the sake of Joseph.[1246] He could not take his brother under the king's law, unless Allāh pleased. We raise in degree whom We please. And above every one possessed of knowledge is the All-Knowing One.

فَبَدَاَ بِاَوْعِيَتِهِمْ قَبْلَ وِعَآءِ اَخِيْهِ ثُمَّ
اسْتَخْرَجَهَا مِنْ وِّعَآءِ اَخِيْهِ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ كِدْنَا
لِيُوْسُفَ ؕ مَا كَانَ لِيَاْخُذَ اَخَاهُ فِيْ دِيْنِ
الْمَلِكِ اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّشَآءَ اللّٰهُ ؕ نَرْفَعُ دَرَجٰتٍ
مَّنْ نَّشَآءُ ؕ وَفَوْقَ كُلِّ ذِيْ عِلْمٍ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 They said: If he steal, a brother of his did indeed steal before.[1247] But Joseph kept it secret in his soul, and disclosed it not to them. He said: You are in an evil condition, and Allāh knows best what you state.

قَالُوْٓا اِنْ يَّسْرِقْ فَقَدْ سَرَقَ اَخٌ لَّهٗ مِنْ
قَبْلُ ۚ فَاَسَرَّهَا يُوْسُفُ فِيْ نَفْسِهٖ وَلَمْ
يُبْدِهَا لَهُمْ ۚ قَالَ اَنْتُمْ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا ۚ
وَاللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَصِفُوْنَ ﴿٧٧﴾

78 They said: O chief, he has a father, a very old man, so take one of

قَالُوْا يٰٓاَيُّهَا الْعَزِيْزُ اِنَّ لَهٗٓ اَبًا شَيْخًا كَبِيْرًا

1245 This was done out of respect for that brother, for they knew that Joseph had lodged him with himself.

1246 This makes it clear that this was not Joseph's plan, but a Divine plan. In other words, the circumstances were made to assist Joseph to keep his brother with him. Joseph's desire, no doubt, was to retain his brother Benjamin while the others returned; but he was unable to do so under the laws of Egypt, as is shown by what follows. This shows that one living under an alien government should abide by the laws of that government.

1247 The brethren of Joseph made a false statement against Joseph to cast a veil over their own evil deeds. If Benjamin, they said, was a thief, so was his brother Joseph, as if they meant to say that this evil trait of character was due to the mother. There is probably a reference here to what is said in Gen. 31:19: "And Rachel had stolen the images which were her father's".

us in his place. Surely we see thee to be of the doers of good.

فَخُذْ أَحَدَنَا مَكَانَهُ ۚ إِنَّا نَرٰىكَ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿٧٨﴾

79 He said: Allāh forbid that we should seize other than him with whom we found our property, for then surely we should be unjust!

قَالَ مَعَاذَ اللّٰهِ أَنْ نَّأْخُذَ إِلَّا مَنْ وَّجَدْنَا مَتَاعَنَا عِنْدَهٗۤ ۙ إِنَّآ إِذًا لَّظٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿٧٩﴾

SECTION 10: **Joseph Discloses his Identity**

80 So when they despaired of him, they conferred together privately. The eldest of them said: Know you not that your father took from you a covenant in Allāh's name, and how you fell short of your duty about Joseph before? So I shall not leave this land, until my father permits me or Allāh decides for me; and He is the Best of the judges.

فَلَمَّا اسْتَيْـَٔسُوْا مِنْهُ خَلَصُوْا نَجِيًّا ؕ قَالَ كَبِيْرُهُمْ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمُوْۤا أَنَّ أَبَاكُمْ قَدْ أَخَذَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَّوْثِقًا مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَمِنْ قَبْلُ مَا فَرَّطْتُّمْ فِيْ يُوْسُفَ ۚ فَلَنْ أَبْرَحَ الْأَرْضَ حَتّٰى يَأْذَنَ لِيْۤ أَبِيْۤ أَوْ يَحْكُمَ اللّٰهُ لِيْ ۚ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحٰكِمِيْنَ ﴿٨٠﴾

81 Go back to your father and say: O our father, thy son committed theft. And we bear witness only to what we know, and we could not keep watch over the unseen.

اِرْجِعُوْۤا إِلٰۤى أَبِيْكُمْ فَقُوْلُوْا يٰۤأَبَانَاۤ إِنَّ ابْنَكَ سَرَقَ ۚ وَمَا شَهِدْنَاۤ إِلَّا بِمَا عَلِمْنَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِلْغَيْبِ حٰفِظِيْنَ ﴿٨١﴾

82 And ask the town where we were, and the caravan with which we proceeded. And surely we are truthful.

وَسْـَٔلِ الْقَرْيَةَ الَّتِيْ كُنَّا فِيْهَا وَالْعِيْرَ الَّتِيْۤ أَقْبَلْنَا فِيْهَا ؕ وَإِنَّا لَصٰدِقُوْنَ ﴿٨٢﴾

83 He said: Nay, your souls have contrived an affair for you, so patience is good. Maybe Allāh will bring them together to me. Surely He is the Knowing, the Wise.

قَالَ بَلْ سَوَّلَتْ لَكُمْ أَنْفُسُكُمْ أَمْرًا ؕ فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيْلٌ ؕ عَسَى اللّٰهُ أَنْ يَّأْتِيَنِيْ بِهِمْ جَمِيْعًا ؕ إِنَّهٗ هُوَ الْعَلِيْمُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿٨٣﴾

84 And he turned away from them, and said: O my sorrow for Joseph! And his eyes were filled[1248] (with tears) on account of the grief, then he repressed (grief).

وَتَوَلّٰى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يٰۤأَسَفٰى عَلٰى يُوْسُفَ وَابْيَضَّتْ عَيْنٰهُ مِنَ الْحُزْنِ فَهُوَ كَظِيْمٌ ﴿٨٤﴾

1248 *Ibyaḍḍa* and *bayyaḍa* convey almost identical significance, and under the

85, They said : By Allāh! Thou wilt not cease remembering Joseph till thou art a prey to disease or thou art of those who perish.[1249]

قالوا تالله تفتؤا تذكر يوسف حتى تكون حرضا او تكون من الهلكين ﴿٨٥﴾

86 He said : I complain of my grief and sorrow only to Allāh, and I know from Allāh what you know not.[1250]

قال انما اشكوا بثي وحزني الى الله واعلم من الله ما لا تعلمون ﴿٨٦﴾

87 O my sons, go and inquire about Joseph and his brother, and despair not of Allāh's mercy.[1251] Surely none despairs of Allāh's mercy except the disbelieving people.

يبني اذهبوا فتحسسوا من يوسف واخيه ولا تايئسوا من روح الله ط انه لا يايئس من روح الله الا القوم الكفرون ﴿٨٧﴾

88 So when they came to him, they said: O chief, distress has afflicted us and our family, and we have brought scanty money, so give us full measure and be charitable to us. Surely Allāh rewards the charitable.

فلما دخلوا عليه قالوا يايها العزيز مسنا واهلنا الضر وجئنا ببضاعة مزجىة فاوف لنا الكيل وتصدق علينا ط ان الله يجزي المتصدقين ﴿٨٨﴾

89 He said : Do you know how you treated Joseph and his brother, when you were ignorant ?

قال هل علمتم ما فعلتم بيوسف واخيه اذ انتم جهلون ﴿٨٩﴾

90 They said : Art thou indeed Joseph ? He said : I am Joseph and this is my brother ; Allāh has indeed been gracious to us. Surely he who keeps his duty and is patient — Allāh never wastes the reward of the doers of good.

قالوا ءانك لانت يوسف ط قال انا يوسف وهذا اخي ز قد من الله علينا ط انه من يتق ويصبر فان الله لا يضيع اجر المحسنين ﴿٩٠﴾

91 They said : By Allāh ! Allāh has indeed chosen thee over us, and we were certainly sinners.

قالوا تالله لقد اثرك الله علينا وان كنا لخطئين ﴿٩١﴾

92 He said : No reproof be against you this day.[1252] Allāh may forgive

قال لا تثريب عليكم اليوم ط يغفر الله

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latter we find *bayyaḍa al-siqā'a,* meaning *amla'a-hū,* i.e., *he filled the vessel* (T). LL also gives this significance of the words. I'Ab, too, interprets the words as meaning *the filling of eyes with tears* (Rz). Even if we accept the ordinary significance, *his eyes were whitened,* the meaning is that they were whitened with tears, which naturally came at the mention of Joseph.

1249 *Ḥaraḍ* is a *person who is in a disordered and diseased state* so that

1250, 1251, 1252, see next page.

you, and He is the most Merciful of those who show mercy.

لَكُمْ ۖ وَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ ﴿٩٢﴾

93 Take this my shirt and cast it before my father's face — he will come to know.[1254] And come to me with all your family.

اذْهَبُوا بِقَمِيصِي هَٰذَا فَأَلْقُوهُ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِ أَبِي يَأْتِ بَصِيرًا ۚ وَأْتُونِي بِأَهْلِكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

SECTION 11 : **Israel goes to Egypt**

94 And when the caravan left (Egypt), their father said: Surely I scent (the power of) Joseph, if you call me not a dotard.[1255]

وَلَمَّا فَصَلَتِ الْعِيرُ قَالَ أَبُوهُمْ إِنِّي لَأَجِدُ رِيحَ يُوسُفَ ۖ لَوْلَا أَنْ تُفَنِّدُونِ ﴿٩٤﴾

95 They said: By Allāh! thou art surely in thy old error.

قَالُوا تَاللَّهِ إِنَّكَ لَفِي ضَلَالِكَ الْقَدِيمِ ﴿٩٥﴾

96 Then when the bearer of good news came, he cast it before his face so he became certain. He said: Did I not say to you that I know from Allāh what you know not?

فَلَمَّا أَنْ جَاءَ الْبَشِيرُ أَلْقَاهُ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهِ فَارْتَدَّ بَصِيرًا ۖ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

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he is one *from whom good is not expected.* It also signifies *one who falls down so that he is not able to rise again,* or *one affected by constant disease* (LL).

1250 This shows clearly that Jacob knew by Divine revelation that Joseph was alive.

1251 Here the Holy Qur'ān again differs from the Bible and shows that Jacob was so certain of Joseph being alive because of the knowledge he received from God, that he sent his sons a third time to Egypt to ascertain about Joseph. It appears that he had an inkling also that Joseph was in Egypt.

1252 It is related that the Prophet took hold of the two sides of the gate of the Ka'bah on the day of the conquest of Makkah and said to the Quraish: How do you think I should treat you? They said: We hope for good, a noble brother and the son of a noble brother. Then he said: I say as my brother Joseph said: "No reproof be against you this day" (Rz).

1254 *Baṣīr* means *one who sees things with the eyes,* as well as *one endowed with mental perception* or *one knowing* (LL). The Qur'ān does not say anywhere that Jacob had become blind. The shirt was sent as being a reminder of the torn shirt of Joseph, which Joseph's brethren had brought to Jacob (v. 18).

1255 When the caravan in which were Joseph's brethren departed from Egypt, Jacob again received assurance from on high about Joseph, so he said to those about him that he scented the power of Joseph. Jacob knew that Joseph was alive and of this he informed his sons again and again, but he now told them further that he had received an assurance from God that Joseph occupied a high position.

97 They said: O our father, ask forgiveness of our sins for us, surely we are sinners.

قَالُوْا يٰٓاَبَانَا اسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوْبَنَآ اِنَّا كُنَّا خٰطِـِٕيْنَ ﴿٩٧﴾

98 He said: I shall ask forgiveness for you of my Lord. Surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.

قَالَ سَوْفَ اَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ رَبِّيْ ۭ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿٩٨﴾

99 Then when they went in to Joseph, he lodged his parents[1256] with himself and said: Enter Egypt in safety, if Allāh please.

فَلَمَّا دَخَلُوْا عَلٰى يُوْسُفَ اٰوٰٓى اِلَيْهِ اَبَوَيْهِ وَقَالَ ادْخُلُوْا مِصْرَ اِنْ شَاۗءَ اللّٰهُ اٰمِنِيْنَ ۭ ﴿٩٩﴾

100 And he raised his parents on the throne,[1257] and they fell prostrate for his sake.[1258] And he said: O my father, this is the significance of my vision of old — my Lord has made it true. And He was indeed kind to me, when He brought me forth from the prison, and brought you from the desert after the devil had sown dissensions between me and my brethren. Surely my Lord is Benignant to whom He pleases. Truly He is the Knowing, the Wise.

وَرَفَعَ اَبَوَيْهِ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَخَرُّوْا لَهٗ سُجَّدًا ۚ وَقَالَ يٰٓاَبَتِ هٰذَا تَاْوِيْلُ رُءْيَايَ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۡ قَدْ جَعَلَهَا رَبِّيْ حَقًّا ۭ وَقَدْ اَحْسَنَ بِيْٓ اِذْ اَخْرَجَنِيْ مِنَ السِّجْنِ وَجَاۗءَ بِكُمْ مِّنَ الْبَدْوِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ اَنْ نَّزَغَ الشَّيْطٰنُ بَيْنِيْ وَبَيْنَ اِخْوَتِيْ ۭ اِنَّ رَبِّيْ لَطِيْفٌ لِّمَا يَشَاۗءُ ۭ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ الْعَلِيْمُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿١٠٠﴾

101 My Lord, Thou hast given me of the kingdom and taught me of the interpretation of sayings. Originator of the heavens and the earth, Thou art my Friend in this world and the Hereafter. Make me die in submission and join me with the righteous.

رَبِّ قَدْ اٰتَيْتَنِيْ مِنَ الْمُلْكِ وَعَلَّمْتَنِيْ مِنْ تَاْوِيْلِ الْاَحَادِيْثِ ۚ فَاطِرَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۣ اَنْتَ وَلِيّٖ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ ۚ تَوَفَّنِيْ مُسْلِمًا وَّاَلْحِقْنِيْ بِالصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿١٠١﴾

102 This is of the announcements relating to the unseen (which) We reveal to thee, and thou wast not with

ذٰلِكَ مِنْ اَنْۢبَاۗءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوْحِيْهِ اِلَيْكَ ۚ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ اِذْ اَجْمَعُوْٓا اَمْرَهُمْ

1256 Leah was Rachel's elder sister and a wife of Jacob (Gen. 29, 16-28). The fact that Rachel was dead in no way contradicts this statement, because Leah would be Joseph's mother in both capacities, as his mother's sister and as his father's wife.

1257 The royal throne is not meant here, for Joseph himself did not sit on the royal throne. Joseph raised his parents to his own raised seat; or the meaning may be that he placed them in a good position. Compare Gen. 47:11: "And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land".

1258 Seeing the highly dignified position to which Joseph had been raised in Egypt, they all fell prostrate before God as a mark of thanksgiving. Joseph speaks of this, i.e. of the dignity to which he was raised, as the fulfilment of his vision. This is made clear in the verse that follows.

them when they resolved upon their affair, and they were devising plans.[1259]

وَهُمْ يَمْكُرُوْنَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

103 And most men believe not, though thou desirest it eagerly.

وَمَآ اَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتَ بِمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

104 And thou askest them no reward for it. It is nothing but a reminder for all mankind.

وَمَا تَسْـَٔلُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ اَجْرٍ ۭ اِنْ هُوَ
اِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِّلْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

SECTION 12 : **A Lesson for the Prophet's Opponents**

105 And how many a sign in the heavens and the earth do they pass by! yet they turn away from it.

وَكَاَيِّنْ مِّنْ اٰيَةٍ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ
يَمُرُّوْنَ عَلَيْهَا وَهُمْ عَنْهَا مُعْرِضُوْنَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

106 And most of them believe not in Allāh without associating others (with Him).

وَمَا يُؤْمِنُ اَكْثَرُهُمْ بِاللّٰهِ اِلَّا
وَهُمْ مُّشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

107 Do they then feel secure from the coming to them of an all-encompassing chastisement from Allāh or from the coming to them of the hour suddenly, while they perceive not?

اَفَاَمِنُوْٓا اَنْ تَاْتِيَهُمْ غَاشِيَةٌ مِّنْ عَذَابِ اللّٰهِ
اَوْ تَاْتِيَهُمُ السَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً وَّهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُوْنَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

108 Say: This is my way: I call to Allāh, with certain knowledge — I and those who follow me. And glory be to Allāh! and I am not of the polytheists.

قُلْ هٰذِهٖ سَبِيْلِيْٓ اَدْعُوْٓا اِلَى اللّٰهِ ۣ عَلٰي بَصِيْرَةٍ
اَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِيْ ۭ وَسُبْحٰنَ اللّٰهِ وَمَآ اَنَا
مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

109 And We sent not before thee any but men, from the people of the towns, to whom We sent revelation. Have they not then travelled in the

وَمَآ اَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ اِلَّا رِجَالًا نُّوْحِيْٓ
اِلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ اَهْلِ الْقُرٰى ۭ اَفَلَمْ يَسِيْرُوْا فِي

1259 Rodwell's remark that "Muhammad must at this period, while recasting and working up these materials, have entered upon a course of wilful dissimulation and deceipt (although the end would justify to him the means employed) in claiming inspiration for them" is due to crass ignorance, if not to deep malice. It has already been noted how the Qur'ān, after relating that which befell the opponents of a prophet, immediately changes the subject, hinting that the same punishment was in store for the opponents of the Prophet, *and throughout the Holy Qur'ān the anbā al-ghaib*, or *the announcements relating to the unseen, signify not the ancient histories of past prophets, but a repetition of those histories in the life of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad.* Take this case, for instance. The history of Joseph ends in the last verse with his prayer for being classed with the righteous at his death, and there is a reference in this verse to the similar events that must befall the Holy Prophet. It has already been shown how the events in the lives of the two prophets closely resemble each other. The reference in "when they resolved upon their affair and they were devising plans" is to the resolution of the Quraish and their plans of either *killing the Prophet* or *banishing him* or *imprisoning him*; see 8:30. The two verses which follow and the whole of the next section show still more clearly that a change has been introduced with this

land and seen what was the end of those before them? And certainly the abode of the Hereafter is best for those who keep their duty. Do you not then understand?

الْأَرْضِ فَيَنظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۗ وَلَدَارُ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا ۗ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

110 Until, when the messengers despaired and (the people) thought that they were told a lie, Our help came to them, and whom We pleased was delivered. And Our punishment is not averted from the guilty people.[1260]

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا اسْتَيْأَسَ الرُّسُلُ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ كُذِبُوا جَاءَهُمْ نَصْرُنَا فَنُجِّيَ مَن نَّشَاءُ ۖ وَلَا يُرَدُّ بَأْسُنَا عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١١٠﴾

111 In their histories there is certainly a lesson for men of understanding. It is not a narrative which could be forged, but a verification of what is before it, and a distinct explanation of all things, and a guide and a mercy to a people who believe.

لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةٌ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ۗ مَا كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُفْتَرَىٰ وَلَٰكِن تَصْدِيقَ الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

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verse. The Qur'ān does not relate stories for the sake of giving information of the past, but for the lessons which they afford for the future guidance of man. Compare 422, 1185, and 1212.

1260 The personal pronouns, if not rightly understood, quite distort the sense of the passage. The messengers warn their people, but the latter are so stubborn that the messengers at length despair of their people benefiting by the warning. The people, on the other hand, deem, on account of the delay of the punishment, that what the prophets had spoken to them about the coming of the punishment was a lie. Then it is that the promised help for the prophets comes and the punishment with which the evildoers are threatened overtakes them. That the prophets never despair of Divine assistance coming to them, in accordance with Divine promise, is clear from what has already been said in v. 87: "For none despairs of Allāh's mercy except the disbelieving people".

CHAPTER 13

Al-Ra'd : THE THUNDER

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH : 6 *sections*, 43 *verses*)

This chapter is named *The Thunder* from the analogy of the rain, which is often likened to revelation in the Holy Qur'ān. As the rain is a mercy from Allāh, so is revelation, yet as rain is accompanied by thunder and lightning, so revelation is accompanied by warning of punishment, though its real object is to confer benefit.

It deals with the truth of revelation, and a reference to previous history in the chapter preceding the last is here followed by a discussion as to the fate of the opponents of the Holy Prophet. It opens with an assertion as to the truth of Divine revelation, and points to the numerous signs in physical nature which bear witness to its truth ; but not satisfied with these signs, the disbelievers demand that the punishment with which they were threatened as being their ultimate fate should overtake them. The second section is a reply to this demand. There is a law according to which nations rise and fall, and the fall of idolaters, and the rise of the Muslim nation, were to be brought about in accordance with that law. Here it is that the warning is compared to thunder, revelation being rain, the suggestion being that a demand for punishment is as foolish as a desire to be struck by lightning instead of benefiting by the rain. In the third section the disbelievers are told that there is no showing of partiality for one or hatred for another in Divine nature, but that it is in accordance with Divine laws that righteousness brings its own reward, while continued transgression is followed by evil consequences. And why should they again and again demand a miracle from without ? The real miracles, we are told in the fourth section, are the miracles which work within man. The satisfaction which the Holy Book brings to the hearts of the true believers, the great transformation which it was to bring about in the world, the moving away of the great mountains which were obstacles to the spread of truth, and the quickening of those who were dead in spirit, were the real miracles which a heavenly book should work among men. This is what the Qur'ān was destined to do, and what it had already effected to a remarkable extent. Opposition, we are told in the fifth section, was destined to fail because truth must spread in the world and prevail over falsehood. The closing section brings in evidence of the progress of truth, which, however slow, was certainly steady. This chapter, like the three sister chapters preceding it and the two that follow it, was revealed at Makkah in the last Makkan period.

SECTION 1 **Truth of Revelation**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بسم الله الرحمٰن الرحيم ○

1 I, Allāh, am the Best Knower, the Seer.[1261] These are verses of the Book. And that which is revealed to thee from thy Lord is the Truth, but most people believe not.

الٓمّٓرٰ تلك اٰيٰت الكتٰب ؕ والذی انزل الیك من ربك الحق ولٰكن اكثر الناس لا یؤمنون ①

2 Allāh is He who raised the heavens without any pillars that you can see, and He is established on the Throne of Power[1261a], and He made the sun and the moon subservient (to you). Each one runs to an appointed term. He regulates the affair, making clear the messages that you may be certain of the meeting with your Lord.

الله الذی رفع السمٰوٰت بغیر عمد ترونها ثم استوٰی علی العرش وسخر الشمس والقمر ؕ كل یجری لاجل مسمًّی ؕ یدبر الامر یفصل الاٰیٰت لعلكم بلقآء ربكم توقنون ②

3 And He it is who spread the earth, and made in it firm mountains and rivers. And of all fruits He has made in it pairs, two (of every kind). He makes the night cover the day. Surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect.

وهو الذی مد الارض وجعل فیها رواسی وانهرًا ؕ ومن كل الثمرٰت جعل فیها زوجین اثنین یغشی الیل النهار ؕ ان فی ذٰلك لاٰیٰت لقوم یتفكرون ③

4 And in the earth are tracts side by side, and gardens of vines, and corn, and palm-trees growing from one root and distinct roots — they are watered with one water; and We make some of them to excel others in fruit. Surely there are signs in this for a people who understand.[1262]

وفی الارض قطع متجوٰرٰت وجنٰت من اعناب وزرع ونخیل صنوان وغیر صنوان یسقٰی بمآء واحد ۟ ونفضل بعضها علٰی بعض فی الاكل ؕ ان فی ذٰلك لاٰیٰت لقوم یعقلون ④

1261 The letters are *alif*, standing for *ana*, meaning I, *lām* for *Allāh*, *mīm* for *A'lam*, meaning the Best Knower, and *rā* for *Rā'ī*, meaning the Seer.

1261a All heavenly bodies are raised high without any pillars that man can see. Those pillars are the laws of gravitation. All heavenly bodies, we are further told, run their course to an appointed term; they have a beginning and an end, as all things on earth have a beginning and an end.

1262 Unity in diversity is observable in the whole of nature, which is a sure sign of the Unity of the great Author of all existence. Besides this, as there is a difference in the produce of different tracts, though they are subject to the same laws of nature, even so are the hearts of men in relation to the growth of the seed of virtue, which is sown by revelation.

5 And if thou wonderest, then wondrous is their saying: When we are dust, shall we then be raised in a new creation? These are they who disbelieve in their Lord, and these have chains on their necks, and they are the companions of the Fire; in it they will abide.[1263]

وَإِنْ تَعْجَبْ فَعَجَبٌ قَوْلُهُمْ ءَإِذَا كُنَّا تُرَٰبًا ءَإِنَّا لَفِى خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ۗ أُولَٰٓئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ ۖ وَأُولَٰٓئِكَ الْأَغْلَٰلُ فِىٓ أَعْنَاقِهِمْ ۖ وَأُولَٰٓئِكَ أَصْحَٰبُ النَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٥﴾

6 And they ask thee to hasten on the evil before the good, and indeed there have been exemplary punishments[1264] before them. And surely thy Lord is full of forgiveness for mankind notwithstanding their iniquity.[1265] And surely thy Lord is Severe in requiting.

وَيَسْتَعْجِلُونَكَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ قَبْلَ الْحَسَنَةِ وَقَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمُ الْمَثُلَٰتُ ۗ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُو مَغْفِرَةٍ لِّلنَّاسِ عَلَىٰ ظُلْمِهِمْ ۖ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَشَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٦﴾

7 And those who disbelieve say: Why has not a sign been sent down to him from his Lord? Thou art only a warner and for every people a guide.[1266]

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَآ أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ ءَايَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِۦٓ ۗ إِنَّمَآ أَنتَ مُنذِرٌ ۖ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ ﴿٧﴾

SECTION 2: **Fall and Rise of Nations**

8 Allāh knows what every female bears, and that of which the wombs fall short of completion and that which they grow.[1267] And everything with Him has a measure.

اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَحْمِلُ كُلُّ أُنثَىٰ وَمَا تَغِيضُ الْأَرْحَامُ وَمَا تَزْدَادُ ۖ وَكُلُّ شَىْءٍ عِندَهُۥ بِمِقْدَارٍ ﴿٨﴾

1263 The chains spoken of here are the chains which keep them constrained to evil usages and corrupt practices.

1264 *Mathulāt* is the plural of *muthlah,* which means *a punishment that comes down upon a man so that he is made an example by which another is restrained* (R).

1265 The Makkans were warned again and again, and they demanded that the threatened punishment should overtake them, but they are told that the Merciful God would deal with them not according to their iniquities, but according to His vast and comprehensive forgiveness. But when evil outsteps all bounds, His very mercy, which must be exercised towards His righteous servants, requires that the iniquitous should not be left witho punishment. Hence the Lord is also severe in requiting evil.

1266 The words *for every people a guide* refer to the Holy Prophet. He was a warner indeed; he warned the evildoers of the evil consequences of their evil

1267, see next page.

9 The Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Great, the Most High.

عٰلِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَ الشَّهَادَةِ الْكَبِيْرُ الْمُتَعَالِ ۝٩

10 Alike (to Him) among you is he who conceals (the) word and he who speaks openly, and he who hides himself by night and (who) goes forth by day.[1268]

سَوَآءٌ مِّنْكُمْ مَّنْ اَسَرَّ الْقَوْلَ وَ مَنْ جَهَرَ بِهٖ وَ مَنْ هُوَ مُسْتَخْفٍۭ بِالَّيْلِ وَ سَارِبٌۢ بِالنَّهَارِ ۝١٠

11 For him are (angels) guarding the consequences (of his deeds), before him and behind him, who guard him by Allāh's command.[1269] Surely Allāh changes not the condition of a people, until they change their own condition. And when Allāh intends evil to a people, there is no averting it, and besides Him they have no protector.

لَهٗ مُعَقِّبٰتٌ مِّنْۢ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَ مِنْ خَلْفِهٖ يَحْفَظُوْنَهٗ مِنْ اَمْرِ اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتّٰى يُغَيِّرُوْا مَا بِاَنْفُسِهِمْ ؕ وَ اِذَاۤ اَرَادَ اللّٰهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوْٓءًا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهٗ ۚ وَ مَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِهٖ مِنْ وَّالٍ ۝١١

12 He it is Who shows you the lightning causing fear and hope and (Who) brings up the heavy cloud.

هُوَ الَّذِيْ يُرِيْكُمُ الْبَرْقَ خَوْفًا وَّ طَمَعًا وَّ يُنْشِئُ السَّحَابَ الثِّقَالَ ۝١٢

13 And the thunder celebrates His praise, and the angels too for awe of Him. And He sends the thunderbolts and smites with them whom He pleases, yet they dispute concerning Allāh, and He is Mighty in prowess.

وَ يُسَبِّحُ الرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهٖ وَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ مِنْ خِيْفَتِهٖ ۚ وَ يُرْسِلُ الصَّوَاعِقَ فَيُصِيْبُ بِهَا مَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَ هُمْ يُجَادِلُوْنَ فِي اللّٰهِ ۚ وَ هُوَ شَدِيْدُ الْمِحَالِ ۝١٣

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deeds, but he was ultimately to be a guide for every people, to lead them out of their evil ways and to set them on the right path.

1267 The wombs fall short of completion when no gestation takes place. The physical law of nature is spoken of here with a deeper reference to the spiritual law, according to which some receive a new birth through the Prophet and others do not. The subject is made clearer in the verses that follow.

1268 A general law is given expression to with a deeper reference to the secret and open counsels against the Prophet and to enemies seeking his life by day and by night. A perusal of the history of his life shows that those who sought his life sometimes followed him secretly, when he went out to pray during the early hours of the morning, and sometimes openly followed him in the daytime with an evil purpose.

1269 While the statement is no doubt general and refers to the guardian angels referred to in 6:61, there is a deeper allusion to the Divine protection specially vouchsafed to the Holy Prophet against the numerous enemies among whom he lived day and night. *Mu'aqqibāt* (sing. *mu'aqqib*) is derived from *'aqqaba*, meaning *he looked to the consequence*, or *result of the affair* (LL). The word may also be translated as meaning *those following one another*. Such are the angels, who are mentioned as *ḥafaẓah* or *keepers* in 6:61, and as *kirām-an kātibīn* or honourable recorders in 82:11, 12. They guard the consequences of the deeds of man, and are therefore spoken of here as *guarding him*, i.e., *guarding whatever*

14 To Him is due the true prayer. And those to whom they pray besides Him give them no answer, but (they are) like one who stretches forth his two hands towards water that it may reach his mouth, but it will not reach it. And the prayer of the disbelievers is only wasted.

لَهٗ دَعْوَةُ الْحَقِّ ؕ وَ الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ
دُوْنِهٖ لَا يَسْتَجِيْبُوْنَ لَهُمْ بِشَيْءٍ اِلَّا
كَبَاسِطِ كَفَّيْهِ اِلَى الْمَآءِ لِيَبْلُغَ فَاهُ وَ مَا
هُوَ بِبَالِغِهٖ ؕ وَ مَا دُعَآءُ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ اِلَّا فِيْ ضَلٰلٍ ﴿۱۴﴾

Prostration

15 And whoever is in the heavens and the earth makes obeisance to Allāh only, willingly and unwillingly, and their shadows, too, at morn and eve.[1269a]

وَ لِلّٰهِ يَسْجُدُ مَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضِ
طَوْعًا وَّ كَرْهًا وَّ ظِلٰلُهُمْ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَ الْاٰصَالِ ﴿۱۵﴾

16 Say: Who is the Lord of the heavens and the earth? Say: Allāh. Say: Do you then take besides Him guardians who control no benefit or harm even for themselves? Say: Are the blind and the seeing alike? Or, are darkness and light equal? Or, have they set up with Allāh associates who have created creation like His, so that what is created became confused to them? Say: Allāh is the Creator of all things, and He is the One, the Supreme.

قُلْ مَنْ رَّبُّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضِ ؕ قُلِ اللّٰهُ ؕ
قُلْ اَفَاتَّخَذْتُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِهٖۤ اَوْلِيَآءَ لَا
يَمْلِكُوْنَ لِاَنْفُسِهِمْ نَفْعًا وَّ لَا ضَرًّا ؕ قُلْ
هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الْاَعْمٰى وَ الْبَصِيْرُ ۙ۬
اَمْ هَلْ تَسْتَوِي الظُّلُمٰتُ وَ النُّوْرُ ۚ۬
اَمْ جَعَلُوْا لِلّٰهِ شُرَكَآءَ خَلَقُوْا كَخَلْقِهٖ
فَتَشَابَهَ الْخَلْقُ عَلَيْهِمْ ؕ قُلِ اللّٰهُ خَالِقُ
كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَّ هُوَ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ ﴿۱۶﴾

17 He sends down water from the clouds, then watercourses flow according to their measure, and the torrent bears along the swelling foam. And from that which they melt in the fire for the sake of making ornaments or apparatus[1270] arises a scum like it. Thus does Allāh compare truth and falsehood. Then as for the scum, it passes away as a worthless thing; and as for that which does good to men, it tarries in the earth. Thus does Allāh set forth parables.[1271]

اَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَسَالَتْ اَوْدِيَةٌۢ
بِقَدَرِهَا فَاحْتَمَلَ السَّيْلُ زَبَدًا رَّابِيًا ؕ
وَ مِمَّا يُوْقِدُوْنَ عَلَيْهِ فِي النَّارِ ابْتِغَآءَ
حِلْيَةٍ اَوْ مَتَاعٍ زَبَدٌ مِّثْلُهٗ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ
يَضْرِبُ اللّٰهُ الْحَقَّ وَ الْبَاطِلَ ۬ؕ
فَاَمَّا الزَّبَدُ فَيَذْهَبُ جُفَآءً ۚ وَ اَمَّا مَا
يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ فَيَمْكُثُ فِي الْاَرْضِ ؕ
كَذٰلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللّٰهُ الْاَمْثَالَ ﴿۱۷﴾

he does, by Allāh's command.

1269a The recital of this verse is followed by actual prostration; see 978.

1270 *Matā'* includes here *all kinds of things necessary for the life of man*, such as *utensils, tools, implements*, and *instruments of war* (S).

1271 The parable set forth here signifies that the Holy Prophet and his

18 For those who respond to their Lord is good. And as for those who respond not to Him, even if they had all that is in the earth and the like thereof with it, they would certainly offer it for a ransom. As for those, theirs is an evil reckoning and their abode is hell; and evil is the resting-place.

لِلَّذِيْنَ اسْتَجَابُوْا لِرَبِّهِمُ الْحُسْنٰى ؕ وَ الَّذِيْنَ لَمْ يَسْتَجِيْبُوْا لَهٗ لَوْ اَنَّ لَهُمْ مَّا فِى الْاَرْضِ جَمِيْعًا وَّ مِثْلَهٗ مَعَهٗ لَافْتَدَوْا بِهٖ ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ سُوْٓءُ الْحِسَابِ ۙ وَ مَاْوٰىهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ؕ وَ بِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ ۝

SECTION 3 : **Good and Evil bring their own Reward**

19 Is he who knows that what is revealed to thee from thy Lord is the truth like him who is blind? Only men of understanding mind —

اَفَمَنْ يَّعْلَمُ اَنَّمَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ الْحَقُّ كَمَنْ هُوَ اَعْمٰى ؕ اِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ اُولُوا الْاَلْبَابِ ۝

20 Those who fulfil the pact of Allāh, and break not the covenant,

الَّذِيْنَ يُوْفُوْنَ بِعَهْدِ اللّٰهِ وَ لَا يَنْقُضُوْنَ الْمِيْثَاقَ ۝

21 And those who join that which Allāh has bidden to be joined[1272] and have awe of their Lord, and fear the evil reckoning.

وَ الَّذِيْنَ يَصِلُوْنَ مَآ اَمَرَ اللّٰهُ بِهٖٓ اَنْ يُّوْصَلَ وَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ وَ يَخَافُوْنَ سُوْٓءَ الْحِسَابِ ۝

22 And those who are steadfast[1273] seeking the pleasure of their Lord, and keep up prayer and spend of that which We have given them, secretly and openly, and repel evil with good;[1274] for such is the (happy) issue of the abode —

وَ الَّذِيْنَ صَبَرُوا ابْتِغَآءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِمْ وَ اَقَامُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَ اَنْفَقُوْا مِمَّا رَزَقْنٰهُمْ سِرًّا وَّ عَلَانِيَةً وَّ يَدْرَءُوْنَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةَ اُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ ۝

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followers will live and prosper, as they work for the good of man. On the other hand, evil practices and worthless usages and customs, as well as those who uphold them, will be swept away before the mighty current of Truth, as rubbish is borne away by a torrent.

1272 While the previous verse deals with man's duty to his Maker, this treats of the relations with His creatures. "What Allāh has bidden to be joined" includes all those ties of love and relationship which Allāh has taught man to observe and keep inviolate.

1273 Patience in trials and sufferings is only one of the ideas which the word *ṣabr* conveys. According to R, *ṣabr* is *the keeping oneself constrained to that which reason or law requires*, or *the withholding from that from which it requires to withhold.*

1274 *Evil* is a thing which is by all means to be repelled, and hence *good for evil* is recommended only in cases when *evil* would be *repelled* by that good. Unconditionally requiting evil with good would abolish all safeguards; evildoers

23 Gardens of perpetuity, which they will enter along with those who do good from among their fathers and their spouses[1276] and their offspring; and the angels will enter in upon them from every gate.

جَنّٰتُ عَدۡنٍ يَّدۡخُلُوۡنَهَا وَمَنۡ صَلَحَ مِنۡ اٰبَآئِهِمۡ وَاَزۡوَاجِهِمۡ وَذُرِّيّٰتِهِمۡ وَالۡمَلٰٓئِكَةُ يَدۡخُلُوۡنَ عَلَيۡهِمۡ مِّنۡ كُلِّ بَابٍ ﴿۲۳﴾

24 Peace be to you, because you were constant — how excellent is then the final Abode!

سَلٰمٌ عَلَيۡكُمۡ بِمَا صَبَرۡتُمۡ فَنِعۡمَ عُقۡبَى الدَّارِ ﴿۲۴﴾

25 And those who break the covenant of Allāh after its confirmation, and cut asunder that which Allāh has ordered to be joined, and make mischief in the land, for them is the curse, and theirs is the evil end of the Abode.

وَالَّذِيۡنَ يَنۡقُضُوۡنَ عَهۡدَ اللّٰهِ مِنۡۢ بَعۡدِ مِيۡثَاقِهٖ وَيَقۡطَعُوۡنَ مَاۤ اَمَرَ اللّٰهُ بِهٖۤ اَنۡ يُّوۡصَلَ وَيُفۡسِدُوۡنَ فِى الۡاَرۡضِ ۙ اُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ اللَّعۡنَةُ وَلَهُمۡ سُوۡٓءُ الدَّارِ ﴿۲۵﴾

26 Allāh amplifies and straitens provision for whom He pleases. And they rejoice in this world's life. And this world's life, compared with the Hereafter, is only a temporary enjoyment.

اَللّٰهُ يَبۡسُطُ الرِّزۡقَ لِمَنۡ يَّشَآءُ وَيَقۡدِرُ ؕ وَفَرِحُوۡا بِالۡحَيٰوةِ الدُّنۡيَا ؕ وَمَا الۡحَيٰوةُ الدُّنۡيَا فِى الۡاٰخِرَةِ اِلَّا مَتَاعٌ ﴿۲۶﴾

SECTION 4: **Revolution to be brought about by Qur'ān**

27 And those who disbelieve say: Why is not a sign sent down to him by his Lord?[1277] Say: Allāh leaves in error whom He pleases, and guides to Himself those who turn (to Him—[1278]

وَيَقُوۡلُ الَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوۡا لَوۡلَاۤ اُنۡزِلَ عَلَيۡهِ اٰيَةٌ مِّنۡ رَّبِّهٖ ؕ قُلۡ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُضِلُّ مَنۡ يَّشَآءُ وَيَهۡدِىۡۤ اِلَيۡهِ مَنۡ اَنَابَ ﴿۲۷﴾

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who received nothing but good for every evil they committed would most assuredly establish a condition of anarchy by their evil deeds. Elsewhere it is said *he who forgives and amends* (*thereby*) (42:40).

1276 The Qur'ān is full of clear statements that women shall enjoy the bliss of paradise. *Azwāj* is the plural of *zauj*, which means either husband or wife, and hence I have rendered it as spouses or mates.

1277 The answer to this question is given in the concluding words of the section: "There will not cease to afflict them because of what they do a repelling calamity, or it will alight close by their abodes, until the promise of Allāh comes about". This promise related to the utter annihilation of the power of the disbelievers. The question *why is not a sign sent down to him?* here as elsewhere in the Holy Qur'ān, is really a demand for the promised annihilation of their

1278, see next page.

28 Those who believe and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allāh. Now surely in Allāh's remembrance do hearts find rest.

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُم بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 Those who believe and do good, a good final state is theirs and a goodly return.[1279]

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ طُوبَىٰ لَهُمْ وَحُسْنُ مَآبٍ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 Thus We have sent thee among a nation before which other nations have passed away, that thou mightest recite to them what We have revealed to thee, and (still) they deny the Beneficent. Say: He is my Lord, there is no god but He; in Him do I trust and to Him is my return.

كَذَٰلِكَ أَرْسَلْنَاكَ فِي أُمَّةٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهَا أُمَمٌ لِّتَتْلُوَ عَلَيْهِمُ الَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَهُمْ يَكْفُرُونَ بِالرَّحْمَٰنِ ۚ قُلْ هُوَ رَبِّي لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ مَتَابِ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And if there could be a Qur'ān with which the mountains were made to pass away, or the earth were cloven asunder, or the dead were made to speak—[1280] nay, the commandment is wholly Allāh's. Do not those who

وَلَوْ أَنَّ قُرْآنًا سُيِّرَتْ بِهِ الْجِبَالُ أَوْ قُطِّعَتْ بِهِ الْأَرْضُ أَوْ كُلِّمَ بِهِ الْمَوْتَىٰ ۗ بَل لِّلَّهِ الْأَمْرُ جَمِيعًا ۗ أَفَلَمْ

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power and their vanquishment, and the answer is always conveyed in somewhat similar terms, stating first that they should ask for mercy; that the Qur'ān has healing power, the condition of the faithful being a witness to it; that the fate of the former generations affords a lesson; that smaller calamities continue to afflict them, and in these they can see the signs of their ultimate vanquishment; and that finally, if all those tokens are rejected, the great calamity will not fail to overtake them.

1278 The contrast with *him who turns to God* makes it clear that Allāh's pleasure to leave some in error is exercised only in the case of those who, though invited to God, do not turn to Him but choose to remain in error. The first part may also be translated thus: *Allāh leaves him in error who will (remain in error).*

1279 *Ṭūbā,* as an infinitive noun (from *ṭāba,* meaning *it became good*), means a *good final state* or *good future* (LL).

1280 According to some, the words *la-kāna hādha-l-Qur'ān* are understood, i.e. *it is this Qur'ān* (JB). But the answer is contained in what follows and there is no omission here. That the Qur'ān should work great wonders is not here treated as an impossibility, but rather as a fact, for we are immediately told that *the commandment is wholly Allāh's,* which is equivalent to saying that it will be brought about soon by His commandment. At the time when these verses were revealed, difficulties in the spread of Islām appeared like mountains. Formidable opponents of the Prophet stood undoubtedly like impassable mountains — and they were given the name of *jibāl,* or *mountains,* by the Arabs (LL) — in the way of the advance of Truth. That they were made to pass away is a matter of history. The words *quṭṭi at bi--hi-l-arḍu* may mean *the earth were cloven asunder,* by which is to be understood that the Qur'ān would go deep down into the hearts of men, which are compared here to the earth, which would thus be cloven asunder, with streams and springs flowing in it. Another significance of the words is that the earth will be *travelled over.* There were no facilities at that time for

believe know that, if Allāh please, He would certainly guide all the people? And as for those who disbelieve, disaster will not cease to afflict them because of what they do, or it will alight close by their abodes, until the promise of Allāh come to pass Surely Allāh will not fail in (His) promise.

يٰاَيْـَٔسِ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْۤا اَنْ لَّوْ يَشَآءُ اللّٰهُ لَهَدَى النَّاسَ جَمِيْعًا ؕ وَلَا يَزَالُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا تُصِيْبُهُمْ بِمَا صَنَعُوْا قَارِعَةٌ اَوْ تَحُلُّ قَرِيْبًا مِّنْ دَارِهِمْ حَتّٰى يَاْتِيَ وَعْدُ اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيْعَادَ ﴿۳۱﴾

SECTION 5: **Opposition will fail**

32 And messengers before thee were certainly mocked, but I gave respite to those who disbelieved, then I seized them. How (awful) was then My requital!

وَلَقَدِ اسْتُهْزِئَ بِرُسُلٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ فَاَمْلَيْتُ لِلَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا ثُمَّ اَخَذْتُهُمْ ۫ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عِقَابِ ﴿۳۲﴾

33 Is, then, He Who watches every soul as to what it earns —?[1283] And yet they ascribe partners to Allāh! Say: Name them.[1284] Would you inform Him of that which He knows not in the earth, or of an outward saying?[1285] Rather, their plan is made

اَفَمَنْ هُوَ قَآئِمٌ عَلٰى كُلِّ نَفْسٍۭ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ ۚ وَجَعَلُوْا لِلّٰهِ شُرَكَآءَ ؕ قُلْ سَمُّوْهُمْ ؕ اَمْ تُنَبِّـُٔوْنَهٗ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ فِى الْاَرْضِ

going to distant corners of Arabia, to say nothing of the distant countries of the world. Yet so irresistible was the urge within the hearts of Muslims to deliver the message of Truth that not only was the whole of Arabia travelled over by the message-bearers of Islām within ten years after this in the Prophet's lifetime, but within a hundred years after the Prophet, Islām had traversed the whole of the known world, spreading from the farthest East in China to the farthest West in Spain. As regards the last statement, *the dead were made to speak,* it is again a matter of history. Men who were dead spiritually now spoke with such power that the whole earth from end to end responded to their call. See 6:123, where it is made clear that by the dead in the terminology of the Qur'ān are sometimes meant the *spiritually dead* and by *giving life* is meant their *spiritual quickening.*

1283 Allāh watches what everyone does, i.e. requites everyone for what he does — their alleged associate-gods are admittedly unable to do this. The answer to the question, Is He . . . ? is given in the words that follow, *yet they ascribe partners to Allāh.*

1284 It is to show the utmost contempt for the alleged associates of the Divine Being that their worshippers are called upon to give them a name, as if it were said that they are not worthy of a name. Or the meaning may be, give them a name expressing any qualification of godhead, such as a sustainer, creator, etc.

1285, see next page.

fair-seeming to those who disbelieve,[1286] and they are kept back from the path. And whom Allāh leaves in error, he has no guide.

أَمْ بِظَاهِرٍ مِّنَ الْقَوْلِ ۗ بَلْ زُيِّنَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مَكْرُهُمْ وَصُدُّوا عَنِ السَّبِيلِ ۗ وَمَن يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 For them is chastisement in this world's life, and the chastisement of the Hereafter is certainly more grievous. And they have no protector against Allāh.

لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَعَذَابُ الْآخِرَةِ أَشَقُّ ۚ وَمَا لَهُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ مِن وَاقٍ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 A parable of the Garden which is promised to those who keep their duty:[1287] Therein flow rivers. Its fruits are perpetual and its plenty.[1288] Such is the end for those who keep their duty; and the end for the disbelievers is the Fire.

مَّثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ ۖ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهٰرُ ۖ أُكُلُهَا دَائِمٌ وَظِلُّهَا ۚ تِلْكَ عُقْبَى الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوا ۖ وَّعُقْبَى الْكٰفِرِينَ النَّارُ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 And those to whom We have given the Book[1289] rejoice in that which has been revealed to thee, and of the confederates are some who deny a part of it. Say: I am commanded only to serve Allāh and not associate anything with Him. To Him do I invite (you), and to Him is my return.

وَالَّذِينَ آتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَمِنَ الْأَحْزَابِ مَن يُنكِرُ بَعْضَهُ ۚ قُلْ إِنَّمَا أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ وَلَا أُشْرِكَ بِهِ ۚ إِلَيْهِ أَدْعُوا وَإِلَيْهِ مَآبِ ﴿٣٦﴾

1285 The appeal is to the inner self of man. Is anything hidden from God? Is He not Aware of the inmost feelings of man? Must there be a partner with God, who should tell Him of what He knows not? Are your outward sayings not known to Him, so that there must be a partner to inform Him of what you say? He knows both the inner feelings of man and his outward sayings, and He does not stand in need of a mediator.

1286 It is the devil who makes the evil deeds fair-seeming to men; see 6:43; 16:63. And elsewhere it is made clear: "And the devil made their deeds fair-seeming to them and kept them back from the path" (29:38).

1287 It should be noted that the paradise mentioned here is called a *parable,* as also in 47:15. The reason is, as a saying of the Holy Prophet makes clear, that the blessings of paradise are such as no eye has seen, nor has ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive of them (B. 59:8). Therefore, what it actually is cannot be known to man, until he has tasted of its blessings; the description given in the Qur'ān being only a likeness of what it actually is, for an impression of a thing which is of a nature entirely different from the things of this world can only be conveyed by parables.

1288 The word *ẓill* has other meanings besides *shade.* It signifies *mightiness, inaccessibility, ease,* or *plenty* (R). It also signifies *protection* (LL).

1289 By the *Book* is meant the *Qur'ān,* as the context clearly shows. Some, however, take the Book to signify the previous revelation given to the Israelite prophets, and understand Jewish or Christian converts to Islām to be meant here.

37 And thus have We revealed it, a true judgment, in Arabic. And if thou follow their low desires after that which has come to thee of knowledge, thou wouldst have against Allāh no guardian nor protector.

وَكَذٰلِكَ اَنْزَلْنٰهُ حُكْمًا عَرَبِيًّا ؕ وَلَئِنِ اتَّبَعْتَ اَهْوَآءَهُمْ بَعْدَ مَا جَآءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ ۙ مَا لَكَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ مِنْ وَّلِيٍّ وَّلَا وَاقٍ ﴿۳۷﴾

SECTION 6 : **Steady Progress of Truth**

38 And certainly We sent messengers before thee and appointed for them wives and children. And it is not in (the power of) a messenger to bring a sign except by Allāh's permission. For every term there is an appointment.[1290]

وَلَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ اَزْوَاجًا وَّذُرِّيَّةً ؕ وَمَا كَانَ لِرَسُوْلٍ اَنْ يَّاْتِيَ بِاٰيَةٍ اِلَّا بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ لِكُلِّ اَجَلٍ كِتَابٌ ﴿۳۸﴾

39 Allāh effaces what He pleases and establishes (what He pleases),[1291] and with Him is the basis of the Book.[1292]

يَمْحُوا اللّٰهُ مَا يَشَآءُ وَيُثْبِتُ ۚۖ وَعِنْدَهٗۤ اُمُّ الْكِتٰبِ ﴿۳۹﴾

40 Whether We let thee see part of that which We promise them, or cause thee to die, thine is but the delivery of the message, and Ours to call (them) to account.

وَاِنْ مَّا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ الَّذِيْ نَعِدُهُمْ اَوْ نَتَوَفَّيَنَّكَ فَاِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلٰغُ وَعَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ ﴿۴۰﴾

41 See they not that We are visiting the land, curtailing it of its sides?[1293] And Allāh pronounces a doom — there is no repeller of His decree. And He is Swift in calling to account.

اَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا اَنَّا نَاْتِي الْاَرْضَ نَنْقُصُهَا مِنْ اَطْرَافِهَا ؕ وَاللّٰهُ يَحْكُمُ لَا مُعَقِّبَ لِحُكْمِهٖ ؕ وَهُوَ سَرِيْعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿۴۱﴾

1290 The significance is that the sign so often demanded will come at the appointed time. The ultimate discomfiture of the power of the opponents had been prophesied in the earliest revelations, hence the repeated demands.

1291 God was now going to efface falsehood and to establish the Truth.

1292 The same word, *umm al-kitāb,* occurs in 3:6, where the verses that are of obvious import are called the *basis of the Book,* because allegorical verses must be interpreted subject to the principles laid down in plain words. Here the Divine ordinance to annihilate the power of the opponents of the Holy Prophet and to bring about the establishment of the Truth is called the *basis of the Book,* because the final vanquishment of the powers of evil, which was previously foretold, would be such a clear sign that it would dispel all doubts.

1293 *Aṭrāf* signifies *sides,* as indicating *the high and the low* or *exalted men* (LL). The reference may be either to some of the exalted men having come over to Islām and the opposition being thus weakened, or to the diminution of the number of disbelievers, both high and low, by men daily leaving their ranks and joining the ranks of Islām.

42 And those before them planned indeed, but all planning is Allāh's.[1294] He knows what every soul earns. And the disbelievers will come to know for whom is the (good) end of the Abode.

وَقَدْ مَكَرَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَلِلّٰهِ
الْمَكْرُ جَمِيعًا ۖ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْسِبُ كُلُّ
نَفْسٍ ۗ وَسَيَعْلَمُ الْكُفّٰرُ لِمَنْ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 And those who disbelieve say: Thou art not a messenger. Say: Allāh is sufficient for a witness between me and you and whoever has knowledge of the Book.[1295]

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَسْتَ مُرْسَلًا ۚ قُلْ
كَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۙ
وَمَنْ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتٰبِ ﴿٤٣﴾

1294 The meaning is that the plans of the enemy need not be feared, for all their planning is controlled by Allāh, or that the requital of their plans is in the hands of Allāh.

1295 The Book here stands for previous revelation from Allāh, and attention is called to the fact that all those who have any knowledge of previous revelation will testify to the truth of the revelation of the Qur'ān, because it fulfils all previous prophecies and satisfies the criteria of a true revelation.



CHAPTER 14

Ibrāhīm : **ABRAHAM**

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 7 *sections,* 52 *verses*)

The name of this chapter is taken from Abraham, whose prayer is mentioned in the sixth section. As this prayer speaks of the settling of Ishmael in the wilderness of Paran, the mention of it is meant to be a reminder of the truth of the Holy Prophet, whose advent was prophesied by Abraham.

The chapter opens with the statement that the Qur'ān is revealed with the object of leading men out of darkness into light, and goes on to show that the Mosaic revelation, although given with a similar object, was for a particular people. The second section shows that Moses also exhorted his people to accept the truth, but that all prophets had their message rejected at first. The third section maintains that in all cases opposition was at last destroyed, the Divine promise to help the prophet being brought to fulfilment and his powerful opponents rendered helpless. That truth is confirmed as the natural sequel is affirmed in the next section, and this is followed by one which shows that by rejecting truth man brings about his own ruin, for everything is made subservient to man, which establishes the grand truth of Divine Unity. Here follows Abraham's prayer expressing his disavowal of polytheism of every sort, with special reference to his descendants through Ishmael, for whom he also prayed. The concluding section states that the end of opposition to truth has always been, and will always be, failure.

The chapter belongs to the same period as the sister-chapters of this group.

SECTION 1 **Revelation dispels Darkness**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 I, Allāh, am the Seer. A Book which We have revealed to thee that thou mayest bring forth men, by their Lord's permission, from darkness into light, to the way of the Mighty, the Praised One,

الٓرٰ ۟ كِتٰبٌ اَنْزَلْنٰهُ اِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ
النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمٰتِ اِلَى النُّوْرِ ۙ۬
بِاِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ اِلٰى صِرَاطِ الْعَزِيْزِ الْحَمِيْدِ ۙ①

2 Of Allāh, Whose is whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. And woe to the disbelievers for the severe chastisement!

اللّٰهِ الَّذِيْ لَهٗ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ؕ
وَوَيْلٌ لِّلْكٰفِرِيْنَ مِنْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيْدِ ۙ②

3 Those who love this world's life more than the Hereafter, and turn away from Allāh's path, and would have it crooked. Those are far astray.

الَّذِيْنَ يَسْتَحِبُّوْنَ الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى
الْاٰخِرَةِ وَيَصُدُّوْنَ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ
وَيَبْغُوْنَهَا عِوَجًا ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ فِيْ ضَلٰلٍ بَعِيْدٍ ③

4 And We sent no messenger but with the language of his people, so that he might explain to them clearly.[1296] Then Allāh leaves in error whom He pleases and He guides whom He pleases. And He is the Mighty, the Wise.

وَمَاۤ اَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُوْلٍ اِلَّا بِلِسَانِ قَوْمِهٖ
لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ ؕ فَيُضِلُّ اللّٰهُ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَ
يَهْدِيْ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ④

5 And certainly We sent Moses with Our messages, saying: Bring forth thy people from darkness into

وَلَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَا مُوْسٰى بِاٰيٰتِنَاۤ اَنْ اَخْرِجْ
قَوْمَكَ مِنَ الظُّلُمٰتِ اِلَى النُّوْرِ ۙ۬

1296 In 7:158 we have: "Say: O mankind, I am the Messenger of Allah to you all, of Him Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth". A similar statement is made in 34:28: "And We have not sent thee but to all mankind as a bearer of good news and as a warner". In the verse under discussion nothing is said about the extent of the mission of the Holy Prophet. All that is said here is that every prophet is sent with the language of his people, not that his people, or the nation to which he belongs, are the only people to whom he is required to deliver the message. And the reason for sending a prophet with the language of a people is stated to be that he may explain to his people, because it is his people, who are the first recipients of his message.

light and remind them of the days of Allāh.[1297] In this are surely signs for every steadfast, grateful one.

وَذَكِّرْهُمْ بِأَيّٰمِ اللّٰهِ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ﴿٥﴾

6 And when Moses said to his people: Call to mind Allāh's favour to you, when He delivered you from Pharaoh's people, who subjected you to severe torment, and slew your sons and spared your women. And therein was a great trial from your Lord.

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسٰى لِقَوْمِهِ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ أَنْجٰىكُمْ مِّنْ اٰلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوٓءَ الْعَذَابِ وَيُذَبِّحُونَ أَبْنَآءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَآءَكُمْ ۚ وَفِي ذٰلِكُمْ بَلَآءٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٦﴾

SECTION 2: **Truth is rejected first**

7 And when your Lord made it known: If you are grateful, I will give you more, and if you are ungrateful, My chastisement is truly severe.

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِنْ كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿٧﴾

8 And Moses said: If you are ungrateful, you and all those on earth, then Allāh is surely Self-sufficient, Praised.

وَقَالَ مُوسٰى إِنْ تَكْفُرُوٓا أَنْتُمْ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ۙ فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَغَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ ﴿٨﴾

9 Has not the account reached you of those before you, of the people of Noah and 'Ād and Thamūd — and those after them? None knows them but Allāh.[1298] Their messengers came to them with clear arguments, but they thrust their hands into their mouths[1299] and said: We deny that with which you are sent, and surely we are in serious doubt as to that to which you invite us.[1300]

أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَبَؤُا الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَّعَادٍ وَّثَمُودَ ۛ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ ۛ لَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ ۚ جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ فَرَدُّوٓا أَيْدِيَهُمْ فِيٓ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَقَالُوٓا إِنَّا كَفَرْنَا بِمَآ أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ وَإِنَّا لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّمَّا تَدْعُونَنَآ إِلَيْهِ مُرِيبٍ ﴿٩﴾

1297 *Ayyām-Allāh* is explained as meaning the *favours of Allāh* (T). The use of the word in a similar sense is well known in Arabic literature, in which *Ayyām al-'Arab*, or *the days of the Arabs*, is used for the conflicts of the Arabs. Hence, as a conflict is a source of blessings for the conqueror and a source of distress for the vanquished, *the days of Allāh* signify *His merciful dealings with the righteous and His punishment of the wicked.*

1298 The Qur'ān does not claim to give a history of all the prophets; see 4:164 and 40.78. The statement made here is much wider. It is claimed that no other book mentions them all; they are known only to Allāh. In fact, the Bible does not contain more than a mangled account of some of the prophets of a single nation.

1299, 1300, see next page.

10 Their messengers said: Is there doubt about Allāh, the Maker of the heavens and the earth? He invites you to forgive you your faults and to respite you till an appointed term. They said: You are nothing but mortals like us; you wish to turn us away from that which our fathers used to worship; so bring us clear authority.

قَالَتْ رُسُلُهُمْ أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ يَدْعُوكُمْ لِيَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ مِنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُؤَخِّرَكُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُسَمًّى ۚ قَالُوا إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُنَا تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَصُدُّونَا عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا فَأْتُونَا بِسُلْطٰنٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿١٠﴾

11 Their messengers said to them: We are nothing but mortals like yourselves, but Allāh bestows (His) favours on whom He pleases of His servants. And it is not for us to bring you an authority, except by Allāh's permission. And on Allāh let the believers rely.

قَالَتْ لَهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ إِنْ نَحْنُ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ وَلٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَمُنُّ عَلَىٰ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ۖ وَمَا كَانَ لَنَا أَنْ نَأْتِيَكُمْ بِسُلْطٰنٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12 And why should we not rely on Allāh? and He has indeed guided us in our ways. And we would certainly bear with patience your persecution of us. And on Allāh should the reliant rely.

وَمَا لَنَا أَلَّا نَتَوَكَّلَ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَقَدْ هَدٰىنَا سُبُلَنَا ۚ وَلَنَصْبِرَنَّ عَلَىٰ مَا آذَيْتُمُونَا ۚ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

SECTION 3: **Opposition is at last destroyed**

13 And those who disbelieved said to their messengers: We will certainly drive you out of our land, unless you come back into our religion.[1301] So their Lord revealed to them: We shall certainly destroy the wrongdoers,

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِرُسُلِهِمْ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكُمْ مِنْ أَرْضِنَا أَوْ لَتَعُودُنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا ۖ فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ لَنُهْلِكَنَّ الظّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

1299 *When a man does not return an answer, being unable to do so, and withholds, he thrusts his hand into his mouth* (AH). Or, as the majority of the commentators agree, the meaning may be, *they bit their hands* by reason of rage; compare 3:118. Or the meaning may simply be that the disbelievers put their hands into the mouths of the messengers to silence them.

1300 The general statements made with regard to the messengers and the treatment of their people in this and the following section, while essentially true with regard to messengers generally, are particularly made in reference to the mission of the Prophet Muḥammad, the determined opposition and enmity of his people, their turning him out of the city, and their final discomfiture.

1301 This is no doubt equally a description of what the Holy Prophet was

14 And We shall certainly settle you in the land after them. This is for him who fears standing in My presence and fears My threat.[1302]

وَلَنُسْكِنَنَّكُمُ الْأَرْضَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامِي وَخَافَ وَعِيدِ ﴿١٤﴾

15 And they sought judgment, and every insolent opposer was disappointed :

وَاسْتَفْتَحُوا وَخَابَ كُلُّ جَبَّارٍ عَنِيدٍ ﴿١٥﴾

16 Hell is before him and he is given to drink of boiling water ;[1303]

مِنْ وَرَائِهِ جَهَنَّمُ وَيُسْقَىٰ مِنْ مَاءٍ صَدِيدٍ ﴿١٦﴾

17 He drinks it little by little and is not able to swallow it; and death[1304] comes to him from every quarter, yet he dies not. And before him is vehement chastisement.

يَتَجَرَّعُهُ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُسِيغُهُ وَيَأْتِيهِ الْمَوْتُ مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمَيِّتٍ ۖ وَمِنْ وَرَائِهِ عَذَابٌ غَلِيظٌ ﴿١٧﴾

18 The parable of those who disbelieve in their Lord : Their works are as ashes on which the wind blows hard on a stormy day. They have no power over aught they have earned. That is straying far away.

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ كَرَمَادٍ اشْتَدَّتْ بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي يَوْمٍ عَاصِفٍ ۖ لَا يَقْدِرُونَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الضَّلَالُ الْبَعِيدُ ﴿١٨﴾

19 Seest thou not that Allāh created the heavens and the earth with truth ? If He please, He will take you away and bring a new creation,

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ ۚ إِنْ يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ﴿١٩﴾

20 And that is not difficult for Allāh.[1305]

وَمَا ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ بِعَزِيزٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

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suffering at the hands of his enemies.

1302 The prophecy of the final triumph of the Holy Prophet and of the utter discomfiture and overthrow of the power of his opponents is of very frequent occurrence in the Holy Qur'ān ; here, too, it is expressed in the clearest words. The opponents are told that they may expel the Prophet, but there was not the least doubt that he would ultimately come back as a conqueror, and be made the ruler in the land after their power was crushed. This verse contains, in fact, a very clear prophecy of the flight of the Holy Prophet from Makkah and of his re-entry into that city as a conqueror and ruler.

1303 *Ṣadīd* is translated variously as *pus, filthy* water, *hot* or *boiling* water (LL).

1304 *Death* or *maut* here means, not cessation of life, but *grief* or *distress* (R), sufficient to cause death. He experiences, as it were, the pangs of death, but death, which would end all distress, does not come to him.

1305 Vv. 18-20 are again prophetical. V. 18 states that all the exertions of the opponents against the Prophet will be useless, while vv. 19 and 20 warn

21 And they will all come forth to Allāh then the weak will say to those who were proud: We were your followers, can you then avert from us aught of the chastisement of Allāh? They will say: If Allāh had guided us, we would have guided you. It is the same to us whether we cry or bear patiently; there is no escape for us.

وَبَرَزُوْا لِلّٰهِ جَمِيْعًا فَقَالَ الضُّعَفٰٓؤُا
لِلَّذِيْنَ اسْتَكْبَرُوْٓا اِنَّا كُنَّا لَكُمْ تَبَعًا فَهَلْ
اَنْتُمْ مُّغْنُوْنَ عَنَّا مِنْ عَذَابِ اللّٰهِ مِنْ
شَيْءٍ ۗ قَالُوْا لَوْ هَدٰىنَا اللّٰهُ لَهَدَيْنٰكُمْ ۗ
سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْنَآ اَجَزِعْنَآ اَمْ صَبَرْنَا مَا
لَنَا مِنْ مَّحِيْصٍ ﴿٢١﴾

SECTION 4: **Truth is confirmed**

22 And the devil[1306] will say, when the matter is decided: Surely Allāh promised you a promise of truth, and I promised you, then failed you.[1307] And I had no authority over you,[1308] except that I called you and you obeyed me; so blame me not but blame yourselves. I cannot come to your help, nor can you come to my help. I deny your associating me with Allāh before.[1309] Surely for the unjust is a painful chastisement.

وَقَالَ الشَّيْطٰنُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الْاَمْرُ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ
وَعَدَكُمْ وَعْدَ الْحَقِّ وَوَعَدْتُّكُمْ فَاَخْلَفْتُكُمْ ۗ
وَمَا كَانَ لِيَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّنْ سُلْطٰنٍ اِلَّآ اَنْ
دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِيْ ۚ فَلَا تَلُوْمُوْنِيْ
وَلُوْمُوْٓا اَنْفُسَكُمْ ۗ مَآ اَنَا بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ
وَمَآ اَنْتُمْ بِمُصْرِخِيَّ ۗ اِنِّيْ كَفَرْتُ بِمَآ
اَشْرَكْتُمُوْنِ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۗ اِنَّ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ
لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

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the disbelievers that their power will come to an end and another people will take their place.

1306 The devil mentioned in this verse is none other than the proud misleader of the preceding one. Compare also 37:30, where the very words *we had no authority over you* are put into the mouth of the leaders of evil from among men.

1307 Whenever a person is misled into an evil deed, he finds in the end that the promise of a good consequence for an evil deed was only a deception. Compare 4:120 and 17:64.

1308 The devil, or the leader in evil, only points out an evil way, and the evildoer follows that way.

1309 Compare 35:14. An alternative significance is *I disbelieved because you associated me with Allāh*; in other words, the leaders disbelieve because their followers lead them by their flattery to think that they are worthy of being obeyed and followed.

23 And those who believe and do good are made to enter Gardens, wherein flow rivers, abiding therein by their Lord's permission. Their greeting therein is, Peace !

وَأُدْخِلَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا بِاِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ ؕ تَحِيَّتُهُمْ فِيْهَا سَلٰمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Seest thou not how Allāh sets forth a parable of a good word as a good tree, whose root is firm and whose branches are high,[1310]

اَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ ضَرَبَ اللّٰهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ اَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَّفَرْعُهَا فِي السَّمَآءِ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 Yielding its fruit in every season by the permission of its Lord ? And Allāh sets forth parables for men that they may be mindful.

تُؤْتِيْۤ اُكُلَهَا كُلَّ حِيْنٍۭ بِاِذْنِ رَبِّهَا ؕ وَيَضْرِبُ اللّٰهُ الْاَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 And the parable of an evil word is as an evil tree pulled up from the earth's surface ; it has no stability.[1311]

وَمَثَلُ كَلِمَةٍ خَبِيْثَةٍ كَشَجَرَةٍ خَبِيْثَةِ اِجْتُثَّتْ مِنْ فَوْقِ الْاَرْضِ مَا لَهَا مِنْ قَرَارٍ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 Allāh confirms those who believe with the sure word in this world's life and in the Hereafter ; and Allāh leaves the wrongdoers in error ; and Allāh does what He pleases.[1312]

يُثَبِّتُ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْاٰخِرَةِ ۚ وَيُضِلُّ اللّٰهُ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ۙ وَيَفْعَلُ اللّٰهُ مَا يَشَآءُ ﴿٢٧﴾

1310 The parable likening a good word to a good tree follows immediately a description of the final abode of those who do good, which is repeatedly described in the Holy Qur'ān as being a Garden or Gardens wherein rivers flow. This gives us a clue to the real nature of paradise. A good word is like a good tree which gives its fruit in every season, and therefore the fruits which a man will find in paradise, ever ready and within his reach, are only the fruits of his own good deeds. The trees of paradise are in fact man's own good deeds, which have grown into trees, bearing a fruit which is an embodiment of the spiritual fruits of the good deeds of this life. It should also be noted that, as good deeds are likened to fruit-bearing trees, faith is likened to water repeatedly in the Holy Qur'ān, being the source of physical life. It is for this reason that, just as the righteous are always spoken of as being those who *believe* and *do good*, paradise is always described as being a *Garden* in which *rivers* flow, the *rivers* corresponding to *faith* and the *trees* of the Garden corresponding to the *good* which a man does. By the *kalimah* (*word*) is meant *a thing*, or *an affair* or *a matter, because every matter is termed a kalimah, whether it is a word* or *a deed* (R).

1311 The evil deed is likened to a tree whose roots do not go down into the earth, and in whose case, therefore, the process of nutrition must stop. Therefore an evil deed does not prosper and cannot bear any fruit.

1312 *Allāh does what He pleases,* but it is the *wrongdoers* only, whom He leaves in error. The immediate cause of their going astray is their own iniquity.

SECTION 5 : **Man's Injustice in rejecting Truth**

28 Seest thou not those who change Allāh's favour for disbelief[1313] and make their people to alight in the abode of perdition —

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ بَدَّلُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ
كُفْرًا وَأَحَلُّوا قَوْمَهُمْ دَارَ الْبَوَارِ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 Hell. They will burn in it. And an evil place it is to settle in!

جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَوْنَهَا ۚ وَبِئْسَ الْقَرَارُ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 And they set up equals with Allāh to lead astray from His path. Say : Enjoy yourselves, for surely your return is to the Fire.

وَجَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَنْدَادًا لِيُضِلُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ۗ
قُلْ تَمَتَّعُوا فَإِنَّ مَصِيرَكُمْ إِلَى النَّارِ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 Tell My servants who believe to keep up prayer and spend out of what We have given them, secretly and openly, before the coming of the day in which there is no bartering, nor befriending.

قُلْ لِعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ
وَيُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً
مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا بَيْعٌ فِيهِ
وَلَا خِلَالٌ ﴿٣١﴾

32 Allāh is He Who created the heavens and the earth and sent down water from the clouds, then brought forth with it fruits as a sustenance for you, and He has made the ships subservient to you to run their course in the sea by His command, and He has made the rivers subservient to you.[1315]

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ
وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ
مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ ۖ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ
الْفُلْكَ لِتَجْرِيَ فِي الْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِ ۖ وَسَخَّرَ
لَكُمُ الْأَنْهَارَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 And He has made subservient to you the sun and the moon, pursuing their courses ; and He has made subservient to you the night and the day.

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ دَائِبَيْنِ ۖ
وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ ﴿٣٣﴾

1313 They reject Allāh's favour, the Revelation, which aims at making them a great and exalted people, and adopt disbelief in its place.

1315 The whole of creation is here, and in the next verse, declared to be made subservient to man, to show his high place in creation. How much then does man degrade himself by bowing before and worshipping things which were made to serve him!

34 And He gives you of all you ask of Him. And if you count Allāh's favours, you will not be able to number them. Surely man is very unjust, very ungrateful.

وَاٰتٰىكُمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ مَا سَاَلْتُمُوْهُ ؕ وَاِنْ
تَعُدُّوْا نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ لَا تُحْصُوْهَا ؕ اِنَّ الْاِنْسَانَ
لَظَلُوْمٌ كَفَّارٌ ﴿۳۴﴾

SECTION 6 : **Abraham's Prayer**

35 And when Abraham said: My Lord, make this city secure, and save me and my sons from worshipping idols.[1316]

وَاِذْ قَالَ اِبْرٰهِيْمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هٰذَا
الْبَلَدَ اٰمِنًا وَّاجْنُبْنِيْ وَبَنِيَّ اَنْ
نَّعْبُدَ الْاَصْنَامَ ﴿۳۵﴾

36 My Lord, surely they have led many men astray.[1317] So whoever follows me, he is surely of me; and whoever disobeys me, Thou surely art Forgiving, Merciful.[1318]

رَبِّ اِنَّهُنَّ اَضْلَلْنَ كَثِيْرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ ۚ
فَمَنْ تَبِعَنِيْ فَاِنَّهٗ مِنِّيْ ۚ وَمَنْ عَصَانِيْ فَاِنَّكَ
غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۳۶﴾

37 Our Lord, I have settled a part of my offspring[1319] in a valley unproductive of fruit near Thy Sacred House, our Lord, that they may keep up prayer; so make the hearts of some people yearn towards them, and provide them with fruits; haply they may be grateful.

رَبَّنَآ اِنِّيْٓ اَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِيْ بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ
ذِيْ زَرْعٍ عِنْدَ بَيْتِكَ الْمُحَرَّمِ ۙ رَبَّنَا
لِيُقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ فَاجْعَلْ اَفْـِٕدَةً مِّنَ
النَّاسِ تَهْوِيْٓ اِلَيْهِمْ وَارْزُقْهُمْ مِّنَ
الثَّمَرٰتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿۳۷﴾

38 Our Lord, surely Thou knowest what we hide and what we proclaim. And nothing is hidden from Allāh, either in the earth, or in the heaven.

رَبَّنَآ اِنَّكَ تَعْلَمُ مَا نُخْفِيْ وَمَا نُعْلِنُ ؕ
وَمَا يَخْفٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي
الْاَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَآءِ ﴿۳۸﴾

1316 That idolatry received a death-blow from the hands of one of Abraham's descendants shows that Abraham's prayer was not in vain. In fact, if idolatry is being swept off from the face of the eath, it is due only to Abraham and his descendants.

1317 Idols do not actually lead men astray, but as it is on account of them that people go astray, they are described as causing men to go astray.

1318 The prayer of Abraham is in fact the prayer of the Holy Prophet and illustrates the breadth of his view. Those who follow him are, of course, his own, but he does not reject even those who disobey him, for he prays for Allāh's mercy and protection even for them.

1319 According to the Holy Qur'ān, Abraham brought Ishmael (and his mother), to Arabia and settled them there. The story of the casting forth of Hagar and Ishmael in the wilderness of Beer-sheba is thus not accepted. There are some details given in a ḥadīth by Ibn 'Abbās (B. 60:9). According to this ḥadīth, Abraham brought Hagar and Ishmael, and settled them near the ruins of the Sacred House, the Ka'bah. This, as the hadīth states, was done under a Divine commandment. For when Abraham was going back on leaving them both in this

39 Praise be to Allāh, Who has given me, in old age, Ishmael and Isaac! Surely my Lord is the Hearer of prayer.

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِیْ وَهَبَ لِیْ عَلَی الْکِبَرِ اِسْمٰعِیْلَ وَاِسْحٰقَ ؕ اِنَّ رَبِّیْ لَسَمِیْعُ الدُّعَآءِ ﴿۳۹﴾

40 My Lord, make me keep up prayer and from my offspring (too), our Lord, and accept my prayer.

رَبِّ اجْعَلْنِیْ مُقِیْمَ الصَّلٰوۃِ وَمِنْ ذُرِّیَّتِیْ ٭ۖ رَبَّنَا وَتَقَبَّلْ دُعَآءِ ﴿۴۰﴾

41 Our Lord, grant me protection and my parents and the believers on the day when the reckoning comes to pass.

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لِیْ وَلِوَالِدَیَّ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِیْنَ یَوْمَ یَقُوْمُ الْحِسَابُ ﴿۴۱﴾

SECTION 7: **The End of Opposition**

42 And think not Allāh to be heedless of what the unjust do. He only respites them to a day when the eyes will stare (in terror),[1321]

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللّٰهَ غَافِلًا عَمَّا یَعْمَلُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ۬ؕ اِنَّمَا یُؤَخِّرُهُمْ لِیَوْمٍ تَشْخَصُ فِیْهِ الْاَبْصَارُ ﴿۴۲﴾

43 Hastening forward, their heads upraised, their gaze not returning to them, and their hearts vacant.[1322]

مُهْطِعِیْنَ مُقْنِعِیْ رُءُوْسِهِمْ لَا یَرْتَدُّ اِلَیْهِمْ طَرْفُهُمْ ۚ وَاَفْـِٕدَتُهُمْ هَوَآءٌ ﴿۴۳﴾

44 And warn people of a day when the chastisement will come to them, then the wrongdoers will say: Our Lord, respite us to a near term, we will respond to Thy call and follow the messengers. Did you not swear before that there will be no passing away for you?

وَاَنْذِرِ النَّاسَ یَوْمَ یَاْتِیْهِمُ الْعَذَابُ فَیَقُوْلُ الَّذِیْنَ ظَلَمُوْا رَبَّنَاۤ اَخِّرْنَاۤ اِلٰۤی اَجَلٍ قَرِیْبٍ ۙ نُّجِبْ دَعْوَتَکَ وَنَتَّبِعِ الرُّسُلَ ؕ اَوَلَمْ تَکُوْنُوْۤا اَقْسَمْتُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلُ مَا لَکُمْ مِّنْ زَوَالٍ ﴿۴۴﴾

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wilderness, where there was no town at this time, Hagar asked him, Is it by Allāh's commandment that thou art doing this? Abraham's reply was, Yes. Then said Hagar: "Allāh will not leave us to perish" It is further stated that, when no water was left with her, Hagar ran to and fro, between the Ṣafā and the Marwah, to find out if there was any caravan going that way. It was on this occasion that she saw an angel, who pointed to her a place where she could find water. This was the place known now as Zamzam. It was due to this water that some people settled there. Even the Bible accepts that Ishmael's descendants settled in Arabia.

1321 The expression indicates a state of intense terror, in which one is unable even to wink the eye.

1322 The striking terror into the hearts of those who opposed the Prophet was witnessed in this very life, when the Prophet advanced on Makkah. The vacancy or blankness of the heart indicates a state of great terror.

45 And you dwell in the abodes of those who wronged themselves, and is it clear to you how We dealt with them and We made (them) examples for you.

وَّ سَكَنْتُمْ فِيْ مَسٰكِنِ الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ وَ تَبَيَّنَ لَكُمْ كَيْفَ فَعَلْنَا بِهِمْ وَ ضَرَبْنَا لَكُمُ الْاَمْثَالَ ﴿۴۵﴾

46 And they have indeed planned their plan,[1323] and their plan is with Allāh,[1324] though their plan is such that the mountains should be moved thereby.

وَ قَدْ مَكَرُوْا مَكْرَهُمْ وَ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ مَكْرُهُمْ ؕ وَ اِنْ كَانَ مَكْرُهُمْ لِتَزُوْلَ مِنْهُ الْجِبَالُ ﴿۴۶﴾

47 So think not that Allāh will fail in His promise to His messengers. Surely Allāh is Mighty, the Lord of retribution.

فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللّٰهَ مُخْلِفَ وَعْدِهٖ رُسُلَهٗ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيْزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ ﴿۴۷﴾

48 On the day when the earth will be changed into a different earth, and the heavens (as well),[1325] and they will come forth to Allāh, the One, the Supreme.

يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ الْاَرْضُ غَيْرَ الْاَرْضِ وَ السَّمٰوٰتُ وَ بَرَزُوْا لِلّٰهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ ﴿۴۸﴾

49 And thou wilt see the guilty on that day linked together in chains —[1326]

وَ تَرَى الْمُجْرِمِيْنَ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّقَرَّنِيْنَ فِي الْاَصْفَادِ ﴿۴۹﴾

50 Their shirts made of pitch, and fire covering their faces,

سَرَابِيْلُهُمْ مِّنْ قَطِرَانٍ وَّ تَغْشٰى وُجُوْهَهُمُ النَّارُ ﴿۵۰﴾

51 That Allāh may repay each soul what it has earned. Surely Allāh is Swift in reckoning.

لِيَجْزِيَ اللّٰهُ كُلَّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَرِيْعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿۵۱﴾

1323 The reference is to the plan of the Quraish to put an end to the Prophet's life, when he was left almost alone in Makkah.

1324 The words *their plan is with Allāh* signify that their plan is controlled by Allāh, Who will make it ineffective. A wonderful prophecy indeed in the mouth of a person whose only chance of saving himself now lay in escaping from his enemies, while they were taking every precaution not to allow him to escape, having decided to put him to death! See 8 : 30 and 998, where these plans are detailed.

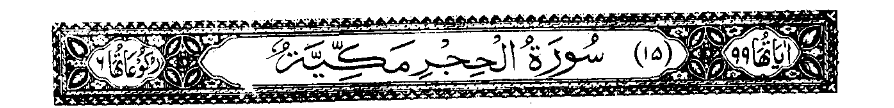
1325 The transformation wrought by the Holy Prophet no doubt changed the earth into a different earth and the heaven into a new heaven. The Arabia at the birth of the Prophet was not the Arabia at his death. Beliefs, usages, and practices, which had baffled all attempts at reformation for centuries, were swept away, and the ignorant, superstitious, and warring tribes had become a single nation, holding aloft the torch of knowledge and civilization to the whole world. Idolatry was blotted out of existence so completely that no vestige of it could be found among a people who had remained addicted to it for centuries. And that great change must now come over the whole world. But the spiritual resurrection is only an indication of the great day of Resurrection.

1326, see next page.

52 This is a message for the people and that they may be warned thereby, and that they may know that He is One God, and that men of understanding may mind.

هٰذَا بَلٰغٌ لِّلنَّاسِ وَلِيُنْذَرُوْا بِهٖ وَلِيَعْلَمُوْٓا
أَنَّمَا هُوَ إِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ وَّلِيَذَّكَّرَ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٥٢﴾

1326 The powerful opponents of the Prophet were brought before him linked together in chains in this very life, at the battle of Badr. These promises were fulfilled in this life to show that they were equally true as regards the next.



CHAPTER 15

Al-Ḥijr : THE ROCK

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 6 *sections;* 99 *verses*)

This chapter is named *The Rock,* because of the mention of the Dwellers of the Rock in v. 80, whose fate is mentioned as a warning to those who contemplated the slaying of the Prophet. While promising a complete protection for the message of Truth contained in the Holy Qur'ān against all evil designs, it itensifies the warning contained in the previous chapters against those who were bent on its destruction.

The last chapter closed by warning the opponents of the end which they were destined to meet. The same subject is continued in the beginning of this chapter, because the Qur'ān, which was meant for the welfare of humanity, must be guarded against all evil intentions. Thus it is in the very first section that the grand promise is given that the Qur'ān shall for ever be guarded against all corruption, and, of course, against all attempts to annihilate it. In the next section we are told that all things are controlled by Allāh, so that the mischief-makers cannot inflict any injury on the elect, and the signs of the triumph of Truth could already be witnessed. In the third section it is stated that the devil has always been opposing the righteous servants, yet his opposition has always been a failure. The next, while promising mercy for the righteous, refers to an incident in Abraham's history as to how he was given the good news of the birth of a son, through whom a great nation was to be blessed. The same messengers also bore to him the news that Lot's people were about to be destroyed because of their great iniquities. The fifth section speaks of the punishment of the guilty people, who would not listen to Lot, closing with a reference to Shu'aib, also a descendant of Abraham. The Arabs, however, are warned of the fate of a people nearer home, the Thamūd, who dwelt in rocks, and they are told that, all-important as the message of the Qur'ān was, their mockery and opposition would not go unpunished.

That the chapter was revealed at Makkah is agreed on all hands, but it is generally regarded as being earlier than the other chapters of this group.

SECTION 1 **The Qur'ān is guarded**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 I, Allāh, am the Seer. These are the verses of the Book and (of) a Qur'ān that makes manifest.

الٓرٰ تِلْكَ اٰيٰتُ الْكِتٰبِ وَ قُرْاٰنٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿١﴾

PART XIV

2 Often will those who disbelieve wish that they were Muslims.[1327]

رُبَمَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا لَوْ كَانُوْا مُسْلِمِيْنَ ﴿٢﴾

3 Leave them to eat and enjoy themselves, and let (false) hope beguile them, for they will soon know.

ذَرْهُمْ يَاْكُلُوْا وَ يَتَمَتَّعُوْا وَ يُلْهِهِمُ الْاَمَلُ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٣﴾

4 And never did We destroy a town but it had a decree made known.

وَ مَاۤ اَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ اِلَّا وَ لَهَا كِتَابٌ مَّعْلُوْمٌ ﴿٤﴾

5 No people can hasten on their doom, nor can they postpone (it).

مَا تَسْبِقُ مِنْ اُمَّةٍ اَجَلَهَا وَ مَا يَسْتَاْخِرُوْنَ ﴿٥﴾

6 And they say: O thou to whom the Reminder is revealed, thou art indeed mad.

وَ قَالُوْا يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْ نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ اِنَّكَ لَمَجْنُوْنٌ ﴿٦﴾

7 Why bringest thou not the angels to us, if thou art of the truthful?

لَوْ مَا تَاْتِيْنَا بِالْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٧﴾

8 We send not angels but with truth, and then they would not be respited.[1328]

مَا نُنَزِّلُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ اِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَ مَا كَانُوْۤا اِذًا مُّنْظَرِيْنَ ﴿٨﴾

1327 The passage does not refer only to life after death. The powerful opponents, who were under the impression that Islām would soon be annihilated, must no doubt have felt in after life, when the truth of Islām became manifest to them, that it would have been much better for them, if they had accepted Islām at the first call of the Prophet.

1328 The demand is here as elsewhere: *Why are not the angels sent?* The

9 Surely We have revealed the Reminder, and surely We are its Guardian.[1329]

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾

10 And certainly We sent (messengers) before thee among the sects of yore.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فِي شِيَعِ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

11 And there never came a messenger to them but they mocked him.

وَمَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12 Thus do We make it enter the hearts of the guilty —[1330]

كَذَٰلِكَ نَسْلُكُهُ فِي قُلُوبِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 They believe not in it; and the example of the ancients has gone before.

لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ وَقَدْ خَلَتْ سُنَّةُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

14 And even if We open to them a gate of heaven, and they keep on ascending into it,

وَلَوْ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ بَابًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَظَلُّوا فِيهِ يَعْرُجُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 They would say: Only our eyes have been covered over, rather we are an enchanted people.[1331]

لَقَالُوا إِنَّمَا سُكِّرَتْ أَبْصَارُنَا بَلْ نَحْنُ قَوْمٌ مَسْحُورُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

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words *if thou art of the truthful* clearly show that the coming of angels is demanded in relation to the fulfilment of prophecies. The answer makes it still more clear. The words *bi-l-ḥaqq* (*with truth*) really signify *in accordance with the requirements of truth, justice,* and *wisdom* (LL). The meaning therefore is that the angels will be sent, when they are required to execute the judgment of the doom of the opponents; and the concluding words, *and then they would not be respited,* dispel all doubts on the point.

1329 This is one of the most wonderful prophecies, whose fulfilment is, and will ever remain, a standing testimony to the truth of the Holy Qur'ān. The statement is first made in connection with the powerful opposition of the disbelievers, and is then made general, that the Qur'ān will for all time be preserved safe against all attempts to destroy it and from every kind of corruption. The fulfilment of this prophecy is so evident a fact that a hostile writer like Muir admits that "there is probably in the world no other book which has remained twelve centuries with so pure a text". The recent attempt of Dr. Mingana to prove alterations in the text of the Holy Qur'ān has resulted in miserable failure, and his discovery has rather set the question at rest. During the whole length and breadth of the Islamic world there does not exist a single copy with any variation from the recognized text, and thus not only was the Qur'ān preserved from destruction against a powerful enemy, but it has also been preserved from corruption.

1330 *Thus* refers to the mockery mentioned in the previous verse; the meaning being *as they mock the revelation, so We make it enter their hearts that they do not believe in it.* It is equivalent to saying that this is due to their mockery, or a consequence of their mockery.

1331 This verse and the one preceding it speak of the hardness of their hearts. They were determined to reject the truth and did not pay any attention to the clearest evidence.

SECTION 2 : **Forces of Evil will be destroyed**

16 And certainly We have made strongholds in the heaven, and We have made it fair-seeming to the beholders,

وَلَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا فِي السَّمَآءِ بُرُوجًا وَّزَيَّنّٰهَا لِلنّٰظِرِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 And We guard it against every accursed devil,

وَحَفِظْنٰهَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطٰنٍ رَّجِيمٍ ﴿١٧﴾

18 But he who steals a hearing ; so there follows him a visible flame.[1332]

إِلَّا مَنِ اسْتَرَقَ السَّمْعَ فَأَتْبَعَهُ شِهَابٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٨﴾

19 And the earth—We have spread it out and made in it firm mountains and caused to grow in it of every suitable thing.

وَالْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنٰهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوٰسِيَ وَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَّوْزُونٍ ﴿١٩﴾

20 And We have made in it means of subsistence for you and for him for whom you provide not.

وَجَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَعٰيِشَ وَمَنْ لَّسْتُمْ لَهُ بِرٰزِقِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 And there is not a thing but with Us are the treasures of it, and We send it not down but in a known measure

وَإِنْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا عِنْدَنَا خَزَآئِنُهُ وَمَا نُنَزِّلُهُ إِلَّا بِقَدَرٍ مَّعْلُومٍ ﴿٢١﴾

22 And We send the winds fertilizing,[1333] then send down water from the clouds, so We give it to you to drink ; nor is it you who store it up.

وَأَرْسَلْنَا الرِّيٰحَ لَوٰقِحَ فَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَسْقَيْنٰكُمُوهُ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ لَهُ بِخٰزِنِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 And surely it is We, Who give life and cause death, and We are the Inheritors.[1334]

وَإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ نُحْيِ وَنُمِيتُ وَنَحْنُ الْوٰرِثُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

1332 The three verses speak of the soothsayers and the diviners, who were among the opponents of the Holy Prophet ; they pretended to receive communications from on high. We are here told that they were really driven from the Divine presence, and therefore could not have any access to that source of purity. In speaking of the divinations as being followed by a visible flame, it is indicated that they meet with failure and disappointment. The description of spiritual truths in words relating to physical laws prevailing in the world is of common occurrence in the Holy Qur'ān. Thus in v. 22 the *fertilizing winds* stand for the *imperceptible advance of Islām* (see 1333). For further reference, see 2102, 2103, 2104, 2365, and 2582. The following verses of the Holy Qur'ān deal with this subject: 37:8 ; 52:38 ; 67:5 ; 72:8.

1333 The *lawāqiḥ*, or *fertilizing* winds, are those which raise a cloud that gives rain, or those which make herbage and plants fruitful. Here they represent the signs of the progress of Islām before its final triumph, which is indicated by the rain.

1334, see next page.

24 And certainly We know those among you who go forward and We certainly know those who lag behind.

وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْنَا الْمُسْتَقْدِمِينَ مِنْكُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْنَا الْمُسْتَأْخِرِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And surely thy Lord will gather them together. He indeed is Wise, Knowing.[1335]

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

SECTION 3: **The Devil's Opposition to the Righteous.**

26 And surely We created man of sounding clay, of black mud fashioned into shape.

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ مِنْ حَمَإٍ مَسْنُونٍ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And the jinn, We created before of intensely hot fire.[1336]

وَالْجَانَّ خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ مِنْ نَارِ السَّمُومِ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 And when thy Lord said to the angels: I am going to create a mortal of sounding clay, of black mud fashioned into shape.

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي خَالِقٌ بَشَرًا مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ مِنْ حَمَإٍ مَسْنُونٍ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 So when I have made him complete and breathed into him of My spirit,[1337] fall down making obeisance to him.

فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

1334 *Wāri<u>th</u>* means *one who inherits,* and therefore *one who remains after another has perished.* The announcement made here is a prophecy that the true worshippers of Allāh will be heirs in the land while the others will perish.

1335 *Al-mustaqdimīn* (v. 24) are *those who are foremost in accepting truth,* and *al-musta'<u>kh</u>irīn, those who lag behind in accepting it.* They will all be gathered together, i.e., ultimately those who now lag behind will be brought over to the right course. Some understand by these two words *those who have gone before* and *those who will come afterwards* respectively, in point of time.

1336 For an explanation of man's creation from dust, see 862. In man's creation from dust there also seems to be a reference to his low and humble origin and to his temperate nature, as opposed to another kind of creation of a fiery nature, which is called the *jinn* or the *devil.* The two words, *jinn* and *devil,* are frequently applied to men of a fiery temperament or rebellious nature, men who lead others to evil. This description of the creation of *men* and *jinn* from *dust* and *fire* respectively is no doubt an allegorical description of the nature of those who are submissive to Divine laws and those who rebel against them, and the allegory is carried on further in what is stated of the rebellion of the devil against Adam, the two being taken as prototypes of the two kinds of temperament. The two descriptions of the origin of man, his being made from clay that gives sound and of mud that is fashioned into shape, refer to the two great characteristics which give man a superiority over other animals, there being a reference to the use of language in the *clay that gives sound,* and to the perfection of his make in the *mud fashioned into shape.* Were it not for the use of language and the perfection of his make, man could not have risen above the lower animals. It should also be noted that elsewhere the *ṣalṣāl* is likened to *fa<u>kh</u><u>kh</u>ār* (55:14), which means *clay that has been baked,* showing that the earth's surface itself has baked in fire. It was undoubtedly originally a lump of fire.

1337 This shows that man is made complete when the Divine spirit is breathed

30 So the angels made obeisance, all of them together —

فَسَجَدَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ اَجْمَعُوْنَ ﴿۳۰﴾

31 But Iblīs (did it not). He refused to be with those who made obeisance.

اِلَّآ اِبْلِيْسَ ؕ اَبٰٓى اَنْ يَّكُوْنَ مَعَ السّٰجِدِيْنَ ﴿۳۱﴾

32 He said: O Iblīs, what is the reason that thou art not with those who make obeisance?

قَالَ يٰٓاِبْلِيْسُ مَا لَكَ اَلَّا تَكُوْنَ مَعَ السّٰجِدِيْنَ ﴿۳۲﴾

33 He said: I am not going to make obeisance to a mortal, whom Thou hast created of sounding clay, of black mud fashioned into shape.

قَالَ لَمْ اَكُنْ لِّاَسْجُدَ لِبَشَرٍ خَلَقْتَهٗ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ مِّنْ حَمَاٍ مَّسْنُوْنٍ ﴿۳۳﴾

34 He said: Then go forth, for surely thou art driven away,

قَالَ فَاخْرُجْ مِنْهَا فَاِنَّكَ رَجِيْمٌ ﴿۳۴﴾

35 And surely on thee is a curse till the day of Judgment.

وَّاِنَّ عَلَيْكَ اللَّعْنَةَ اِلٰى يَوْمِ الدِّيْنِ ﴿۳۵﴾

36 He said: My Lord, respite me till the time when they are raised.[1338]

قَالَ رَبِّ فَاَنْظِرْنِيْٓ اِلٰى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُوْنَ ﴿۳۶﴾

37 He said: Surely thou art of the respited ones,

قَالَ فَاِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنْظَرِيْنَ ﴿۳۷﴾

38 Till the period of the time made known.

اِلٰى يَوْمِ الْوَقْتِ الْمَعْلُوْمِ ﴿۳۸﴾

39 He said: My Lord, as Thou hast judged me erring,[1339] I shall certainly make (evil) fair-seeming to them on earth, and I shall cause them all to deviate,

قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَآ اَغْوَيْتَنِيْ لَاُزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ فِي الْاَرْضِ وَلَاُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ اَجْمَعِيْنَ ﴿۳۹﴾

40 Except Thy servants from among them, the purified ones.

اِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلَصِيْنَ ﴿۴۰﴾

41 He said: This is a right way with Me.

قَالَ هٰذَا صِرَاطٌ عَلَيَّ مُسْتَقِيْمٌ ﴿۴۱﴾

42 As regards My servants, thou hast no authority over them except such of the deviators as follow thee.[1340]

اِنَّ عِبَادِيْ لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطٰنٌ اِلَّا مَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْغٰوِيْنَ ﴿۴۲﴾

43 And surely hell is the promised place for them all —

وَاِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمَوْعِدُهُمْ اَجْمَعِيْنَ ﴿۴۳﴾

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into him. It should be noted that the *Divine spirit* (Ar. *rūḥ*) does not mean here the *animal soul* in man, but the *spirit of Allāh*, that gives him perfection.

1338 When a man is raised to life spiritually, the suggestions and the promptings of the devil cease to affect him. But until he finds spiritual life, evil suggestions mislead him now and then. This is the time made known in v. 38.

1339 The meaning has been fully explained in 865. It may be added here that this is a remarkable instance of what *iḍlāl, ighwā'*, and such other words mean when attributed to Allāh. The devil refuses to make obeisance to Adam of his own accord, and this is expressed by saying *aghwaita-nī*, the meaning clearly being, *because Thou hast judged me to be in error*, not *caused me to err*.

1340, see next page.

44 It has seven gates. For each gate is an appointed portion of them.[1341]

لَهَا سَبْعَةُ اَبْوَابٍ ۭ لِكُلِّ بَابٍ مِّنْهُمْ جُزْءٌ مَّقْسُوْمٌ ﴿٤٤﴾

SECTION 4 : **Mercy for the Righteous — Abraham**

45 Surely those who keep their duty are in Gardens and fountains.

اِنَّ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ فِيْ جَنّٰتٍ وَّعُيُوْنٍ ۭ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 Enter them in peace, secure.

اُدْخُلُوْهَا بِسَلٰمٍ اٰمِنِيْنَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And We shall root out whatever of rancour is in their breasts — as brethren, on raised couches, face to face.

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِيْ صُدُوْرِهِمْ مِّنْ غِلٍّ اِخْوَانًا عَلٰى سُرُرٍ مُّتَقٰبِلِيْنَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 Toil afflicts them not therein, nor will they be ejected therefrom.[1342]

لَا يَمَسُّهُمْ فِيْهَا نَصَبٌ وَّمَا هُمْ مِّنْهَا بِمُخْرَجِيْنَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 Inform My servants that I am the Forgiving, the Merciful,

نَبِّئْ عِبَادِيْٓ اَنِّيْٓ اَنَا الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 And that My chastisement — that is the painful chastisement.

وَاَنَّ عَذَابِيْ هُوَ الْعَذَابُ الْاَلِيْمُ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 And inform them of the guests of Abraham.

وَنَبِّئْهُمْ عَنْ ضَيْفِ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ ﴿٥١﴾

52 When they entered upon him, they said, Peace! He said: We are afraid of you.

اِذْ دَخَلُوْا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوْا سَلٰمًا ۭ قَالَ اِنَّا مِنْكُمْ وَجِلُوْنَ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 They said: Be not afraid, we give thee good news of a boy, possessing knowledge.

قَالُوْا لَا تَوْجَلْ اِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلٰمٍ عَلِيْمٍ ﴿٥٣﴾

54. He said: Do you give me good news when old age has come upon me? Of what then do you give me good news?

قَالَ اَبَشَّرْتُمُوْنِيْ عَلٰٓى اَنْ مَّسَّنِيَ الْكِبَرُ فَبِمَ تُبَشِّرُوْنَ ﴿٥٤﴾

1340 In a broad sense all men are servants of Allāh. That the devil has no authority over any man is clear from 14:22, where the devil says to his followers: "I had no authority over you except that I called you and you obeyed me".

1341 Hell is mentioned by seven different names in the Holy Qur'ān: (1) *Jahannam*, or *hell*; (2) *lazā*, or *flaming fire*; (3) *ḥuṭamah*, or *crushing disaster*; (4) *sa'īr*, or *burning fire*; (5) *saqar*, or *scorching fire*; (6) *jaḥīm*, or *fierce fire*; (7) *hāwiyah*, or *abyss*. The seven gates mean the seven ways which lead into it, according to which there are seven different names. But see 46, where it is shown that the numeral *seven* in Arabic often stands for a large number, so that the meaning may be that there are many gates or many ways leading to it.

1342 Such is the Muslim paradise. There is absolute peace of mind, perfect

55 They said: We give thee good news with truth,[1343] so be not thou of the despairing ones.

قَالُوْا بَشَّرْنٰكَ بِالْحَقِّ فَلَا تَكُنْ مِّنَ الْقٰنِطِيْنَ ﴿۵۵﴾

56 He said: And who despairs of the mercy of his Lord but the erring ones?

قَالَ وَمَنْ يَّقْنَطُ مِنْ رَّحْمَةِ رَبِّهٖۤ اِلَّا الضَّآلُّوْنَ ﴿۵۶﴾

57 He said: What is your business, then, O messengers?

قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكُمْ اَيُّهَا الْمُرْسَلُوْنَ ﴿۵۷﴾

58 They said: We have been sent to a guilty people,

قَالُوْۤا اِنَّاۤ اُرْسِلْنَاۤ اِلٰى قَوْمٍ مُّجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿۵۸﴾

59 Except Lot's followers. We shall deliver them all,

اِلَّاۤ اٰلَ لُوْطٍ اِنَّا لَمُنَجُّوْهُمْ اَجْمَعِيْنَ ﴿۵۹﴾

60 Except his wife: We ordained that she shall surely be of those who remain behind.

اِلَّا امْرَاَتَهٗ قَدَّرْنَاۤ اِنَّهَا لَمِنَ الْغٰبِرِيْنَ ﴿۶۰﴾

SECTION 5: **Lot and Shu'aib**

61 So when the messengers came to Lot's followers,

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ اٰلَ لُوْطِ الْمُرْسَلُوْنَ ﴿۶۱﴾

62 He said: Surely you are an unknown people.

قَالَ اِنَّكُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّنْكَرُوْنَ ﴿۶۲﴾

63 They said: Nay, we have come to thee with that about which they disputed.

قَالُوْا بَلْ جِئْنٰكَ بِمَا كَانُوْا فِيْهِ يَمْتَرُوْنَ ﴿۶۳﴾

64 And we have come to thee with the truth, and we are surely truthful.

وَاَتَيْنٰكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَاِنَّا لَصٰدِقُوْنَ ﴿۶۴﴾

65 So travel with thy followers for a part of the night and thyself follow their rear; and let not any one of you turn round, and go whither you are commanded.

فَاَسْرِ بِاَهْلِكَ بِقِطْعٍ مِّنَ الَّيْلِ وَاتَّبِعْ اَدْبَارَهُمْ وَلَا يَلْتَفِتْ مِنْكُمْ اَحَدٌ وَّامْضُوْا حَيْثُ تُؤْمَرُوْنَ ﴿۶۵﴾

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security from any inclination to evil or any other danger (v. 46); there is a brotherhood in which no one conceals any rancour in his heart for his brother, nor has anyone a complaint against another (v. 47); and lastly, there is neither toil nor fatigue, nor is one to be ever deprived of that state of perfect bliss (v. 48). This verse further establishes that those who are once made to enter paradise are not sent back to this world; and that therefore the garden in which Adam was at first placed was not the paradise of heavenly life, for in that case he would not have been ejected from it.

1343 Compare 3:44. The good news given here is not *of* truth, but *by means of* truth, which is Divine revelation.

66 And We made known to him this decree, that the roots of these should be cut off in the morning.

وَقَضَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْأَمْرَ أَنَّ دَابِرَ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ مَقْطُوعٌ مُّصْبِحِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 And the people of the town came rejoicing.

وَجَآءَ أَهْلُ ٱلْمَدِينَةِ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 He said: These are my guests, so disgrace me not,

قَالَ إِنَّ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ ضَيْفِى فَلَا تَفْضَحُونِ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 And keep your duty to Allāh and shame me not.

وَٱتَّقُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُخْزُونِ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 They said: Did we not forbid thee from (entertaining) people?[1344]

قَالُوٓا۟ أَوَلَمْ نَنْهَكَ عَنِ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾

71 He said: These are my daughters, if you will do (aught).[1345]

قَالَ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ بَنَاتِىٓ إِن كُنتُمْ فَٰعِلِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

72 By thy life! they blindly wandered on in their frenzy.

لَعَمْرُكَ إِنَّهُمْ لَفِى سَكْرَتِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

73 So the cry overtook them at sunrise;

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ ٱلصَّيْحَةُ مُشْرِقِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 Thus We turned it upside down, and rained upon them hard stones.

فَجَعَلْنَا عَٰلِيَهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ حِجَارَةً مِّن سِجِّيلٍ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 Surely in this are signs for those who take a lesson.[1346]

إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّلْمُتَوَسِّمِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 And it is on a road that still abides.

وَإِنَّهَا لَبِسَبِيلٍ مُّقِيمٍ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 Verily therein is a sign for the believers.

إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَةً لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

78 And the dwellers of the thicket were indeed iniquitous:[1347]

وَإِن كَانَ أَصْحَٰبُ ٱلْأَيْكَةِ لَظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾

79 So We inflicted retribution on them. And they are both on an open high road.[1348]

فَٱنتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ وَإِنَّهُمَا لَبِإِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٧٩﴾

1344 As remarked in 1194, Lot was a stranger among the Sodomites, and, as this verse shows, he was forbidden by the people to entertain any stranger as a guest or to give him shelter.

1345 He offered his daughters as hostages, as a guarantee that the strangers would not make any mischief; see further 1194.

1346 *Mutawassim* is *one who examines things in order to know the real character of a thing from outward signs*; hence *one who takes a lesson from the fate of others.*

1347 *The dwellers of the thicket* were Shu'aib's people. But whether they are the same as the people of Midian is not agreed upon.

1348 *Imām* signifies *a road* because *it is pursued* or *followed*, the root being

SECTION 6: **Dwellers of the Rock and a Warning**

80 And the dwellers of the Rock indeed rejected the messengers;[1349]

وَلَقَدْ كَذَّبَ أَصْحٰبُ الْحِجْرِ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ ﴿٨٠﴾

81 And We gave them Our messages, but they turned away from them;

وَاٰتَيْنٰهُمْ اٰيٰتِنَا فَكَانُوْا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِيْنَ ﴿٨١﴾

82 And they hewed houses in the mountains, in security.

وَكَانُوْا يَنْحِتُوْنَ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوْتًا اٰمِنِيْنَ ﴿٨٢﴾

83 So the cry overtook them in the morning;

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّيْحَةُ مُصْبِحِيْنَ ﴿٨٣﴾

84 And what they earned availed them not.

فَمَآ أَغْنٰى عَنْهُمْ مَّا كَانُوْا يَكْسِبُوْنَ ﴿٨٤﴾

85 And We created not the heavens and the earth and what is between them but with truth. And the Hour is surely coming, so turn away with kindly forgiveness.[1350]

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَآ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ۗ وَإِنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَاٰتِيَةٌ فَاصْفَحِ الصَّفْحَ الْجَمِيْلَ ﴿٨٥﴾

86 Surely thy Lord — He is the Creator, the Knower.

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ الْخَلّٰقُ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿٨٦﴾

87 And certainly We have given thee seven oft-repeated (verses)[1351] and the grand Qur'ān.

وَلَقَدْ اٰتَيْنٰكَ سَبْعًا مِّنَ الْمَثَانِيْ وَالْقُرْاٰنَ الْعَظِيْمَ ﴿٨٧﴾

88 Strain not thine eyes at what We have given certain classes of them to enjoy, and grieve not for them, and make thyself gentle to the believers.[1352]

لَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلٰى مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهٖٓ أَزْوَاجًا مِّنْهُمْ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَاخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿٨٨﴾

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amma, meaning *he directed his course to* (LL). By *both* are meant the cities of the people of Lot as well as those of Shu'aib's people. The road alluded to is the road followed by caravans from the Ḥijāz to Syria.

1349 The dwellers of the Rock are the people of Thamūd; see 911.

1350 The verse gives us a true insight into the Holy Prophet's mind. One instance only in the conquest of Makkah is sufficient to prove this, when, having captured the city which had most tyrannically driven him out with his followers, and whose people were guilty of shedding the innocent blood of the Muslims, he forgave all.

1351 The fact that the seven oft-repeated verses are the seven verses of the Opening chapter is known to every Muslim. These verses must be repeated by every Muslim in every single *rak'ah* in every prayer, to which he is at liberty to add any other portion of the Holy Qur'ān. Thus every Muslim repeats these seven verses at least thirty times a day, no other portion of the Holy Qur'ān being repeated so often. The Prophet himself is reported to have said that the "seven oft-repeated verses" were the seven verses of the *Fātiḥah* (B. 65:1). According to the same ḥadīth, the *Fātiḥah* is called the grand Qur'ān. It is so called because it contains the essence of the whole of the Qur'ān.

1352 This verse gives us a picture of the holy mind, for which the riches and embellishments of this life had no temptation, and the unequalled simplicity of his life from the time that he married a rich widow to the time that he ruled

89 And say: I am indeed the plain warner.

وَقُلْ إِنِّيٓ أَنَا النَّذِيرُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿٨٩﴾

90 Like as We sent down on them who took oaths,

كَمَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَى الْمُقْتَسِمِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾

91 Those who divided the Qur'ān into parts.

الَّذِينَ جَعَلُوا الْقُرْاٰنَ عِضِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

92 So, by thy Lord! We shall question them all.

فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَسْـَٔلَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٩٢﴾

93 As to what they did.

عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

94 Therefore declare openly what thou art commanded, and turn away from the polytheists.

فَاصْدَعْ بِمَا تُؤْمَرُ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٩٤﴾

95 Surely We are sufficient for them against the scoffers —

إِنَّا كَفَيْنٰكَ الْمُسْتَهْزِءِينَ ﴿٩٥﴾

96 Those who set up another god with Allāh; so they will come to know.

الَّذِينَ يَجْعَلُونَ مَعَ اللّٰهِ إِلٰهًا اٰخَرَ ۚ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

97 And We know indeed that thy breast straitens at what they say;

وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ يَضِيقُ صَدْرُكَ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾

98 So celebrate the praise of thy Lord, and be of those who make obeisance.

فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَكُن مِّنَ السّٰجِدِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾

99 And serve thy Lord, until there comes to thee that which is certain.[1353]

وَاعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتّٰى يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ ﴿٩٩﴾

Arabia may be guessed from the last scene of his life, when he ordered the last pie in his house to be given away to the poor. The verse, moreover, draws a picture of the utmost kindness and gentleness, which he showed to his followers. The straining of the eyes signifies looking desirously.

1353 *Al-yaqīn* (lit., *certainty*), or *that which is certain*, is here generally understood to mean *death* (B. 65: xv, 5), because it is the one thing which is certain to come to every creature.

سُورَةُ النَّحلِ مَكِّيَّة (١٦) رُكُوعَاتُهَا ١٦ آيَاتُهَا ١٢٨

CHAPTER 16

Al-Naḥl: THE BEE

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 16 *sections;* 128 *verses*)

This chapter is very appropriately named *The Bee,* because the bee, guided by instinct, which is called a revelation in its case (v. 68), gathers together sweet honey from flowers of all kinds, taking what is best in them, thus producing "a beverage of many hues, in which there is healing for men". So Divine revelation to the Holy Prophet collected what was best in the teaching of all the prophets and presented it in the Holy Qur'ān, which is also declared to be a healing (10:57) for the spiritual diseases of men.

The subject-matter of this chapter is the same as that of the preceding six chapters of the *alif lām rā* group, to which it really forms, as it were, a supplement. The first section announces the approach of the doom, and then shows by reference to the great Divine gifts for the physical welfare of man that such a beneficent Master could not have neglected his spiritual welfare. The second section, still dwelling upon the benefits which God has conferred upon man in physical nature, draws attention to man's superiority over the whole of creation, which is made subservient to him. The next two sections lead us again into the domain of prophecy by stating that the deniers will come to disgrace. These are followed by two sections further explaining the truth of the statements made above and dealing with some of the false excuses of those who rejected the truth. The seventh section shows how human nature revolts against polytheism, and the eighth deals with the iniquities of the deniers, which, however, a Merciful God is slow to punish. The ninth establishes the necessity of revelation by reference to the working of law in nature, and the tenth shows that all men cannot be the recipients of that revelation, but that choice is made of the best. The eleventh speaks of the hour when the opponents will be overthrown, though the punishment is delayed out of Divine mercy. The twelfth refers to the evidence of prophets against their people. The thirteenth shows that it is nothing but good that is enjoined by revelation, and thus appeals to human instinct not to reject it. The Qur'ān is next plainly stated to be a revelation in substitution for the previous revelation. The fate of the opponents who persist in rejecting the Truth is then compared with that of a flourishing town, which is made to suffer fear and hunger because of the ingratitude of its people. The chapter is closed by giving the Muslims certain directions, which they must follow in order to become, and to remain, a great nation.

The revelation of this chapter belongs to the last Makkan period, like that of the group which it supplements. The mention, in vv. 41 and 110, of Muhājirs, i.e. those who fly from their home, has led some to think that these verses must have been revealed at Madīnah. It should, however, be noted that the first flight of the Muslims to escape the severe persecution of the Makkans had taken place as early as the fifth year of the Call; but it is more probable that the reference is to the second Muslim exodus from Makkah, which took place before the Holy Prophet's actual departure from that town.

SECTION 1 **Revelation testified to by Nature**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Allāh's commandment will come to pass, so seek not to hasten it.[1354] Glory be to Him, and highly exalted be He above what they associate (with Him)!

أَتَىٰٓ أَمْرُ اللّٰهِ فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوْهُ ۚ سُبْحٰنَهٗ
وَتَعٰلٰى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُوْنَ ①

2 He sends down angels with revelation[1355] by His command on whom He pleases of His servants, saying: Give the warning that there is no God but Me, so keep your duty to Me.

يُنَزِّلُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ بِالرُّوْحِ مِنْ أَمْرِهٖ
عَلٰى مَنْ يَّشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهٖٓ أَنْ أَنْذِرُوْٓا
أَنَّهٗ لَآ إِلٰهَ إِلَّآ أَنَا فَاتَّقُوْنِ ②

3 He created the heavens and the earth with truth. Highly exalted be He above what they associate (with Him)!

خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ ۚ
تَعٰلٰى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُوْنَ ③

4 He created man from a small life-germ,[1356] and lo! he is an open contender.

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ
خَصِيْمٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ④

5 And the cattle, He has created them for you. You have in them warm clothing and (other) advantages, and of them you eat.

وَالْأَنْعَامَ خَلَقَهَا ۚ لَكُمْ فِيْهَا دِفْءٌ
وَّمَنَافِعُ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُوْنَ ⑤

6 And therein is beauty for you, when you drive them back (home) and when you send them out (to pasture).

وَلَكُمْ فِيْهَا جَمَالٌ حِيْنَ تُرِيْحُوْنَ
وَحِيْنَ تَسْرَحُوْنَ ⑥

1354 The first words of this chapter are a fitting sequel to the previous chapters, which repeatedly give warning of punishment to the opponents of the Truth. The *amr Allāh* (lit., *Allāh's commandment*) signifies the threatened punishment. The disbelievers are asked not to hasten the punishment, for Allāh, Who conferred so many physical benefits on them, is willing to bestow His spiritual gifts, as mercy has the foremost place in Divine nature. This is stated in the verses that follow. What that punishment was going to be is expressly stated at the end of this chapter (v. 112); see 1406.

1355 *Rūḥ* here signifies *Divine revelation*, so called because it quickens to spiritual life. It also signifies the Qur'ān (LL).

1356 *Nuṭfah* signifies originally only *pure water* — *al-mā' al-ṣāfī* — the word being applied to a very small quantity as well as to a very large volume of it, so that any good drink is called a *nuṭfah*, so also is a sea (T). The *nuṭfah* from which

7 And they carry your heavy loads to regions which you could not reach but with distress to yourselves. Surely your Lord is Compassionate, Merciful.

وَتَحْمِلُ أَثْقَالَكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَلَدٍ لَّمْ تَكُونُوا بَالِغِيهِ إِلَّا بِشِقِّ الْأَنفُسِ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾

8 And (He made) horses and mules and asses that you might ride upon them and as an ornament. And He creates what you know not.

وَالْخَيْلَ وَالْبِغَالَ وَالْحَمِيرَ لِتَرْكَبُوهَا وَزِينَةً ۚ وَيَخْلُقُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨﴾

9 And upon Allāh it rests to show the right way, and there are some deviating (ways). And if He please, He would guide you all aright.[1357]

وَعَلَى اللَّهِ قَصْدُ السَّبِيلِ وَمِنْهَا جَائِرٌ ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَهَدَاكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٩﴾

SECTION 2 : **Nature upholds Unity**

10 He it is who sends down water from the clouds for you; it gives drink, and by it (grow) the trees on which you feed.

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً ۖ لَّكُم مِّنْهُ شَرَابٌ وَمِنْهُ شَجَرٌ فِيهِ تُسِيمُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

11 He causes to grow for you thereby herbage, and the olives, and the date-palms, and the grapes, and all the fruits. Surely there is a sign in this for a people who reflect.

يُنبِتُ لَكُم بِهِ الزَّرْعَ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالنَّخِيلَ وَالْأَعْنَابَ وَمِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12 And He has made subservient for you the night and the day and the sun and the moon. And the stars are made subservient by His command. Surely there are signs in this for a people who understand.

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ ۖ وَالنُّجُومُ مُسَخَّرَاتٌ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 And what He has created for you in the earth is of varied hues. Surely there is a sign in this for a people who are mindful.

وَمَا ذَرَأَ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهُ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَذَّكَّرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

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man is stated to be created is the small life-germ, or the spermatozoon, in the seminal fluid.

1357 And so at last it was that at first Makkah and then the whole of Arabia accepted Islām.

14 And He it is Who has made the sea subservient that you may eat fresh flesh from it and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear. And thou seest the ships cleaving through it, so that you seek of His bounty and that you may give thanks.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ الْبَحْرَ لِتَأْكُلُوا مِنْهُ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا وَتَسْتَخْرِجُوا مِنْهُ حِلْيَةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا وَتَرَى الْفُلْكَ مَوَاخِرَ فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 And He has cast firm mountains in the earth lest it quake with you, and rivers and roads that you may go aright,[1358]

وَأَلْقَى فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَأَنْهَارًا وَسُبُلًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

16 And landmarks. And by the stars they find the right way.

وَعَلَامَاتٍ وَبِالنَّجْمِ هُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 Is He then Who creates like him who creates not? Do you not then mind?

أَفَمَنْ يَخْلُقُ كَمَنْ لَا يَخْلُقُ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 And if you would count Allāh's favours, you would not be able to number them. Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٨﴾

19 And Allāh knows what you conceal and what you do openly.

وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُسِرُّونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 And those whom they call on besides Allāh created naught, while they are themselves created.

وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَا يَخْلُقُونَ شَيْئًا وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Dead (are they), not living. And they know not when they will be raised.[1359]

أَمْوَاتٌ غَيْرُ أَحْيَاءٍ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

SECTION 3: **Denial due to Ignorance**

22 Your God is one God: so those who believe not in the Hereafter, their hearts refuse to know and they are proud.

إِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ مُنْكِرَةٌ وَهُمْ مُسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

1358 The words of the Qur'ān seem to point to the great upheavals and the violent agitations which led to the formation of the mountains, before man's existence on earth, and, that having been effected, the convulsions are now comparatively insignificant. The present condition of the earth with man upon it is therefore one of stability, making life possible. But *an tamīda bi-kum* may also mean that *they may be a source of benefit to you* as *māda* means *he conferred a benefit*. In accordance with this we have elsewhere: "And the mountains, He made them firm, a provision for you and your cattle" (79:32, 33).

1359 These two verses show conclusively that neither Jesus Christ nor any

23 Undoubtedly Allāh knows what they hide and what they manifest. Surely He loves not the proud.

لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 And when it is said to them, What is it that your Lord has revealed? they say, Stories of the ancients!

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ مَاذَا أَنْزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ ۙ قَالُوا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 That they may bear their burdens in full on the day of Resurrection, and also of the burdens of those whom they lead astray without knowledge. Ah! evil is what they bear.

لِيَحْمِلُوا أَوْزَارَهُمْ كَامِلَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۙ وَمِنْ أَوْزَارِ الَّذِينَ يُضِلُّونَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۗ أَلَا سَاءَ مَا يَزِرُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

SECTION 4: **The Wicked will come to Disgrace.**

26 Those before them plotted, so Allāh demolished their building from the foundations, so the roof fell down on them from above them, and the chastisement came to them from whence they perceived not.[1360]

قَدْ مَكَرَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَأَتَى اللّٰهُ بُنْيَانَهُمْ مِنَ الْقَوَاعِدِ فَخَرَّ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّقْفُ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَأَتَاهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 Then on the Resurrection day He will bring them to disgrace and say: Where are My partners, for whose sake you became hostile? Those who are given the knowledge will say: Surely disgrace this day and evil are upon the disbelievers,[1361]

ثُمَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يُخْزِيهِمْ وَيَقُولُ أَيْنَ شُرَكَائِيَ الَّذِينَ كُنْتُمْ تُشَاقُّونَ فِيهِمْ ۚ قَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ إِنَّ الْخِزْيَ الْيَوْمَ وَالسُّوءَ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

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other person who is taken for a god ever created anything; and secondly, that Jesus Christ was not alive at the time of the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān: *Dead are they, not living.* The further statement that they do not even know when they will be raised, shows that the verse speaks of men taken for gods, and at any rate includes them.

1360 The meaning is that the opponents will be given time to complete their plans, and then these plans and all that they spent on them will be brought to naught, and prove a cause of their own ruin. Compare 8:36 "Surely those who disbelieve spend their wealth to hinder people from the way of Allāh: so they shall spend it, then it shall be to them an intense regret, then they shall be overcome".

1361 Mark that the punishment of the disbelievers on the Resurrection day is described twice in this verse as *disgrace.* This shows that *disgrace* is a sort of hell-fire, which they had in this very life, too.

28 Whom the angels cause to die, while they are unjust to themselves. Then would they offer submission: We did not do any evil. Nay! Surely Allāh knows what you did.

الَّذِيْنَ تَتَوَفّٰىهُمُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ ظَالِمِيْٓ
اَنْفُسِهِمْ ۖ فَاَلْقَوُا السَّلَمَ مَا كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ
مِنْ سُوْٓءٍ ۚ بَلٰٓى اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِمَا
كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 So enter the gates of hell, to abide therein. Evil indeed is the dwelling-place of the proud.

فَادْخُلُوْٓا اَبْوَابَ جَهَنَّمَ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ۚ
فَلَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى الْمُتَكَبِّرِيْنَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 And it is said to those who guard against evil: What has your Lord revealed? They say, Good. For those who do good in this world is good. And certainly the abode of the Hereafter is better. And excellent indeed is the abode of those who keep their duty —

وَقِيْلَ لِلَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا مَاذَآ اَنْزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ ۚ
قَالُوْا خَيْرًا ۚ لِلَّذِيْنَ اَحْسَنُوْا فِيْ هٰذِهِ
الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ ۚ وَلَدَارُ الْاٰخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ ۚ
وَلَنِعْمَ دَارُ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 Gardens of perpetuity which they enter, wherein flow rivers: they have therein what they please. Thus does Allāh reward those who keep their duty,

جَنّٰتُ عَدْنٍ يَّدْخُلُوْنَهَا تَجْرِيْ مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ لَهُمْ فِيْهَا مَا يَشَآءُوْنَ ۚ
كَذٰلِكَ يَجْزِي اللّٰهُ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 Whom the angels cause to die in purity, saying: Peace be to you! enter the Garden for what you did.

الَّذِيْنَ تَتَوَفّٰىهُمُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ طَيِّبِيْنَ ۙ
يَقُوْلُوْنَ سَلٰمٌ عَلَيْكُمُ ۙ ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ
بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 Await they aught but that the angels should come to them or that thy Lord's command should come to pass.[1362] Thus did those before them. And Allāh wronged them not, but they wronged themselves.

هَلْ يَنْظُرُوْنَ اِلَّآ اَنْ تَاْتِيَهُمُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ
اَوْ يَاْتِيَ اَمْرُ رَبِّكَ ۚ كَذٰلِكَ فَعَلَ الَّذِيْنَ
مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ اللّٰهُ وَلٰكِنْ
كَانُوْٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُوْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 So the evil of what they did afflicted them, and that which they mocked encompassed them.[1363]

فَاَصَابَهُمْ سَيِّاٰتُ مَا عَمِلُوْا وَحَاقَ
بِهِمْ مَّا كَانُوْا بِهٖ يَسْتَهْزِءُوْنَ ﴿٣٤﴾

1362 What is meant by the coming of the angels or the coming of the Lord is made clear by the next verse; it is the punishment for their evil deeds and ultimately their complete overthrow that is meant. The coming of the angels stands for the smaller afflictions, such as overtook them in the form of famine and

1363, see next page.

SECTION 5 : **Prophets are raised to explain.**

35 And the idolaters say : Had Allāh pleased, we had not served aught but Him, (neither) we nor our fathers, nor had we prohibited aught without (order from) Him.[1364] Thus did those before them. But have the messengers any duty except a plain delivery (of the message) ?

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا عَبَدْنَا مِن دُونِهِ مِن شَيْءٍ نَّحْنُ وَلَا آبَاؤُنَا وَلَا حَرَّمْنَا مِن دُونِهِ مِن شَيْءٍ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ فَعَلَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ فَهَلْ عَلَى الرُّسُلِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 And certainly We raised in every nation a messenger, saying : Serve Allāh and shun the devil. Then of them was he whom Allāh guided, and of them was he whose remaining in error was justly due.[1365] So travel in the land, then see what was the end of the rejectors.

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ ۖ فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الضَّلَالَةُ ۚ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 If thou desirest their guidance, yet Allāh will not guide him who leads astray,[1367] nor have they any helpers.

إِن تَحْرِصْ عَلَىٰ هُدَاهُمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَن يُضِلُّ ۖ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن نَّاصِرِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 And they swear by Allāh their most energetic oaths : Allāh will not raise up him who dies. Yea ! it is a promise binding on Him, quite true, but most people know not :

وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ ۙ لَا يَبْعَثُ اللَّهُ مَن يَمُوتُ ۚ بَلَىٰ وَعْدًا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

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war, while the coming to pass of the command of the Lord indicates the complete overthrow of their power. Compare 268 and 2 : 210.

1363 The past tense is used to express the highest degree of certainty relating to the future.

1364 They would not give a serious thought to the Prophet's message that evil works bring an evil consequence, but met it with the rejoinder that, if Allāh did not like evil, He could have diverted them from evil ways. They are told in reply that Allāh's pleasure is not exercised by compelling people to adopt one way or the other, but by sending His messengers in every age and to every nation to point out the right way to the people, and by clear messages through the mouths of His ministers to warn people to avoid evil.

1365 *Ḥaqqa 'alai-hi* means *a thing was suitable to the requirements of justice,* etc., *to take effect upon him* (LL). There were some people who did not care for the Prophet's warning and adhered to error. Justice therefore required that they should be left in error. The message was sent by God ; the choice was man's own to accept or reject it. The words do not mean that Allāh had foredoomed some people, for then the sending to them of messengers would have been absurd.

1367 I think there has been a great misunderstanding in the interpretation

39 So that He might make manifest to them that about which they differ, and that those who disbelieve might know that they were liars.

لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي يَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَاذِبِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 Our word for a thing, when We intend it, is only that We say to it, Be ; and it is.

إِنَّمَا قَوْلُنَا لِشَيْءٍ إِذَا أَرَدْنَاهُ أَنْ نَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿٤٠﴾

SECTION 6 : **Doom of Opponents is coming.**

41 And those who flee for Allāh's sake after they are oppressed, We shall certainly give them a good abode in the world ; and the reward of the Hereafter is much greater. Did they but know ![1368]

وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا فِي اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا ظُلِمُوا لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَلَأَجْرُ الْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

42 Those who are steadfast and on their Lord they rely.

الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 And We sent not before thee any but men to whom We sent revelation — so ask the followers of the Reminder if you know not —[1369]

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

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of the words *man yuḍillu,* which clearly mean who *leads* (others) *astray.* The meaning is, therefore, that those who do not only walk in error themselves, but have grown so hostile to the cause of Truth that they mislead others, cannot find the right way, however much the Prophet may be anxious for them.

1368 Here is a clear prophecy regarding those Muslims who had to flee their homes on account of the persecutions of the Quraish. What is promised them is not only a reward of the Hereafter but *a goodly abode in this world, too.* Whether the reference here is only to the earlier flight to Abyssinia, or to the later flight to Madīnah, which had begun before the Holy Prophet's departure, one thing is certain: those who fled their homes in utter helplessness, and were in danger even of their very lives, were given the clearest promise of a great future in this life, and this promise proved true notwithstanding the hard struggle of a powerful nation, united at least in the determination to exterminate Islām. It is related of the Caliph 'Umar that he used to say, when he gave a gift to one of the emigrants : "Take this — may Allāh bless you ! This is what He promised you in this life, and what is for you in the Hereafter is greater" (Kf), evidently referring to this verse.

1369 By the followers of the *Reminder* are generally understood the Jews and the Christians, to whom it is supposed the Quraish are told to refer the question whether it is or it is not true that only men and not angels were sent with Divine

44 With clear arguments and Scriptures. And We have revealed to thee the Reminder that thou mayest make clear to men that which has been revealed to them, and that haply they may reflect.

بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ وَالزُّبُرِ ۗ وَاَنْزَلْنَآ اِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ اِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 Are they, then, who plan evil (plans), secure that Allāh will not abase them in the earth, or that chastisement will not overtake them from whence they perceive not ?[1370]

اَفَاَمِنَ الَّذِيْنَ مَكَرُوا السَّيِّاٰتِ اَنْ يَّخْسِفَ اللّٰهُ بِهِمُ الْاَرْضَ اَوْ يَاْتِيَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَشْعُرُوْنَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 Or that He will not seize them in their going to and fro, then they will not be able to escape ?[1371]

اَوْ يَاْخُذَهُمْ فِيْ تَقَلُّبِهِمْ فَمَا هُمْ بِمُعْجِزِيْنَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 Or that He will not seize them with a gradual diminution ?[1372] Your Lord is surely Compassionate, Merciful.

اَوْ يَاْخُذَهُمْ عَلٰى تَخَوُّفٍ ۗ فَاِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرَءُوْفٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 See they not everything that Allāh has created ? Its (very) shadows return from right and left, making obeisance to Allāh, while they are in utter abasement.

اَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا اِلٰى مَا خَلَقَ اللّٰهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ يَّتَفَيَّؤُا ظِلٰلُهٗ عَنِ الْيَمِيْنِ وَالشَّمَآئِلِ سُجَّدًا لِّلّٰهِ وَهُمْ دٰخِرُوْنَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 And to Allāh makes obeisance every living creature that is in the heavens and that is in the earth, and the angels (too) and they are not proud.

وَلِلّٰهِ يَسْجُدُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ مِنْ دَآبَّةٍ وَّالْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُوْنَ ﴿٤٩﴾

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revelation before, but the mention in the very next verse of the *Dhikr*, or the *Reminder*, being sent to the Holy Prophet shows that the words apply to the Muslims. Some commentators, however, take the words generally as meaning learned men.

1370 *Khasf*, which is ordinarily rendered as *cleaving open*, or *swallowing*, also means *idhlāl* (T), i.e. *bringing to disgrace*. *Khasafa* also signifies *it became defective*, or *suffered loss*, and the infinitive noun *khasf* signifies *being vile, abject*, or *contemptible*, or *lowering, abasing*, or *humbling another* (LL).

1371 *Taqallub* (lit., *turning about*) signifies *journeying for traffic, because for this purpose one has to go and come again and again* (LL). Vv. 45-47 are prophetical. As vv. 41, 42 speak of a prosperous future for those who accepted the truth and now were suffering the severest persecutions, these three verses speak of the different forms of punishment to which the persecutors of the righteous were to be subjected. V. 45 foretells that abasement in the land is in store for them, while in v. 46 they are told that their very journeys to Syria, on which their prosperity depended on account of the trade which was thus kept up, might come to an end. This happened when the Muslims at Madīnah became strong and, due to the hostile attitude of the Makkans, who attacked them again and again, became a threat to their Syrian trade, as Madīnah was situated on the trade route.

1372, see next page.

50 They fear their Lord above them and do what they are commanded.[1372a]

Prostration

يَخَافُونَ رَبَّهُم مِّن فَوْقِهِمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ۩ ﴿٥٠﴾

SECTION 7 : **Human Nature revolts against Polytheism**

51 And Allāh has said : Take not two gods. He is only one God : So Me alone should you fear.

وَقَالَ اللَّهُ لَا تَتَّخِذُوا إِلَٰهَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ ۖ إِنَّمَا هُوَ إِلَٰهٌ وَاحِدٌ ۖ فَإِيَّايَ فَارْهَبُونِ ﴿٥١﴾

52 And whatever is in the heavens and the earth is His, and to Him is obedience due always. Will you then fear other than Allāh ?

وَلَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَهُ الدِّينُ وَاصِبًا ۚ أَفَغَيْرَ اللَّهِ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 And whatever good you have, it is from Allāh ; then, when evil afflicts you, to Him do you cry for aid.

وَمَا بِكُم مِّن نِّعْمَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ ۖ ثُمَّ إِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ فَإِلَيْهِ تَجْأَرُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 Then when He removes the evil from you, lo ! some of you associate others with their Lord,

ثُمَّ إِذَا كَشَفَ الضُّرَّ عَنكُمْ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنكُم بِرَبِّهِمْ يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 So as to deny what We have given them. Then enjoy yourselves, for soon will you know.

لِيَكْفُرُوا بِمَا آتَيْنَاهُمْ ۚ فَتَمَتَّعُوا ۖ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

56 And they set apart for what they know not,[1373] a portion of what we have given them. By Allāh ! you shall certainly be questioned about that which you forged.

وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ نَصِيبًا مِّمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ ۗ تَاللَّهِ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنتُمْ تَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 And they ascribe daughters to Allāh. Glory be to Him ! And for themselves is what they desire !

وَيَجْعَلُونَ لِلَّهِ الْبَنَاتِ سُبْحَانَهُ ۙ وَلَهُم مَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 And when the birth of a daughter is announced to one of them, his face becomes black and he is full of wrath.

وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُم بِالْأُنثَىٰ ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ﴿٥٨﴾

1372 *Takhawwafa-hū* means *he took little by little from it* (LL), and the meaning is that they will be diminished gradually, until disbelief was utterly annihilated. This was their end, their power went on waning till the whole of Arabia bowed before Islām.

1372a The recital of this verse is followed by an actual prostration ; see 978.

1373 That is, for the idols or their gods, whom they ignorantly take for intercessors.

59 He hides himself from the people because of the evil of what is announced to him. Shall he keep it with disgrace or bury it (alive) in the dust? Now surely evil is what they judge![1374]

يَتَوَارٰى مِنَ الْقَوْمِ مِنْ سُوْٓءِ مَا بُشِّرَ بِهٖ ؕ اَيُمْسِكُهٗ عَلٰى هُوْنٍ اَمْ يَدُسُّهٗ فِى التُّرَابِ ؕ اَلَا سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُوْنَ ﴿۵۹﴾

60 For those who believe not in the Hereafter are evil attributes and Allāh's are the sublime attributes. And He is the Mighty, the Wise.

لِلَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ مَثَلُ السَّوْءِ ۚ وَ لِلّٰهِ الْمَثَلُ الْاَعْلٰى ؕ وَ هُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿۶۰﴾

SECTION 8 : **Iniquity of Deniers**

61 And if Allāh were to destroy men for their iniquity, He would not leave therein a single creature, but He respites them till an appointed time. So when their doom comes, they are not able to delay (it) an hour, nor can they advance (it).

وَ لَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ اللّٰهُ النَّاسَ بِظُلْمِهِمْ مَّا تَرَكَ عَلَيْهَا مِنْ دَآبَّةٍ وَّ لٰكِنْ يُّؤَخِّرُهُمْ اِلٰٓى اَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ فَاِذَا جَآءَ اَجَلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَاْخِرُوْنَ سَاعَةً وَّ لَا يَسْتَقْدِمُوْنَ ﴿۶۱﴾

62 And they ascribe to Allāh what they (themselves) hate,[1375] and their tongues relate the lie that for them is good. Assuredly for them is the Fire, and they will be (therein) abandoned.

وَ يَجْعَلُوْنَ لِلّٰهِ مَا يَكْرَهُوْنَ وَ تَصِفُ اَلْسِنَتُهُمُ الْكَذِبَ اَنَّ لَهُمُ الْحُسْنٰى ؕ لَا جَرَمَ اَنَّ لَهُمُ النَّارَ وَ اَنَّهُمْ مُّفْرَطُوْنَ ﴿۶۲﴾

63 By Allāh! We certainly sent (messengers) to nations before thee, but the devil made their deeds fair-seeming to them. So he is their patron to-day, and for them is a painful chastisement.

تَاللّٰهِ لَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَآ اِلٰٓى اُمَمٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ فَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ اَعْمَالَهُمْ فَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمُ الْيَوْمَ وَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ﴿۶۳﴾

1374 The allusion is to the barbarous custom of burying daughters alive, which was prevalent among the Arabs, especially among their chiefs. Its abolition was one of the numerous blessings of Islām. With no physical or administrative power behind it to ensure its enforcement, the word of Allāh swept away this deep-rooted custom as if by a magician's wand, so that not a single case of the burial of a living girl ever occurred after the mandate came. Attention is drawn to the inconsistency of their avowed beliefs with their inward convictions in v. 62; see 1375.

1375 The reference is to their ascribing daughters to Allāh, while they themselves did not like to have a daughter, thus showing how obviously inconsistent with their inward convictions was their professed belief in the Divine Being.

64 And We have not revealed to thee the Book except that thou mayest make clear to them that wherein they differ, and (as) a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe.[1376]

وَمَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ إِلَّا لِتُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِى اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ ۙ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

65 And Allāh sends down water from above, and therewith gives life to the earth after its death.[1377] Surely there is a sign in this for a people who listen.

وَاللّٰهُ أَنزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَآ ۚ إِنَّ فِى ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

SECTION 9 : **Parables showing the Truth of Revelation**

66 And surely there is a lesson for you in the cattle: We give you to drink of what is in their bellies — from betwixt the faeces and the blood — pure milk, agreeable to the drinkers.

وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِى الْأَنْعٰمِ لَعِبْرَةً ۖ نُّسْقِيكُم مِّمَّا فِى بُطُونِهِ مِنۢ بَيْنِ فَرْثٍ وَدَمٍ لَّبَنًا خَالِصًا سَآئِغًا لِّلشّٰرِبِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 And of the fruits of the palms and the grapes, you obtain from them intoxicants and goodly provision. There is surely a sign in this for a people who ponder.[1378]

وَمِن ثَمَرٰتِ النَّخِيلِ وَالْأَعْنٰبِ تَتَّخِذُونَ مِنْهُ سَكَرًا وَرِزْقًا حَسَنًا ۗ إِنَّ فِى ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

1376 The previous verse shows that the whole world was in the grip of the devil at the advent of the Prophet. It speaks of messengers having been sent to all nations before the coming of the Prophet, but adds that, as time passed, the followers of the messengers, instead of following their teachings, followed evil ways, which gradually appeared to them so beautiful that the good of this world was all in all for them. This verse shows that the teachings of the previous prophets had been distorted to such an extent that a new Prophet was now needed to lead them aright. Truth had been obscured to such an extent that it could not now be discovered without light from heaven. It also establishes that the new Prophet's message was for the followers of all religions; in other words, for the whole world.

1377 The water from heaven is the Divine revelation, the death of the earth is its corruption, and the giving of life signifies its spiritual awakening, marvellous signs of which had already appeared in Arabia.

1378 This and the previous verse seem to aim at a comparison between the Divine laws as manifested in nature and the handiwork of man. It is the working of Divine law in nature that produces such a valuable and agreeable diet as pure milk, separating it from the other elements — blood and dung — to which food is reduced in the belly of a cow, a goat, or other animal, which the hand of man is unable to do. On the other hand, the most agreeable provisions produced by nature in the form of fruits are turned into such a poisonous drug as wine by the hand of man. The two illustrations thus point out that just as Divine laws working in the physical world produce the purest and most agreeable diets, separating them from obnoxious elements and useless excrements, so their working in the spiritual world produces the sublimest moral teachings, which afford to man the purest and most agreeable spiritual diet. But the best teachings given by Divine revelation are likely to be corrupted by the hands of man, as the best of fruits is turned into such a disagreeable and obnoxious thing as wine, though if it had been preserved in its original condition it could have served as an excellent provision

68 And thy Lord revealed to the bee: Make hives in the mountains and in the trees and in what they build,

وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنِ اتَّخِذِي
مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَّمِنَ الشَّجَرِ
وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 Then eat of all the fruits and walk in the ways of thy Lord submissively. There comes forth from their bellies a beverage of many hues, in which there is healing for men. Therein is surely a sign for a people who reflect.[1379]

ثُمَّ كُلِي مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ فَاسْلُكِي
سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلُلًا ۚ يَخْرُجُ مِن بُطُونِهَا
شَرَابٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ
لِّلنَّاسِ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 And Allāh creates you, then He causes you to die; and of you is he who is brought back to the worst part of life, so that he knows nothing after having knowledge. Surely Allāh is Knowing, Powerful.[1380]

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يَتَوَفَّاكُمْ ۚ وَمِنكُم مَّن
يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ أَرْذَلِ الْعُمُرِ لِكَيْ لَا يَعْلَمَ بَعْدَ
عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٧٠﴾

SECTION 10: **The Recipient of Revelation**

71 And Allāh has made some of you excel others in the means of subsistence; so those who are made to excel give not away their sustenance to those whom their right hands possess, so that they may be equal therein. Will they then deny the favour of Allāh?[1381]

وَاللَّهُ فَضَّلَ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ فِي الرِّزْقِ ۚ
فَمَا الَّذِينَ فُضِّلُوا بِرَادِّي رِزْقِهِمْ عَلَىٰ
مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَهُمْ فِيهِ سَوَاءٌ ۚ
أَفَبِنِعْمَةِ اللَّهِ يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

1379 This is another illustration to show that Divine revelation brings about an object which cannot be effected by human exertions. In this case the Divine laws of nature are shown working in the bee, which gathers the sweet juice of different flowers, making it into honey. What this small creature effects, working instinctively in obedience to Divine laws, cannot be effected by the combined exertions of the whole of humanity. This illustration from the physical world is introduced to show a similar working of the Divine laws in the spiritual world, viz., that the Prophet, working, as it were, instinctively in obedience to the Divine laws prevailing in the spiritual world, collects by Divine revelation all that is best and noblest in any religion, and sums it up in the Holy Qur'ān: a work which could not be effected by human exertion. It should be noted that five kinds of the *waḥy* (*revelation*) of Allāh are mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān; firstly, a revelation to inanimate objects, as *the earth* (99:5) or *the heavens* (41:12); secondly, a revelation to living creatures other than man, as *the bee;* thirdly, a revelation to the angels (8:12); fourthly, a revelation to men and women other than prophets, as the apostles of Jesus (5:111) or the mother of Moses (28:7); and fifthly, a revelation to prophets and messengers. It should be borne in mind that all these kinds of *waḥy* are not identical; as, for instance, in the case of the *bee,* it is its very *instinct* that is a revelation to it. The revelation to the prophets is the expression of Divine will for the guidance of men.

1380 As in individuals, so in nations. Those who had been given knowledge of Divine revelation before the Holy Prophet had lost or corrupted it at the time of his advent; hence the necessity for a new Divine revelation.

1381 The verse points to the differences in the physical world and affords an

72 And Allāh has made wives for you from among yourselves,[1382] and has given you sons and daughters from your wives, and has provided you with good things. Will they then believe in falsehood and deny the favour of Allāh ?[1383]

وَاللّٰهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ اَنْفُسِكُمْ اَزْوَاجًا وَّجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ اَزْوَاجِكُمْ بَنِيْنَ وَحَفَدَةً وَّرَزَقَكُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبٰتِ ؕ اَفَبِالْبَاطِلِ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ وَبِنِعْمَتِ اللّٰهِ هُمْ يَكْفُرُوْنَ ﴿۷۲﴾

73 And they serve besides Allāh that which controls for them no sustenance at all from the heavens and the earth ; nor have they any power.

وَيَعْبُدُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ مَا لَا يَمْلِكُ لَهُمْ رِزْقًا مِّنَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ شَيْـًٔا وَّلَا يَسْتَطِيْعُوْنَ ﴿۷۳﴾

74 So coin not similitudes for Allāh. Surely Allāh knows and you know not.

فَلَا تَضْرِبُوْا لِلّٰهِ الْاَمْثَالَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَعْلَمُ وَاَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۷۴﴾

75 Allāh sets forth a parable : There is a slave, the property of another, controlling naught, and there is one to whom We have granted from Ourselves goodly provisions, so he spends from it secretly and openly. Are the two alike ?[1384] Praise be to Allāh ! Nay, most of them know not.

ضَرَبَ اللّٰهُ مَثَلًا عَبْدًا مَّمْلُوْكًا لَّا يَقْدِرُ عَلٰى شَيْءٍ وَّمَنْ رَّزَقْنٰهُ مِنَّا رِزْقًا حَسَنًا فَهُوَ يُنْفِقُ مِنْهُ سِرًّا وَّجَهْرًا ؕ هَلْ يَسْتَوٗنَ ؕ اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ ؕ بَلْ اَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۷۵﴾

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answer to the demand of the disbelievers expressly stated elsewhere: "We will not believe, until we are given the like of what Allāh's messengers are given" (6:125), claiming an equal right with the Prophet to receive Divine revelation. It is, therefore, pointed out that, as there are differences in the physical world, so there are differences in the spiritual world. All men are not equally fit to receive the gift of Divine revelation. It is to this that the concluding words of the verse allude ; *the favour of Allāh,* which is the *Divine revelation,* should not be denied simply because all men are not equal recipients of it.

1382 The statement made here is that for all men wives are created from their *anfus* (plural of *nafs,* meaning *soul* or *self*) ; no one ever thinks of placing such an unnatural interpretation upon these words as that which is erroneously placed upon similar words about Adam, where the *rib* is made to take the place of *soul* or *self.* The words of the Qur'ān do not allow this unnatural interpretation, which is based upon the story of Genesis.

1383 In the words that follow, *ḥafadah* are mentioned along with *banīn,* or *sons. Ḥafadah* is plural of *ḥāfid,* which means *one who serves.* But the word *ḥafadah* has been variously explained as meaning *grandsons, daughters, sons-in-law* and *servants. Daughters* seems to be the most appropriate significance, as being mentioned with *sons.* They believe in the superstition that the idols, which are inanimate objects, can intercede with Allāh, and deny the favour of Allāh being granted to a human being. Hence the next verse speaks of the idols.

1384 By slave is meant the idol-worshipper who, instead of being master of idols, stones, and such-like objects, as Allāh has created him to be, chooses to become a slave to them, bows before them, and considers them more powerful

76 And Allāh sets forth a parable of two men: One of them dumb, controlling naught, and he is a burden to his master; wherever he sends him, he brings no good. Is he equal with him who enjoins justice, and he is on the right path?[1385]

وَضَرَبَ اللّٰهُ مَثَلًا رَّجُلَيْنِ اَحَدُهُمَآ اَبْكَمُ لَا يَقْدِرُ عَلٰى شَيْءٍ وَّ هُوَ كَلٌّ عَلٰى مَوْلٰىهُ ۙ اَيْنَمَا يُوَجِّهْهُّ لَا يَاْتِ بِخَيْرٍ ؕ هَلْ يَسْتَوِيْ هُوَ ۙ وَمَنْ يَّاْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ ۙ وَهُوَ عَلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ﴿۷۶﴾

SECTION 11 : **Punishment withheld**

77 And Allāh's is the unseen of the heavens and the earth. And the matter of the Hour is but as a twinkling of the eye or it is nigher still. Surely Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.[1386]

وَلِلّٰهِ غَيْبُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ؕ وَمَآ اَمْرُ السَّاعَةِ اِلَّا كَلَمْحِ الْبَصَرِ اَوْ هُوَ اَقْرَبُ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿۷۷﴾

78 And Allāh brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers — you knew nothing — and He gave you hearing and sight and hearts that you might give thanks.

وَاللّٰهُ اَخْرَجَكُمْ مِّنْۢ بُطُوْنِ اُمَّهٰتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ شَيْـًٔا ۙ وَّجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْاَبْصَارَ وَالْاَفْـِٕدَةَ ۙ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿۷۸﴾

79 See they not the birds, constrained in the middle of the sky? None witholds them but Allāh. Surely in this are signs for a people who believe.[1387]

اَلَمْ يَرَوْا اِلَى الطَّيْرِ مُسَخَّرٰتٍ فِيْ جَوِّ السَّمَآءِ ؕ مَا يُمْسِكُهُنَّ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ ؕ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُّؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿۷۹﴾

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than himself. By the master of the goodly provision from Allāh is meant the recipient of the Divine revelation, i.e., the Prophet. The comparison is introduced to show that the idol-worshippers will ultimately find themselves deprived of all power. The words of the parable find an echo in the reply of Abū Sufyān, when the Holy Prophet, who was entering Makkah as a conqueror, inquired of him: "Has not the time come when thou shouldst know that there is no god but Allāh?" Abū Sufyān replied: "By Allāh! I am now certain that if there had been a god besides Allāh, it would surely have availed me somewhat".

1385 This parable makes the same comparison as the previous one. The purport is here made clearer. The *master of the goodly provision from Allāh* of the previous verse is here plainly called the *enjoiner of justice and the one who is on the right path,* while the idol-worshipper is the *one who is not able to do*

1386, 1387, see next page.

80 And Allāh has given you an abode in your houses, and He has given you houses of the skins of cattle, which you find light to carry on the day of your march and on the day of your halting, and of their wool and their fur and their hair, household stuff and a provision for a time.

وَاللّٰهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ بُيُوْتِكُمْ سَكَنًا
وَّجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ جُلُوْدِ الْاَنْعَامِ بُيُوْتًا
تَسْتَخِفُّوْنَهَا يَوْمَ ظَعْنِكُمْ وَيَوْمَ اِقَامَتِكُمْ
وَمِنْ اَصْوَافِهَا وَاَوْبَارِهَا وَاَشْعَارِهَاۤ
اَثَاثًا وَّمَتَاعًا اِلٰى حِيْنٍ ﴿۸۰﴾

81 And Allāh has made for you, of what He has created, shelters, and He has given you in the mountains, places of retreat, and He has given you garments to save you from the heat,[1388] and coats of mail to save you in your fighting. Thus does He complete His favour to you that you may submit.[1389]

وَاللّٰهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِّمَّا خَلَقَ ظِلٰلًا وَّجَعَلَ
لَكُمْ مِّنَ الْجِبَالِ اَكْنَانًا وَّجَعَلَ لَكُمْ
سَرَابِيْلَ تَقِيْكُمُ الْحَرَّ وَسَرَابِيْلَ تَقِيْكُمْ
بَاْسَكُمْ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ يُتِمُّ نِعْمَتَهٗ عَلَيْكُمْ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿۸۱﴾

82 Then if they turn away, thy duty is only clear deliverance (of the message).

فَاِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلٰغُ الْمُبِيْنُ ﴿۸۲﴾

83 They recognize the favour of Allāh, yet they deny it, and most of them are ungrateful.

يَعْرِفُوْنَ نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ ثُمَّ يُنْكِرُوْنَهَا
وَاَكْثَرُهُمُ الْكٰفِرُوْنَ ﴿۸۳﴾

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anything and who remains unsuccessful in whatever he undertakes — a prophetical allusion to the defeats and discomfiture of the idolaters.

1386 By *the unseen* is meant *the knowledge of the unseen*, or the knowledge of the eventual fulfilment of the prophecies; and by *the Hour* is meant *the hour of the doom* of the opponents of the Prophet, the hour when their power was to be utterly destroyed.

1387 The withholding of the birds seems to have a deeper significance. Both Arab proverb and Arab poetry bear witness to *birds* being spoken of as attending a victorious army to feed upon the corpses of the enemy left on the battlefield. Thus we have the well-known Arab proverb *tabaddada bi-laḥmi-ka al-ṭairu*, i.e., *may the birds disperse thy flesh!* which is a kind of imprecation, meaning "may the man die and his flesh be dispersed and eaten by birds!" (Majma' al-Amthāl, by Maidānī, Part I). Arab poetry has many references to this, but I cannot quote more than one instance. The famous Nābighah says: *When he goes out with the army, flocks of birds, being guided by the companies of the army, hover over his head.* Here the birds are made the attendants of a victorious army, as if they knew that the army which they followed would slay the enemy, and that they would thus feed on dead bodies. In withholding the birds, therefore, there may be a reference to withholding the punishment which must ultimately overtake the enemy.

1388 The mention of one of two contrary things always involves the other. Hence by the preservation from heat spoken of here, preservation from heat and cold alike is meant. Or, as Zj says, since what preserves a man from heat also preserves him from cold, the mention of the other is omitted.

1389 As He has given you of the good things of this life, the physical blessings, He now completes these blessings by giving you the greatest of His blessings, i.e., Divine revelation, so that, submitting to it, you may prosper.

SECTION 12 : **Prophets testify.**

84 And on the day when We raise up a witness out of every nation,[1390] then permission (to offer excuse) will not be given to the disbelievers, nor will they be allowed to make amends.

وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا ثُمَّ لَا يُؤْذَنُ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

85 And when the wrongdoers see the chastisement, it will not be lightened for them, nor will they be respited.

وَإِذَا رَأَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا الْعَذَابَ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنْظَرُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

86 And when those who ascribed partners (to Allāh) see their associate-gods, they will say: Our Lord, these are our associate-gods on whom we called besides Thee. But they will throw back at them the word : Surely you are liars.

وَإِذَا رَأَى الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا شُرَكَاءَهُمْ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا هَٰؤُلَاءِ شُرَكَاؤُنَا الَّذِينَ كُنَّا نَدْعُو مِنْ دُونِكَ ۖ فَأَلْقَوْا إِلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلَ إِنَّكُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

87 And they will tender submission to Allāh on that day, and what they used to forge will fail them.

وَأَلْقَوْا إِلَى اللَّهِ يَوْمَئِذٍ السَّلَمَ ۖ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾

88 Those who disbelieve and hinder (men) from Allāh's way, We will add chastisement to their chastisement because they made mischief.

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ زِدْنَاهُمْ عَذَابًا فَوْقَ الْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوا يُفْسِدُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

89 And on the day when We raise up in every people a witness against them from among themselves, and bring thee as a witness against these.[1391] And We have revealed the Book to thee explaining all things,[1392] and a guidance and mercy and good news for those who submit.

وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ ۖ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ شَهِيدًا عَلَىٰ هَٰؤُلَاءِ ۚ وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾

1390 In this verse, as well as in the concluding verse (v. 89) of this section, the broad humanitarian doctrine is taught that a prophet has been raised in every nation. A Christian annotator seems to note with some wonder that "this verse seems to necessitate the belief of some true prophet having existed in India, China, Japan, etc.", but certainly it is much more surprising that those who claim hundreds of prophets for a single nation, like the house of Israel, should grudge even a single true prophet to those vast countries and nations. Islām rejects all such narrow views of the spiritual providence of Allāh, Who is not the "Lord God of Israel", but the Lord of all nations.

1391 By *these* are meant the Muslim community throughout the world and in all ages.

1392 Brinkman says: "If the Qur'ān explains everything and is a guidance, what need is there for the *Sunnah*?" *Sunnah* means *way* or *practice*, and by

SECTION 13 : **Revelation enjoins Good.**

90 Surely Allāh enjoins justice and the doing of good (to others) and the giving to the kindred, and He forbids indecency and evil and rebellion. He admonishes you that you may be mindful.[1393]

إن الله يأمر بالعدل والإحسان وإيتاي ذي القربى وينهى عن الفحشاء والمنكر والبغي يعظكم لعلكم تذكرون ﴿٩٠﴾

91 And fulfill the covenant of Allāh, when you have made a covenant, and break not the oaths after making them fast, and you have indeed made Allāh your surety. Surely Allāh knows what you do.

وأوفوا بعهد الله إذا عاهدتم ولا تنقضوا الأيمان بعد توكيدها وقد جعلتم الله عليكم كفيلا إن الله يعلم ما تفعلون ﴿٩١﴾

92 And be not like her who unravels her yarn, disintegrating it into pieces, after she has spun it strongly.[1394] You make your oaths to be means of deceit between you because (one) nation is more numerous than (another) nation.[1395] Allāh only tries you by this. And He will certainly make clear to you on the day of Resurrection that wherein you differed.

ولا تكونوا كالتي نقضت غزلها من بعد قوة أنكاثا تتخذون أيمانكم دخلا بينكم أن تكون أمة هي أربى من أمة إنما يبلوكم الله به وليبينن لكم يوم القيمة ما كنتم فيه تختلفون ﴿٩٢﴾

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sunnah is meant the practice of the Prophet, as illustrating the precepts of the Qur'ān. Moreover, by *everything* is meant every basic principle necessary for the spiritual welfare of man. The *sunnah* supplies the details.

1393 This verse deals comprehensively with the different degrees of goodness and evil. The lowest form of goodness is that which is called *'adl* (*justice*) or *returning good for good,* and includes not only justice proper, but also the fulfilment of all duties and obligations, as they all more or less take the form of doing good for good. A higher degree of goodness is, however, that which is called *iḥsān,* or *goodness* proper. It is the doing of good in cases where man has received no benefit. The last stage of goodness is that in which a man's nature is so inclined to good that he has not to make an effort for doing good ; he does good to all people as an ordinary man does good to his own kindred. In fact, he looks upon the whole of humanity as his kindred. Similarly, this verse deals with the three degrees of evil, from the merest indecency to the wrongful conduct which violates the rights of individuals and nations. *Faḥshā'* or *indecency* is that which is evil in itself, though it may not affect the rights of others, *anything not agreeable with truth ; munkar,* what is disapproved, is that which affects the rights of other individuals ; and *baghy, exceeding the bounds* or *acting tyrannically,* is oppression or rebellion affecting the rights of large numbers, nations or States.

1394 A man who accepts the truth but does not act according to it is likened to a woman who first spins her yarn and then unravels it. This is sheer madness,

1395, see next page.

93 And if Allāh please, He would make you a single nation, but He leaves in error whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases. And certainly you will be questioned as to what you did.

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَٰكِن يُضِلُّ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ وَلَتُسْأَلُنَّ عَمَّا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

94 And make not your oaths a means of deceit between you, lest a foot should slip after its stability, and you should taste evil because you hinder (men) from Allāh's way and grievous chastisement be your (lot).

وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ دَخَلًا بَيْنَكُمْ فَتَزِلَّ قَدَمٌ بَعْدَ ثُبُوتِهَا وَتَذُوقُوا السُّوءَ بِمَا صَدَدتُّمْ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۖ وَلَكُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٩٤﴾

95 And take not a small price for Allāh's covenant. Surely what is with Allāh is better for you, did you but know!

وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۚ إِنَّمَا عِندَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

96 What is with you passes away and what is with Allāh is enduring. And We shall certainly give to those who are patient their reward for the best of what they did.

مَا عِندَكُمْ يَنفَدُ ۖ وَمَا عِندَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ ۗ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

97 Whoever does good, whether male or female,[1397] and is a believer, We shall certainly make him live a good life, and We shall certainly give them their reward for the best of what they did.

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٩٧﴾

98 So when thou recitest the Qur'ān, seek refuge in Allāh from the accursed devil.

فَإِذَا قَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ﴿٩٨﴾

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but this is the very thing of which most people are guilty. They are united by certain ties, but when this union brings about strength, they destroy it with their own hands. It was unity which made the Muslims rise to great power, but that unity to-day lies in ruins, and the strong community of Islām is like the unravelled yarn of a crazy spinner.

1395 Faithfulness to covenants is here stressed and, from the covenant with God, the subject is diverted to the covenants between man and man. Attention is drawn in the words, *you make your oaths to be means of deceit between you,* to the conditions generally prevailing in the world, to the breach of covenants between nations, which is ruining the stability of human society.

1397 The Qur'ān here affords another reply to the ignorant statement made in certain quarters that according to Islām women have no soul. The promise is twofold: The doers of good, both men and women, are made to lead a good life in this world and will have a reward in the Hereafter.

99 Surely he has no authority over those who believe and rely on their Lord.

إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطٰنٌ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَلٰى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُوْنَ ﴿٩٩﴾

100 His authority is only over those who befriend him and those who associate others with Him.

إِنَّمَا سُلْطٰنُهُ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ يَتَوَلَّوْنَهُ وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ بِهِ مُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

SECTION 14: **The Qur'ān is not a Forgery**

101 And when We change a message for a message — and Allāh knows best what He reveals — they say: Thou art only a forger. Nay, most of them know not.[1398]

وَإِذَا بَدَّلْنَآ اٰيَةً مَّكَانَ اٰيَةٍ ۙ وَّاللّٰهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُنَزِّلُ قَالُوْٓا إِنَّمَآ أَنْتَ مُفْتَرٍ ۭ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿١٠١﴾

102 Say: The Holy Spirit[1399] has revealed it from thy Lord with truth, that it may establish those who believe, and as a guidance and good news for those who submit.

قُلْ نَزَّلَهُ رُوْحُ الْقُدُسِ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيُثَبِّتَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَهُدًى وَّبُشْرٰى لِلْمُسْلِمِيْنَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

103 And indeed We know that they say: Only a mortal teaches him. The tongue of him whom they hint at is foreign, and this is clear Arabic language.[1400]

وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُ بَشَرٌ ۭ لِسَانُ الَّذِيْ يُلْحِدُوْنَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجَمِيٌّ وَّهٰذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿١٠٣﴾

1398 It is not the change of the Quranic verses that is spoken of here; it is the change of the previous messages sent through former prophets for the message of the Holy Qur'ān. This chapter belongs to Makkah, and the upholders of abrogation have never asserted that any verse was abrogated while the Holy Prophet was at Makkah. Moreover, the context clearly shows that it was the revelation of the Qur'ān itself that was called a forgery, and not an occasional change that any of its commandments could have undergone, with which change the disbelievers had, in fact, no concern. For a fuller discussion of the doctrine of abrogation, see 152.

1399 The Holy Spirit is here stated to be the bearer of the revelation to the Holy Prophet, while elsewhere the same bearer is called the Rūḥ al-Amīn, or the *Faithful Spirit* (26:193), and the same is called Gabriel in 2:97.

1400 Various names have been suggested as to the person whom the opponents of the Prophet referred to. These are mostly the names of Christian slaves, Jabr, Yāsir, 'Aish or Ya'īsh, Qais, 'Addās, who were not Arabs. The name of Salmān is suggested by Prideaux, which Sale shows to be an utterly baseless conjecture, as Salmān came after the Flight. All these slaves were among the early converts to Islām, and it was they who were most cruelly persecuted by the Quraish; yet they remained firm under the severest tortures. Is it possible that they, without being in the least gainers, should have thus willingly suffered persecutions for a cause which they knew to be false? This is sufficient to show the absurdity of the allegation, and it is to this that v. 105 refers. The general opinion of the Christians is that it was a Nestorian monk named Sergius, who is identified with the monk Buḥairah, whom the Holy Prophet, while yet a boy, met on his journey to Syria with his uncle Abū Ṭālib. The absurdity of this view is also pointed

104 Those who believe not in Allāh's messages, Allāh guides them not, and for them is a painful chastisement.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيٰتِ اللّٰهِ لَا يَهْدِيهِمُ اللّٰهُ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٤﴾

105 Only they forge lies who believe not in Allāh's messages, and they are the liars.[1401]

إِنَّمَا يَفْتَرِي الْكَذِبَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيٰتِ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَأُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْكٰذِبُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

106 Whoso disbelieves in Allāh after his belief — not he who is compelled while his heart is content with faith, but he who opens (his) breast for disbelief — on them is the wrath of Allāh, and for them is a grievous chastisement.[1402]

مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللّٰهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلٰكِنْ مَّنْ شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٠٦﴾

107 That is because they love this world's life more than the Hereafter, and because Allāh guides not the disbelieving people.

ذٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمُ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى الْاٰخِرَةِ ۙ وَأَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

108 These are they whose hearts and ears and eyes Allāh has sealed and these are the heedless ones.[1404]

أُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِينَ طَبَعَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصٰرِهِمْ ۚ وَأُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْغٰفِلُونَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

109 No doubt that in the Hereafter they are the losers.

لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّهُمْ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُونَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

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out by Sale. As regards the Christian slaves, they certainly cannot be supposed to have been the authors of the sublime themes of the Holy Qur'ān. That the opponents of the Prophet said so is rather a proof of the falsehood of the assertion than an indication of its truth; for, unable to meet the arguments of the Holy Qur'ān, they had to adopt less honest methods of making the Qur'ān unpopular.

1401 The reference is to the subject-matter of v. 103. The allegation was that certain slaves taught the Prophet. How could a forger of lies be a believer, specially when he had to undergo the severest trials for its sake.

1402 Only very rare instances are met with in the early history of Islām in which the converts even under compulsion ever recanted. For instance, Yāsir and Sumayyah, husband and wife, suffered death at the hands of the disbelievers because they would not recant, the latter being put to death most cruelly, her legs being tied to two camels which were made to run in opposite directions. Their son 'Ammār, however, was not so resolute. The cruellest persecutions were inflicted on those slaves who had become converts to Islām. Muir says: "These were seized and imprisoned, or they were exposed upon the scorching gravel of the valley to the intense glare of the midday sun. The torment was enhanced by intolerable thirst, until the wretched sufferers hardly knew what they said." Yet even under these trying circumstances, which would have maddened even the most resolute man, there were those among these slave-converts who were as firm as a mountain; as in the case of Bilāl, of whom it is recorded that "in the depth of his anguish the persecutors could force from him but one expression, *Ahad! Ahad!* (One! One! God)" (Muir).

1404 It is clear from this that Allāh does not seal the hearts of men and thus hinder them from accepting the truth; on the other hand, it is they who

110 Then surely thy Lord, to those who flee after they are persecuted, then struggle hard[1405] and are patient, surely thy Lord after that is Protecting, Merciful.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ
مَا فُتِنُوا ثُمَّ جَاهَدُوا وَصَبَرُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ
مِنْ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١١٠﴾

SECTION 15 : **Fate of the Opponents**

111 On the day when every soul will come pleading for itself, and every soul will be paid in full what it has done, and they will not be dealt with unjustly.

يَوْمَ تَأْتِي كُلُّ نَفْسٍ تُجَادِلُ عَنْ نَّفْسِهَا وَ
تُوَفَّىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

112 And Allāh sets forth a parable: A town safe and secure, to which its means of subsistence came in abundance from every quarter ; but it disbelieved in Allāh's favours, so Allāh made it taste a pall of hunger and fear because of what they wrought.[1406]

وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا قَرْيَةً كَانَتْ آمِنَةً
مُّطْمَئِنَّةً يَأْتِيهَا رِزْقُهَا رَغَدًا مِّنْ كُلِّ
مَكَانٍ فَكَفَرَتْ بِأَنْعُمِ اللَّهِ فَأَذَاقَهَا اللَّهُ
لِبَاسَ الْجُوعِ وَالْخَوْفِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

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reject the truth, turning a deaf ear to the preaching of the Prophet, as the previous verses show. Nor are the hearts sealed for ever, for, as v. 110 shows, even after that Allāh forgives them, if they repent and show perseverance.

1405 It should be noted that the struggle (Ar. *jihād*) spoken of here is certainly not in connection with fighting, for the verse was revealed at Makkah. Note also that God is spoken of here as being *Ghafūr*, translated as ***Protecting***, to those who flee from their homes on account of persecution and then struggle hard to establish Truth. Both these are deeds of sacrifice, highly virtuous deeds, and therefore God's being *Ghafūr* is in relation to the exaltation of their degrees by protecting them from the commission of sins, not the pardoning of any sins which they may have committed, for it is their acts of sacrifice that are spoken of here, not their sins. For fuller explanation of the word *Ghafūr*, see 380.

1406 The parable is set forth to depict the state of Makkah as it was before the time of the Holy Prophet and, prophetically, the fate to which it was to be reduced after he was rejected, *after it disbelieved in Allāh's favour*. Its first condition was one of great prosperity and affluence, being the centre to which all tribes came for pilgrimage and trade, a picture of which is drawn in one of the earlier chapters of the Holy Qur'ān : " So let them serve the Lord of this House, Who feeds them against hunger and gives them security against fear " (106: 3, 4). When the Prophet and his followers were persecuted and tortured, the Prophet prayed thus: "O Allāh, overtake them with seven (years of famine) like Joseph's seven (years of famine). So a famine overtook them, which destroyed everything, till they ate skins and dead animals and one of them looked to heaven and he saw smoke on account of hunger " (B. 15 : 2). This was the *libās al-jū'* or the *pall of hunger*, spoken of here. But, even then, they did not stop persecution and tried to exterminate Islām by the sword. The result was that all their attacks on Madīnah failed, and ultimately Makkah itself lay powerless when attacked by the Prophet. This was the *libās al-khauf*, or *pall of fear*, being so called because no

113 And certainly there came to them a Messenger from among them, but they rejected him, so the chastisement overtook them, while they were wrongdoers.[1407]

وَلَقَدْ جَآءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ وَهُمْ ظٰلِمُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾

114 So eat of what Allāh has given you, lawful and good (things), and give thanks for Allāh's favour, if He it is you serve.

فَكُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللّٰهُ حَلٰلًا طَيِّبًا وَّاشْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾

115 He has forbidden you only what dies of itself and blood and the flesh of swine and that over which any other name than that of Allāh has been invoked; but whoever is driven to (it), not desiring nor exceeding the limit, then surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.[1407a]

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَآ أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللّٰهِ بِهٖ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَّلَا عَادٍ فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١١٥﴾

116 And utter not, for what your tongues describe, the lie: This is lawful and this unlawful; so that you forge a lie against Allāh. Surely those who forge a lie against Allāh will not prosper.

وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَا تَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُكُمُ الْكَذِبَ هٰذَا حَلٰلٌ وَّهٰذَا حَرَامٌ لِّتَفْتَرُوا عَلَى اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ لَا يُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١١٦﴾

117 A little enjoyment — and for them is a painful chastisement.

مَتَاعٌ قَلِيلٌ وَّلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١١٧﴾

118 And to those who are Jews We prohibited what We have related to thee already,[1407b] and We did them no wrong, but they wronged themselves.

وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَّمْنَا مَا قَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمَا ظَلَمْنٰهُمْ وَلٰكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿١١٨﴾

119 And surely thy Lord, for those who do evil in ignorance, then turn after that and make amends, surely thy Lord after that is Forgiving, Merciful.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السُّوٓءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذٰلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوٓا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنْ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١١٩﴾

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blood was shed. The word *libās* (lit., *covering*) used in connection with hunger and fear indicates the utmost degree of hunger and fear, which, as it were, covered them all over.

1407 This makes the prophecy indicated in the previous parable clear. The chastisement spoken of here is the chastisement of hunger and fear spoken of in the previous verse.

1407a See 210, 836; also 5:3.

1407b See 6:147, and 837. This shows that ch. 6 was revealed before ch. 16.

SECTION 16: **The Way to Greatness**

120 Surely Abraham was a model (of virtue)[1407c], obedient to Allāh, upright, and he was not of the polytheists,

إِنَّ إِبْرٰهِيمَ كَانَ أُمَّةً قَانِتًا لِّلّٰهِ حَنِيفًا ۖ وَلَمْ يَكُ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

121 Grateful for His favours. He chose him and guided him on the right path.

شَاكِرًا لِّأَنْعُمِهِ ۚ اجْتَبٰىهُ وَهَدٰىهُ إِلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿١٢١﴾

122 And We gave him good in this world; and in the Hereafter he is surely among the righteous.

وَآتَيْنٰهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً ۖ وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

123 Then We revealed to thee: Follow the faith of Abraham, the upright one; and he was not of the polytheists.

ثُمَّ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ أَنِ اتَّبِعْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرٰهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۖ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

124 The Sabbath was ordained only against those who differed about it.[1407d] And surely thy Lord will judge between them on the day of Resurrection concerning that wherein they differed.

إِنَّمَا جُعِلَ السَّبْتُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ ۚ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَيَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

125 Call to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and argue with them in the best manner.[1408] Surely thy Lord knows best him who strays from His path, and He knows best those who go aright.

ادْعُ إِلٰى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ ۖ وَجٰدِلْهُم بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِ ۖ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

1407c *Ummat* means originally *a way, course* or *mode of acting, a nation* or a *community,* but it also signifies a *righteous man who is an object of imitation, one who is known for goodness, a man combining all kinds of good qualities, one who has no equal* (LL).

1407d The word *'alā* sometimes carries the significance of *against,* and the meaning here seems to be that the Sabbath, the Jewish day of worship which should have made them walk in the footsteps of righteous Abraham, was turned against them because of their violation of it, because they differed about it and did not observe it as a day of Divine worship. Or, the statement is made to show that it was not necessary for the Muslims to observe a day of worship, as even Abraham, a model of virtue for both the Jews and the Muslims, did not observe a particular day of worship, while the very people who were required to observe it, the Jews, violated the commandment.

1408 The principle laid down for preaching and religious controversy by the "unlearned Arabian" has yet to be learned by the most advanced people, whose controversies are carried on with no other object than that of fault-finding, and whose preaching only aims at carping at others. It shows the breadth of mind of the Holy Prophet, more especially when it is remembered that the injunction

126 And if you take your turn, then punish with the like of that with which you were afflicted.[1409] But if you show patience, it is certainly best for the patient.

وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُمْ بِهِ ۖ وَلَئِنْ صَبَرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لِّلصّٰبِرِيْنَ ﴿١٢٦﴾

127 And be patient and thy patience is not but by (the help of) Allāh, and grieve not for them, nor be in distress for what they plan.

وَاصْبِرْ وَمَا صَبْرُكَ إِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُ فِيْ ضَيْقٍ مِّمَّا يَمْكُرُوْنَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

128 Surely Allāh is with those who keep their duty and those who do good (to others).

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا وَّالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ مُّحْسِنُوْنَ ﴿١٢٨﴾ ع

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was given at a time when the Muslims were being most severely persecuted and there was the greatest reason for adopting a harsh attitude.

1409 There is a prophecy in the words *if you take your turn*. The Muslims were being persecuted most cruelly, and they were told that the time would come when they would dominate their erstwhile persecutors. In that case they are allowed to punish them for their guilt, but it is twice added, here and in v. 127, that they should show patience when they had the upper hand and do good even to their enemies, for Allāh is with those who do good (v. 128).



PART XV

CHAPTER 17

Banī Isrā'īl: THE ISRAELITES

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 12 *sections*; 111 *verses*)

This chapter goes under the name of *The Israelites*, who, after being made a great nation and having risen to power and eminence in the world, were severely punished on account of their transgressions. It opens and ends with a reference to the history of that nation.

The opening reference is to the *Mi'rāj, the Ascension of the Holy Prophet*, which must be interpreted as referring to the eminence which he was to achieve and to the greatness to which Islām was to rise. The Muslims are warned of the fate of the Israelite nation, which after rising to eminence was punished twice on account of its misdeeds, the reference no doubt being to a similar fate which was to befall the Muslims. The second section establishes the immortal principle that every deed has a consequence, the universal law of cause and effect, a right understanding of which alone can raise man to the true dignity which befits humanity. The next two sections contain moral precepts which the Muslims are required to follow. Yet all these high moral teachings only cause the disbelievers to grow harder, as is shown in the fifth section. The sixth deals with the punishment of the earlier as well as the later opponents of Truth, disclosing the marvellous prophecy that a time would come when the whole world would find itself in the jaws of destruction. The seventh section refers to the universal law that the mischief-makers have always stood up in opposition to the righteous, and the eighth speaks specifically of the opposition to the Holy Prophet. The next section, however, makes it clear that that opposition would be brought to naught, for falsehood must disappear before the advance of Truth. The advent of the Holy Prophet has been here described as the advent of the Truth, *the spirit of Truth* mentioned by St. John. The tenth shows how great a miracle is the Holy Qur'ān in itself, yet the opponents seek other signs. How trivial are the excuses on which they reject the Holy Qur'ān is set forth in the eleventh section, and the justice of their retribution is thus made clear. The last section draws attention to Moses' warning to Pharaoh, the mighty ruler of Egypt, and gives a similar warning through the Holy Qur'ān, ending with a brief mention of the absurdity of the doctrine of "sonship", which is dealt with at length in the two chapters that follow.

As regards the date of revelation of this chapter, there are many indications that it belongs to the early Makkan period, and must have been revealed in, or about, the fifth year of the Call. The mention of *Isrā'*, which is the same as *Mi'rāj*, in the very first verse, shows it to be an early revelation because *Mi'rāj* is also mentioned in another chapter, *The Star*, which is also one of the early revelations. Ibn Mas'ūd, who was one of the early converts to Islām, is reported to have said, speaking of the five chapters, 17th to 21st: "They are of the early revelations and they are the ones that I committed to memory first" (B. 66:6).

SECTION 1 **Israelites punished Twice**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ ۝

1 Glory to Him Who carried His servant by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Remote Mosque, whose precincts We blessed, that We might show him of Our signs![1410] Surely He is the Hearing, the Seeing.

سُبۡحٰنَ الَّذِیۡۤ اَسۡرٰی بِعَبۡدِہٖ لَیۡلًا مِّنَ الۡمَسۡجِدِ الۡحَرَامِ اِلَی الۡمَسۡجِدِ الۡاَقۡصَا الَّذِیۡ بٰرَکۡنَا حَوۡلَہٗ لِنُرِیَہٗ مِنۡ اٰیٰتِنَا ؕ اِنَّہٗ ہُوَ السَّمِیۡعُ الۡبَصِیۡرُ ۝۱

2 And We gave Moses the Book and made it a guidance to the Children of Israel (saying): Take no guardian beside Me—[1411]

وَ اٰتَیۡنَا مُوۡسَی الۡکِتٰبَ وَ جَعَلۡنٰہُ ہُدًی لِّبَنِیۡۤ اِسۡرَآءِیۡلَ اَلَّا تَتَّخِذُوۡا مِنۡ دُوۡنِیۡ وَکِیۡلًا ؕ۝۲

3 The offspring of those whom We bore with Noah. Surely he was a grateful servant.

ذُرِّیَّۃَ مَنۡ حَمَلۡنَا مَعَ نُوۡحٍ ؕ اِنَّہٗ کَانَ عَبۡدًا شَکُوۡرًا ۝۳

4 And We made known to the Children of Israel in the Book: Certainly you will make mischief in the land twice, and behave insolently with mighty arrogance.[1412]

وَ قَضَیۡنَاۤ اِلٰی بَنِیۡۤ اِسۡرَآءِیۡلَ فِی الۡکِتٰبِ لَتُفۡسِدُنَّ فِی الۡاَرۡضِ مَرَّتَیۡنِ وَ لَتَعۡلُنَّ عُلُوًّا کَبِیۡرًا ۝۴

1410 The carrying by night of the Prophet from the Sacred Mosque at Makkah to the Remote Mosque at Jerusalem is in reference to the Prophet's reported Ascension. Though Bukhārī speaks of Isrā' in B. 63:41 and of Mi'rāj in B. 63:42, yet elsewhere he speaks of *the prayers being made obligatory on the night of Isrā'*, and then goes on to narrate the ḥadīth which speaks of *Mi'rāj* and of the prayers being made obligatory in *Mi'rāj* (B. 8:1). *Isrā'* is, in fact, the first stage in *Mi'rāj*, as before his Ascension to heaven, the Prophet was taken to the Remote Mosque, or the Temple at Jerusalem. That the Ascension was not a translation of the body, but the spiritual experience of the Holy Prophet, is shown in 1441 under v. 60, where it is expressly called a *ru'yā* or a *vision*. As the significance of the Ascension was the spiritual eminence of the Holy Prophet and indicated his triumph in the world, his being carried to the Temple at Jerusalem signified that he would also inherit the blessings of the Israelite prophets.

1411 The first verse really prophesies a great future for Islām and the Muslims, while this warns them of the pitfalls of greatness, citing the instance of a nation that had been made to rise to eminence before them.

1412 Compare 5:78: "Those who disbelieved from among the Children of Israel were cursed by the tongue of David and Jesus, son of Mary". Jerusalem was destroyed twice as a punishment for the transgressions of the Jews, once by the Babylonians, and again by the Romans. See Jesus' warning in Matt. 23:38: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate," and Luke 21:24: "And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles," and various other like references. The Psalms are also replete with warnings.

5 So when of the two, the first warning came to pass, We raised against you Our servants, of mighty prowess, so they made havoc in (your) houses. And it was an accomplished threat.

فَإِذَا جَآءَ وَعْدُ أُولٰهُمَا بَعَثْنَا عَلَيْكُمْ
عِبَادًا لَّنَآ أُولِي بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ فَجَاسُوا
خِلٰلَ الدِّيَارِ ۚ وَكَانَ وَعْدًا مَّفْعُولًا ۝٥

6 Then We gave you back the turn against them, and aided you with wealth and children and made you a numerous band.[1413]

ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَا لَكُمُ الْكَرَّةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَمْدَدْنٰكُمْ
بِأَمْوَالٍ وَّبَنِينَ وَجَعَلْنٰكُمْ أَكْثَرَ نَفِيرًا ۝٦

7 If you do good, you do good for your own souls. And if you do evil, it is for them. So when the second warning came, (We raised another people) that they might bring you to grief and that they might enter the Mosque as they entered it the first time, and that they might destroy, whatever they conquered, with utter destruction.[1414]

إِنْ أَحْسَنْتُمْ أَحْسَنْتُمْ لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ ۖ وَإِنْ
أَسَأْتُمْ فَلَهَا ۚ فَإِذَا جَآءَ وَعْدُ الْاٰخِرَةِ لِيَسُوٓءُا
وُجُوهَكُمْ وَلِيَدْخُلُوا الْمَسْجِدَ كَمَا دَخَلُوهُ
أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَّلِيُتَبِّرُوا مَا عَلَوْا تَتْبِيرًا ۝٧

8 It may be that your Lord will have mercy on you. And if you return (to mischief), We will return (to punishment).[1415] And We have made hell a prison for the disbelievers.

عَسٰى رَبُّكُمْ أَنْ يَّرْحَمَكُمْ ۚ وَإِنْ عُدْتُّمْ
عُدْنَا ۘ وَجَعَلْنَا جَهَنَّمَ لِلْكٰفِرِينَ حَصِيرًا ۝٨

9 Surely this Qur'ān guides to that which is most upright, and gives good news to the believers who do good that theirs is a great reward,

إِنَّ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ
وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصّٰلِحٰتِ
أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا ۝٩

10 And that those who believe not in the Hereafter, We have prepared for them a painful chastisement.

وَّأَنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ
أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ۝١٠

1413 V. 5 relates the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem and the murder, imprisonment, and banishment of the Jews by the Babylonians in the year 588 B.C., while v. 6 relates to the return of the Jews and rebuilding of the temple under Zerubbabel, and to their subsequent prosperity. This is the turn of fortune spoken of here.

1414 This verse describes the destruction of the Temple a second time, which was accomplished by the Romans under Titus. The personal pronouns

1415, see next page.

SECTION 2 : **Every Deed has a Consequence**

11 And man prays for evil as he ought to pray for good ; and man is ever hasty.

وَيَدْعُ الْإِنْسَانُ بِالشَّرِّ دُعَآءَهُ بِالْخَيْرِ ۖ وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ عَجُولًا ⑪

12 And We made the night and the day two signs, then We have made the sign of the night to pass away[1416] and We have made the sign of the day manifest, so that you may seek grace from your Lord, and that you may know the numbering of years and the reckoning. And We have explained everything with distinctness.

وَجَعَلْنَا الَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ اٰيَتَيْنِ فَمَحَوْنَآ اٰيَةَ الَّيْلِ وَجَعَلْنَآ اٰيَةَ النَّهَارِ مُبْصِرَةً لِّتَبْتَغُوْا فَضْلًا مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَلِتَعْلَمُوْا عَدَدَ السِّنِيْنَ وَالْحِسَابَ ۖ وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَصَّلْنٰهُ تَفْصِيْلًا ⑫

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refer in all cases to the enemy, whoever he might be, and by no means indicate that the same enemy who first destroyed the Temple would do so on the second occasion. In the history of the Israelites, there is a prophetical reference to the history of the Muslims. The Caliphate of Islām was destroyed twice, first by the Mongols under Hulagu in 656 A.H. (1258 A.D.), and again by the powers of Europe recently. But while in the case of the Israelites, their very Temple, their spiritual centre, was laid waste on both occasions, the spiritual centre of Islām, the Ka'bah, has remained intact on both occasions under a Divine promise, though Muslim temporal rule suffered a severe reverse. The Jews were ruined both temporally and spiritually, but the Muslim suffering has affected only its temporal aspect. As a matter of fact, in both great reverses in Muslim history, Islām has spiritually gained a conquest. The destruction of the Caliphate in 1258 was followed by the Mongols and Turks coming over to Islām *en masse*, and the present-day afflictions of Islām are giving birth to a spiritual resuscitation of the world with Islām in the forefront. Along with the spiritual resurrection of Islām, however, on both occasions, there has been a revival of its temporal power as well.

1415 This relates to the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, when the Israelites were again given a chance to reform, but they are told that if they return to mischief they will again be punished. When the Holy Prophet came to Madīnah, the Jews were at first in a conciliatory mood, but their enmity increased day by day, until they joined hands with the enemies of Islām, devising plans to take his very life. The result was that they were swept out of Arabia, while their lot in all other countries of the world has always been one of hard trials and severe afflictions, and spiritually the Jewish religion has no future.

1416 The night stands for the darkness of ignorance and unbelief (see 344), and the passing away of the night indicates that ignorance will vanish and the light of Islām will take its place. Arabia witnessed this sign thirteen hundred years ago, and Islām has since then been gradually advancing in the world; and now there are clear indications that the day is not distant when the sun of Islām will shine forth in its full resplendence over the whole world. Some understand that by the two signs of the night and the day are meant the moon and the sun, and that the passing away of the sign of the night indicates that the moon does not possess original light.

13 And We have made every man's actions to cling to his neck,[1417] and We shall bring forth to him on the day of Resurrection a book which he will find wide open.

وَكُلَّ إِنْسَانٍ أَلْزَمْنَاهُ طَائِرَهُ فِي عُنُقِهِ ۖ وَنُخْرِجُ لَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ كِتَابًا يَلْقَاهُ مَنْشُورًا ﴿١٣﴾

14 Read thy book. Thine own soul is sufficient as a reckoner against thee this day.[1417a]

اقْرَأْ كِتَابَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا ﴿١٤﴾

15 Whoever goes aright, for his own soul does he go aright ; and whoever goes astray, to its detriment only does he go astray. And no bearer of a burden can bear the burden of another.[1418] Nor do We chastise until We raise a messenger.[1419]

مَنِ اهْتَدَىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ ضَلَّ فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا ۚ وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ۗ وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّىٰ نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا ﴿١٥﴾

16 And when We wish to destroy a town, We send commandments[1420] to its people who lead easy lives, but they transgress therein ; thus the word proves true against it, so We destroy it with utter destruction.

وَإِذَا أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نُهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً أَمَرْنَا مُتْرَفِيهَا فَفَسَقُوا فِيهَا فَحَقَّ عَلَيْهَا الْقَوْلُ فَدَمَّرْنَاهَا تَدْمِيرًا ﴿١٦﴾

17 And how many generations did We destroy after Noah ! And thy Lord suffices as being Aware and Seer of His servants' sins.

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنَ الْقُرُونِ مِنْ بَعْدِ نُوحٍ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ بِذُنُوبِ عِبَادِهِ خَبِيرًا بَصِيرًا ﴿١٧﴾

1417 *Ṭāir* (lit., *bird*) means the actions of a man, which are, as it were, attached as a necklace to his neck (Q, LL). Why this significance was attached to the word is explained by an Arab superstition. It was a custom of the Arabs to augur good and evil from birds, by observing whether a bird flew away of itself or by being roused, whether it flew to the right or to the left, or directly upwards, and the proposed action was accordingly deemed good or evil ; hence the word came to signify *good and evil actions* (Rz). The verse reveals the principle that every action produces an effect which is made to cling to a man, and that this very effect will be met with on the day of Resurrection in the form of a wide-open book. It is thus by leaving its effect behind that every action of man is recorded, and this very effect constitutes the book of a man's actions. Clinging to the neck indicates the inseparability of one thing from another, thus establishing the law of cause and effect.

1417a This verse throws a flood of light on the nature of the reckoning on the day of Resurrection and the *wazn* and the *mīzān* (7 : 8 ; 55 : 7), showing clearly that it is nothing but a complete manifestation of the effects of the deeds done in this life.

1418 This verse strikes at the root of the doctrine of atonement. The burden of the sins of one man cannot be taken away by another, for, as already stated, the effect of each man's actions clings to himself. The other burdens spoken of in 29 : 13 — they will carry their own burdens and other burdens with their own burdens — are the burdens of misleading others, while those others are also answerable for their own errors.

1419 Here it is stated that guidance is offered to man through a messenger

1420, see next page.

18 Whoso desires this transitory life, We hasten to him therein what We please for whomsoever We desire, then We assign to him the hell; he will enter it despised, driven away.

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيْدُ الْعَاجِلَةَ عَجَّلْنَا لَهٗ فِيْهَا مَا نَشَآءُ لِمَنْ نُّرِيْدُ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا لَهٗ جَهَنَّمَ ۚ يَصْلٰهَا مَذْمُوْمًا مَّدْحُوْرًا ﴿۱۸﴾

19 And whoso desires the Hereafter and strives for it as he ought to strive and he is a believer — those are they whose striving is amply rewarded.

وَ مَنْ اَرَادَ الْاٰخِرَةَ وَ سَعٰى لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَ هُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُمْ مَّشْكُوْرًا ﴿۱۹﴾

20 All do We aid — these as well as those — out of the bounty of thy Lord, and the bounty of thy Lord is not limited.

كُلًّا نُّمِدُّ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ وَ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ مِنْ عَطَآءِ رَبِّكَ ؕ وَ مَا كَانَ عَطَآءُ رَبِّكَ مَحْظُوْرًا ﴿۲۰﴾

21 See how We have made some of them to excel others. And certainly the Hereafter is greater in degrees and greater in excellence.

اُنْظُرْ كَيْفَ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ ؕ وَ لَلْاٰخِرَةُ اَكْبَرُ دَرَجٰتٍ وَّ اَكْبَرُ تَفْضِيْلًا ﴿۲۱﴾

22 Associate not any other god with Allāh, lest thou sit down despised, forsaken.

لَا تَجْعَلْ مَعَ اللّٰهِ اِلٰهًا اٰخَرَ فَتَقْعُدَ مَذْمُوْمًا مَّخْذُوْلًا ﴿۲۲﴾

SECTION 3: **Moral Precepts**

23 And thy Lord has decreed that you serve none but Him, and do good to parents.[1421] If either or both of them reach old age with thee, say not "Fie" to them, nor chide them, and speak to them a generous word.

وَ قَضٰى رَبُّكَ اَلَّا تَعْبُدُوْٓا اِلَّآ اِيَّاهُ وَ بِالْوَالِدَيْنِ اِحْسَانًا ؕ اِمَّا يَبْلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ اَحَدُهُمَآ اَوْ كِلٰهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَّهُمَآ اُفٍّ وَّ لَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَ قُلْ لَّهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيْمًا ﴿۲۳﴾

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of God, but if he still persists in error and strays from the path, it is to his own detriment. And then it is added that the punishment of the Hereafter is only after man has been warned through a Divine messenger: *Nor do We chastise until We raise a messenger.* The law as to punishment in this world is stated in v. 16, which speaks of the destruction of towns, for such punishment is sent when tyranny and transgression assume extraordinary proportions, and punishment is then inflicted on large numbers.

1420 These words are sometimes misunderstood. Allāh does not command people to transgress, for it is plainly stated in 7:28: "Allāh does not enjoin indecency"; and again in 16:90: "He forbids indecency and evil and rebellion". The meaning is clear: Allāh sends them commandments to do good, pointing out the right way through His prophets, but as they are accustomed to lead easy lives, they transgress those commandments, and are therefore punished.

1421 Obedience to parents is placed next to submission to Allāh, for among

24 And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy, and say: My Lord, have mercy on them, as they brought me up (when I was) little.

وَاخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَّبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيٰنِيْ صَغِيْرًا ﴿٢٤﴾

25 Your Lord knows best what is in your minds. If you are righteous, He is surely Forgiving to those who turn (to Him).

رَبُّكُمْ اَعْلَمُ بِمَا فِيْ نُفُوْسِكُمْ ۚ اِنْ تَكُوْنُوْا صٰلِحِيْنَ فَاِنَّهٗ كَانَ لِلْاَوَّابِيْنَ غَفُوْرًا ﴿٢٥﴾

26 And give to the near of kin his due and (to) the needy and the wayfarer, and squander not wastefully.

وَاٰتِ ذَا الْقُرْبٰى حَقَّهٗ وَالْمِسْكِيْنَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيْلِ وَلَا تُبَذِّرْ تَبْذِيْرًا ﴿٢٦﴾

27 Surely the squanderers are the devil's brethren. And the devil is ever ungrateful to his Lord.[1422]

اِنَّ الْمُبَذِّرِيْنَ كَانُوْٓا اِخْوَانَ الشَّيٰطِيْنِ ۚ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطٰنُ لِرَبِّهٖ كَفُوْرًا ﴿٢٧﴾

28 And if thou turn away from them to seek mercy from thy Lord, which thou hopest for, speak to them a gentle word.[1423]

وَاِمَّا تُعْرِضَنَّ عَنْهُمُ ابْتِغَآءَ رَحْمَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكَ تَرْجُوْهَا فَقُلْ لَّهُمْ قَوْلًا مَّيْسُوْرًا ﴿٢٨﴾

29 And make not thy hand to be shackled to thy neck, nor stretch it forth to the utmost (limit) of its stretching forth, lest thou sit down blamed, stripped off.[1424]

وَلَا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُوْلَةً اِلٰى عُنُقِكَ وَلَا تَبْسُطْهَا كُلَّ الْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُوْمًا مَّحْسُوْرًا ﴿٢٩﴾

30 Surely thy Lord makes plentiful the means of subsistence for whom He pleases, and He straitens. Surely He is ever Aware, Seer, of His servants.

اِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ اِنَّهٗ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهٖ خَبِيْرًا بَصِيْرًا ﴿٣٠﴾

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fellow-beings none has a greater claim upon a person than his parents. Moreover, obedience to parents is the seed from which, if the child is properly taught this lesson, springs the great obligation of obedience to all constituted authority.

1422 While enjoining charity, the Holy Qur'ān also draws attention to economy, thus indicating the golden mean. Those who waste wealth are called the devil's brethren, because they are ungrateful to God for wasting away what He has given them out of His grace.

1423 The *hoping for mercy from the Lord* means standing in need of the bounty of the Lord, i.e., *not having aught to give to the needy*. In that case one should still speak to the needy gently and not chide him with harshness. A saying of the Holy Prophet declares a gentle word spoken to a fellow-man to be a deed of charity (B. 56:72).

1424 By the shackling of the hand to the neck is meant being niggardly in one's expenses, and by stretching it forth to its utmost extent, being so profuse as to waste away all one's substance. The verse supplies a general rule regarding the

SECTION 4 : **Moral Precepts**

31 And kill not your children for fear of poverty — We provide for them and for you. Surely the killing of them is a great wrong.[1425]

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوْٓا اَوْلَادَكُمْ خَشْيَةَ اِمْلَاقٍ ؕ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُهُمْ وَاِيَّاكُمْ ؕ اِنَّ قَتْلَهُمْ كَانَ خِطْاً كَبِيْرًا ﴿۳۱﴾

32 And go not nigh to fornication : surely it is an obscenity. And evil is the way.[1426]

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الزِّنٰٓى اِنَّهٗ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً ؕ وَسَآءَ سَبِيْلًا ﴿۳۲﴾

33 And kill not the soul which Allāh has forbidden except for a just cause. And whoever is slain unjustly, We have indeed given to his heir authority — but let him not exceed the limit in slaying. Surely he will be helped.[1427]

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِيْ حَرَّمَ اللّٰهُ اِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ؕ وَمَنْ قُتِلَ مَظْلُوْمًا فَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا لِوَلِيِّهٖ سُلْطٰنًا فَلَا يُسْرِفْ فِّي الْقَتْلِ ؕ اِنَّهٗ كَانَ مَنْصُوْرًا ﴿۳۳﴾

34 And draw not nigh to the orphan's property, except in a goodly way, till he attains his maturity. And fulfil the promise ; surely, the promise will be enquired into.

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوْا مَالَ الْيَتِيْمِ اِلَّا بِالَّتِيْ هِيَ اَحْسَنُ حَتّٰى يَبْلُغَ اَشُدَّهٗ ۪ وَاَوْفُوْا بِالْعَهْدِ ۚ اِنَّ الْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْـُٔوْلًا ﴿۳۴﴾

35 And give full measure when you measure out, and weigh with a true balance. This is fair and better in the end.

وَاَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ اِذَا كِلْتُمْ وَزِنُوْا بِالْقِسْطَاسِ الْمُسْتَقِيْمِ ؕ ذٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَّاَحْسَنُ تَاْوِيْلًا ﴿۳۵﴾

36 And follow not that of which thou hast no knowledge.[1428] Surely the hearing and the sight and the heart, of all of these it will be asked.

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهٖ عِلْمٌ ؕ اِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ اُولٰٓئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْـُٔوْلًا ﴿۳۶﴾

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mean to be adopted in one's ordinary expenses, and thus inculcates the duty of economy.

1425 Infanticide, in the case of daughters, was met with among the Arabs, but this was not for fear of poverty. According to R, *killing of children* here means *not giving them proper education ;* ignorance, or intellectual death, being treated as death. The word *aulād* includes both males and females, and this explanation is therefore more reasonable. Or the reference may be to the modern evil of birth-control, which also amounts to the slaying of offspring.

1426 This is another evil which is becoming prevalent with the growth of civilization. The Qur'ān not only forbids fornication but enjoins men not to go near it, thus avoiding all those opportunities which are likely to tempt one to fall into the evil. Hence it is that Islām discourages the too free intermingling of the sexes.

1427 This verse contains nothing inconsistent with what is said in 2:178. The words *he will be helped* indicate that as the government is bound to help him by bringing the murderer within reach of the law, the heir should not take the law into his own hands. This is called exceeding the limits.

1428 If this injunction were followed, all society gossip would immediately cease, thereby relieving many an innocent man and woman of the heart-burning

37 And go not about in the land exultingly, for thou canst not rend the earth, nor reach the mountains in height.

وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۚ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَخْرِقَ الْأَرْضَ وَلَنْ تَبْلُغَ الْجِبَالَ طُولًا ﴿٣٧﴾

38 All this, the evil thereof, is hateful in the sight of thy Lord.

كُلُّ ذٰلِكَ كَانَ سَيِّئُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ مَكْرُوهًا ﴿٣٨﴾

39 This is of the wisdom which thy Lord has revealed to thee. And associate not any other god with Allāh lest thou be thrown into hell, blamed, cast away.

ذٰلِكَ مِمَّا أَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ رَبُّكَ مِنَ الْحِكْمَةِ ۗ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ مَعَ اللّٰهِ إِلٰهًا اٰخَرَ فَتُلْقَىٰ فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَلُومًا مَدْحُورًا ﴿٣٩﴾

40 Has then your Lord preferred to give you sons, and (for Himself) taken daughters from among the angels? Surely you utter a grievous saying.

أَفَأَصْفٰكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِالْبَنِينَ وَاتَّخَذَ مِنَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ إِنَاثًا ۚ إِنَّكُمْ لَتَقُولُونَ قَوْلًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٤٠﴾

SECTION 5 : **Disbelievers grow harder**

41 And certainly We have repeated (warnings) in this Qur'ān that they may be mindful. And it adds not save to their aversion.[1429]

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِي هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنِ لِيَذَّكَّرُوا ۖ وَمَا يَزِيدُهُمْ إِلَّا نُفُورًا ﴿٤١﴾

42 Say: If there were with Him gods, as they say, then certainly they would have been able to seek a way to the Lord of the Throne.[1430]

قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ مَعَهُ اٰلِهَةٌ كَمَا يَقُولُونَ إِذًا لَابْتَغَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِي الْعَرْشِ سَبِيلًا ﴿٤٢﴾

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which he or she suffers on account of evil and unfounded reports. The verse also forbids entering into discussions without accurate knowledge, or proffering uncertain opinion. In fact, peace and contentment would reign in society, instead of mutual strife and hatred, if the injunction were observed.

1429 Allāh's purpose in repeating arguments and signs in the Qur'ān is clearly to make men mindful, but the more they are reminded, the greater is their aversion to it.

1430 The idol-worshippers were sunk deep in vices and immorality, while access to the Divine Being — *a way to the Lord of the Throne* — which they claimed they got through their idols, should have purified their lives. "We serve them not," said the idolaters, "save that they may draw us nearer to Allāh" (39:3). But nearness to God, Who is the source of Purity, was meaningless in the case of those who led impure lives. Or, the meaning is that, if they had access to God, Who holds all power in His hands, they should have certainly received Divine help and been successful in uprooting Islām.

43 Glory to Him! and He is highly exalted above what they say!

سُبْحٰنَهٗ وَتَعٰلٰى عَمَّا يَقُوْلُوْنَ عُلُوًّا كَبِيْرًا ﴿٤٣﴾

44 The seven heavens and the earth and those in them declare His glory. And there is not a single thing but glorifies Him with His praise, but you do not understand their glorification. Surely He is Forbearing, Forgiving.[1430a]

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمٰوٰتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْاَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيْهِنَّ ۭ وَاِنْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ اِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهٖ وَلٰكِنْ لَّا تَفْقَهُوْنَ تَسْبِيْحَهُمْ ۭ اِنَّهٗ كَانَ حَلِيْمًا غَفُوْرًا ﴿٤٤﴾

45 And when thou recitest the Qur'ān, We place between thee and those who believe not in the Hereafter a hidden barrier;[1431]

وَاِذَا قَرَاْتَ الْقُرْاٰنَ جَعَلْنَا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ حِجَابًا مَّسْتُوْرًا ﴿٤٥﴾

46 And We put coverings on their hearts and a deafness in their ears lest they understand it; and when thou makest mention of thy Lord alone in the Qur'ān, they turn their backs in aversion.[1432]

وَّجَعَلْنَا عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ اَكِنَّةً اَنْ يَّفْقَهُوْهُ وَفِيْٓ اٰذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا ۭ وَاِذَا ذَكَرْتَ رَبَّكَ فِي الْقُرْاٰنِ وَحْدَهٗ وَلَّوْا عَلٰٓى اَدْبَارِهِمْ نُفُوْرًا ﴿٤٦﴾

47 We know best what they listen to when they listen to thee, and when they take counsel secretly, when the wrongdoers say: You follow only a man deprived of reason.

نَحْنُ اَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَسْتَمِعُوْنَ بِهٖٓ اِذْ يَسْتَمِعُوْنَ اِلَيْكَ وَاِذْ هُمْ نَجْوٰٓى اِذْ يَقُوْلُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ اِنْ تَتَّبِعُوْنَ اِلَّا رَجُلًا مَّسْحُوْرًا ﴿٤٧﴾

48 See, what they liken thee to! So they have gone astray, and cannot find the way.

اُنْظُرْ كَيْفَ ضَرَبُوْا لَكَ الْاَمْثَالَ فَضَلُّوْا فَلَا يَسْتَطِيْعُوْنَ سَبِيْلًا ﴿٤٨﴾

49 And they say: When we are

وَقَالُوْٓا ءَاِذَا كُنَّا عِظَامًا وَّرُفَاتًا ءَاِنَّا

1430a The whole universe is here mentioned as declaring the glory of Allāh. *Tasbīḥ* is synonymous with *tanzīh,* and means *the declaring God to be free from every imperfection and impurity, or from everything derogatory to His dignity* (LL). This declaration need not be with the tongue and in words: in fact, the very dependence of the whole creation on the Creator and its consequent imperfection is a glorification of the Creator.

1431 This hidden barrier is nothing but that erected by their own aversion, as plainly indicated in v. 41. Allāh, according to that verse, sends the Qur'ān to remind them, but because of their aversion to it a barrier is imposed between them and it.

1432 The placing of the coverings on the hearts and deafness in the ears of the disbelievers is no doubt attributed to Allāh as the prime cause of all things, but how this covering or heaviness is directly brought about is plainly indicated in the latter part of the verse. It is because they do not even listen to the mention of Allāh, and flee in aversion from His word, that there follows a deafness in their ears and a covering on their hearts. Allāh brings it about, but He brings it about on account of the condition of their very hearts and ears. This is made

bones and decayed particles, shall we then be raised up as a new creation?

لَمَبْعُوثُونَ خَلْقًا جَدِيدًا ﴿٤٩﴾

50 Say: Be stones or iron,

قُلْ كُونُوا حِجَارَةً أَوْ حَدِيدًا ﴿٥٠﴾

51 Or some other creature of those which are too hard (to receive life) in your minds![1433] But they will say: Who will return us? Say: He Who created you at first. Still they will shake their heads at thee and say: When will it be? Say: Maybe it has drawn nigh.[1434]

أَوْ خَلْقًا مِّمَّا يَكْبُرُ فِي صُدُورِكُمْ ۚ فَسَيَقُولُونَ مَن يُعِيدُنَا ۖ قُلِ الَّذِي فَطَرَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ ۚ فَسَيُنْغِضُونَ إِلَيْكَ رُءُوسَهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هُوَ ۖ قُلْ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونَ قَرِيبًا ﴿٥١﴾

52 On the day when He will call you forth, then will you obey Him, giving Him praise, and you will think that you tarried but a little (while).

يَوْمَ يَدْعُوكُمْ فَتَسْتَجِيبُونَ بِحَمْدِهِ وَتَظُنُّونَ إِن لَّبِثْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٥٢﴾

SECTION 6: **Punishment must follow**

53 And say to My servants that they speak what is best. Surely the devil sows dissensions among them. The devil is surely an open enemy to man.[1435]

وَقُل لِّعِبَادِي يَقُولُوا الَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يَنزَغُ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلْإِنسَانِ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا ﴿٥٣﴾

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very clear in 7:179: "They have hearts with which they understand not, and they have eyes with which they see not, and they have ears with which they hear not"

1433 The Arabs denied a life after death, giving as an argument that they would be reduced to decayed particles, and that hence there was no possibility of their being raised to life again. They are told that a life after death must follow, even if they could change themselves into stones. And the spiritual life with which they were quickened by the Holy Prophet, notwithstanding their hard-heartedness — "they are like rocks, rather worse in hardness" (2:74) — afforded a clear proof of the fulfilment of the statement made here.

1434 The shaking of the head is to indicate one's disbelief in a thing. The answer, *maybe it has drawn nigh,* refers to the spiritual resuscitation of Arabia, which was now to be accomplished through the Holy Prophet, as an indication of the greater Resurrection. The next verse makes it clear: *Then will you obey Him, giving Him praise.* Fifteen years after this the whole of Arabia resounded with Divine praises.

1435 The Muslims — My servants — are here enjoined to be very kind when they speak to the disbelievers. It is related that when the Muslims complained to the Holy Prophet that they were abused by the idolaters, they were told to be kind and not to retaliate (JB). And why? Because it was the devil that was causing these quarrels. The words evidently imply that these dissensions were only transient, and that the two parties would again become united.

54 Your Lord knows you best. He will have mercy on you, if He please, or He will chastise you, if He please. And We have not sent thee as being in charge of them.[1436]

رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ ۚ إِنْ يَّشَأْ يَرْحَمْكُمْ أَوْ إِنْ يَّشَأْ يُعَذِّبْكُمْ ۚ وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنٰكَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيْلًا ﴿٥٤﴾

55 And thy Lord best knows those who are in the heavens and the earth. And certainly We made some of the prophets to excel others,[1437] and to David We gave the Zabūr.

وَرَبُّكَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَلَقَدْ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَ النَّبِيّٖنَ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ وَّاٰتَيْنَا دَاوٗدَ زَبُوْرًا ﴿٥٥﴾

56 Say: Call on those whom you assert besides Him; they have no power to remove distress from you nor to change.

قُلِ ادْعُوا الَّذِيْنَ زَعَمْتُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِهٖ فَلَا يَمْلِكُوْنَ كَشْفَ الضُّرِّ عَنْكُمْ وَلَا تَحْوِيْلًا ﴿٥٦﴾

57 Those whom they call upon, themselves seek the means of access to their Lord — whoever of them is nearest — and they hope for His mercy and fear His chastisement. Surely the chastisement of thy Lord is a thing to be cautious of.[1438]

أُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ يَبْتَغُوْنَ إِلٰى رَبِّهِمُ الْوَسِيْلَةَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ وَيَرْجُوْنَ رَحْمَتَهٗ وَيَخَافُوْنَ عَذَابَهٗ ۗ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ كَانَ مَحْذُوْرًا ﴿٥٧﴾

58 And there is not a town but We will destroy it before the day of Resurrection or chastise it with a severe chastisement. That is written in the Book.[1439]

وَإِنْ مِّنْ قَرْيَةٍ إِلَّا نَحْنُ مُهْلِكُوْهَا قَبْلَ يَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ أَوْ مُعَذِّبُوْهَا عَذَابًا شَدِيْدًا ۗ كَانَ ذٰلِكَ فِي الْكِتٰبِ مَسْطُوْرًا ﴿٥٨﴾

1436 It should be noted that in this verse, as elsewhere, *mercy* is mentioned first, thus showing that Divine mercy has precedence over Divine retribution.

1437 By saying that some of the prophets are made to excel others, the excellence of the Holy Prophet over others is implied. David is specially mentioned, because, as stated in the Psalms, he prayed for the utter destruction of his enemies, whereas the above two verses show that the Holy Prophet was enjoined to deal mercifully with his opponents. As regards David's invoking curses and destruction on wicked judges and on his enemies, see the Psalms: "Break their teeth, O God . . . let them melt away as waters . . . let them be as cut in pieces . . . let every one of them pass away" (Ps. 58:6-8); "Be not merciful to any wicked transgressors" (Ps. 59:5); "Consume them in wrath, consume them that they may not be" (Ps. 59:13). For *Zabūr*, see 527.

1438 This verse and v. 56 seem to refer to the worship of prophets, saints, and rabbis by the Christians and the Jews. Explaining the words *whom they call upon*, JB adds, *as the angels and Jesus and his mother and Ezra.* These divinities, it is argued, themselves hoped for Divine mercy and feared His retribution; the nearer a person to the Divine Being, the greater was his hope of mercy and his fear of punishment if he disobeyed.

1439 There is a prophetical reference here to great disasters which would ruin populous towns. The addition of the words "before the day of Resurrection" clearly points to the fact that the destruction of the towns does not refer to the end of things. The Second World War has but given us a glimpse of what is yet in store for this world, if a Third War breaks out. Already we have seen the

59 And nothing hindered Us from sending signs, but the ancients rejected them.[1440] And We gave to Thamūd the she-camel, a manifest sign, but they did her wrong, and We send not signs but to warn.

وَمَا مَنَعَنَآ اَنْ نُّرْسِلَ بِالْاٰيٰتِ اِلَّآ اَنْ كَذَّبَ بِهَا الْاَوَّلُوْنَ ۭ وَاٰتَيْنَا ثَمُوْدَ النَّاقَةَ مُبْصِرَةً فَظَلَمُوْا بِهَا ۭ وَمَا نُرْسِلُ بِالْاٰيٰتِ اِلَّا تَخْوِيْفًا ۝

60 And when We said to thee: Surely thy Lord encompasses men.[1440a] And We made not the vision which We showed thee but a trial for men,[1441] as also the tree cursed[1442] in the Qur'ān. And We warn them, but it only adds to their great inordinacy.

وَاِذْ قُلْنَا لَكَ اِنَّ رَبَّكَ اَحَاطَ بِالنَّاسِ ۭ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الرُّءْيَا الَّتِيْٓ اَرَيْنٰكَ اِلَّا فِتْنَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَالشَّجَرَةَ الْمَلْعُوْنَةَ فِي الْقُرْاٰنِ ۭ وَنُخَوِّفُهُمْ ۙ فَمَا يَزِيْدُهُمْ اِلَّا طُغْيَانًا كَبِيْرًا ۝

fulfilment of this prophecy in the destruction of populous towns in almost every country of the world on an unprecedented scale, but it is nothing compared with the havoc which the atom bomb or the hydrogen bomb and other inventions of this modern age are likely to work, if the mad struggle for power is not ended. It should be noted that the prophecy of the ruination of populous towns is here mentioned as a part of the Divine scheme in the ultimate triumph of Islām with which this chapter deals, and hence the reference to the sending of signs in the next verse.

1440 After speaking of a great sign in the latter days, the destruction of towns on a large scale, this verse speaks of a general law that God has always been sending signs to establish truth, and that nothing ever hindered Him from sending signs, though such signs were rejected by the people to whom they were sent. It is further made clear that signs are sent to warn people of the evil consequences of doing evil.

1440a *Aḥāṭa* (*r. ḥauṭ*) *bi-hī* means *he encompassed* or *surrounded* him, *he had him in his grasp* (LL). By *the people* are meant *those who opposed the Truth*, the reference being to the utter discomfiture of the enemy.

1441 The reference here is to *the vision of Ascension* or *the Mi'rāj* (B. 63:42), which was really a prophecy of the ultimate triumph of Islām; see 1410. There has been a difference of opinion among the learned as to whether the Holy Prophet's Ascension was bodily or spiritual; the majority adhere to the first view, but among those who hold the latter view there are personages of sound opinion, such as 'Ā'ishah and Mu'āwiyah. In view of the plain words of the Qur'ān, however, which refer to the Ascension as being *the vision which We showed thee*, the opinion of the majority must be rejected. The sayings of the Holy Prophet support this view. Thus in a report it is stated that the angel came to him *on another night when his heart saw, and the Prophet (peace be on him!), his eyes slept but his heart did not sleep; and such are the prophets, their eyes sleep but their hearts do not sleep, then Gabriel accompanied him and he carried him to heaven* (B. 61:24). The concluding words of another report which speaks of the *Mi'rāj* are: "And he awoke and he was in the Sacred Mosque" (B. 98:37). In another report the words describing the condition in which he was at the time of *Ascension* are, *whilst I was in a state between that of one sleeping and one awake* (B. 59:6). In fact, it is quite true that he was not asleep — he was in a vision, but at the same time it was not a corporeal Ascension. He was actually carried to the Holy Presence, and he was shown great wonders, but it was in spirit that he was carried, and it was with the spiritual eye that he saw those wonders, not in body and with the physical

1442, see next page.

SECTION 7 : **The Devil's Opposition to the Righteous**

61 And when We said to the angels : Be submissive to Adam ; they submitted, except Iblīs.[1442a] He said : Shall I submit to him whom Thou hast created of dust ?

وَاِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اسْجُدُوْا لِاٰدَمَ فَسَجَدُوْٓا
اِلَّآ اِبْلِيْسَ ؕ قَالَ ءَاَسْجُدُ لِمَنْ
خَلَقْتَ طِيْنًا ﴿۶۱﴾

62 He said : Seest Thou ? This is he whom Thou hast honoured above me ! If Thou respite me to the day of Resurrection, I will certainly cause his progeny to perish except a few.

قَالَ اَرَءَيْتَكَ هٰذَا الَّذِیْ كَرَّمْتَ عَلَیَّ ؗ
لَئِنْ اَخَّرْتَنِ اِلٰی يَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ لَاَحْتَنِكَنَّ
ذُرِّيَّتَهٗۤ اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا ﴿۶۲﴾

63 He said : Begone ! whoever of them follows thee surely hell is your recompense, a full recompense.

قَالَ اذْهَبْ فَمَنْ تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ فَاِنَّ
جَهَنَّمَ جَزَآؤُكُمْ جَزَآءً مَّوْفُوْرًا ﴿۶۳﴾

64 And incite whom thou canst of them with thy voice,[1443] and collect against them thy horse and thy foot,[1444] and share with them in wealth and children,[1445] and promise them. And the devil promises them only to deceive.

وَاسْتَفْزِزْ مَنِ اسْتَطَعْتَ مِنْهُمْ بِصَوْتِكَ
وَاَجْلِبْ عَلَيْهِمْ بِخَيْلِكَ وَرَجِلِكَ وَشَارِكْهُمْ
فِی الْاَمْوَالِ وَالْاَوْلَادِ وَعِدْهُمْ ؕ وَمَا
يَعِدُهُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ اِلَّا غُرُوْرًا ﴿۶۴﴾

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eye, for things spiritual can only be seen with the spiritual eye. And this vision had an important significance. He saw it at a time when his condition was, to human seeming, one of utmost helplessness, and he was shown that a great future lay before him. His opponents, as usual, disbelieved in such visions, and laughed at him.

1442 The cursed tree is the tree of *zaqqūm* (B. 63 : 42). According to the Holy Qur'ān, every good action is a good tree and every evil action is an evil tree. One explanation of the cursed tree being a trial for the disbelievers is given in 2111. But the statement is made here in contrast with the Prophet's vision, and both, in fact, have a deeper significance. As the Prophet's vision signified his future triumph and gave an indication of the greatness to which Islām would rise, the statement made elsewhere that the tree of *zaqqūm* was the food of sinners (44 : 43, 44) contained a prophecy of the discomfiture of the enemies of Islām, telling them that a deadly food was in store for them. It was these two prophecies that the opponents laughed to scorn, hence they were a trial for them. And the reason why the vision and the statement about the cursed tree are conjoined is thus evident. The triumph of Islām and the discomfiture of the enemy went hand in hand.

1442a See 56, 57, 58. For man's creation from dust, see 862.

1443 The devil is here compared with a coward who comes with great show but little real force, and who, if shown the least resistance, retreats at every step. According to I'Ab, *every inviter who invites* (others) *to the disobedience of Allāh is a satan uttering the cry* (JB).

1444 The forces of the devil are no other than the evildoers, those going quickly into evil being likened to horsemen and those who walk slowly in their

1445, see next page.

65 My servants — thou hast surely no authority over them.[1446] And thy Lord suffices as having charge of affairs.

إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَٰنٌ ۚ
وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ وَكِيلًا ﴿٦٥﴾

66 Your Lord is He who speeds the ships for you in the sea that you may seek of His grace. Surely He is ever Merciful to you.

رَبُّكُمُ الَّذِي يُزْجِي لَكُمُ الْفُلْكَ فِي الْبَحْرِ
لِتَبْتَغُوا مِن فَضْلِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا ﴿٦٦﴾

67 And when distress afflicts you in the sea, away go those whom you call on except He ; but when He brings you safe to the land, you turn away. And man is ever ungrateful.[1447]

وَإِذَا مَسَّكُمُ الضُّرُّ فِي الْبَحْرِ ضَلَّ مَن
تَدْعُونَ إِلَّآ إِيَّاهُ ۖ فَلَمَّا نَجَّىٰكُمْ إِلَى
الْبَرِّ أَعْرَضْتُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ الْإِنسَٰنُ كَفُورًا ﴿٦٧﴾

68 Do you then feel secure that He will not bring you low on a tract of land, or send on you a violent wind ?[1448] Then you will not find a protector for yourselves ;

أَفَأَمِنتُمْ أَن يَخْسِفَ بِكُمْ جَانِبَ الْبَرِّ
أَوْ يُرْسِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَاصِبًا ثُمَّ لَا تَجِدُوا
لَكُمْ وَكِيلًا ﴿٦٨﴾

69 Or, do you feel secure that He will not take you back into it another time, then send on you a fierce gale and thus overwhelm you for your ungratefulness ?[1449] Then you will not find any aider against Us in the matter.

أَمْ أَمِنتُمْ أَن يُعِيدَكُمْ فِيهِ تَارَةً أُخْرَىٰ
فَيُرْسِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ قَاصِفًا مِّنَ الرِّيحِ فَيُغْرِقَكُم
بِمَا كَفَرْتُمْ ۙ ثُمَّ لَا تَجِدُوا لَكُمْ عَلَيْنَا
بِهِۦ تَبِيعًا ﴿٦٩﴾

70 And surely We have honoured the children of Adam, and We carry them in the land and the sea, and We provide them with good things, and We have made them to excel highly most of those whom We have created.

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِيٓ ءَادَمَ وَحَمَلْنَٰهُمْ فِي
الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَرَزَقْنَٰهُم مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَٰتِ
وَفَضَّلْنَٰهُمْ عَلَىٰ كَثِيرٍ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا تَفْضِيلًا ﴿٧٠﴾

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evil course being likened to infantry. According to JB, by the *devil's horse and foot* are meant *fast riders* and *slow walkers in disobedience.*

1445 The sharing of the devil in wealth signifies *everything spent unlawfully* or *acquired unlawfully ;* and *sharing in children* is in reference *to committing fornication, which results in illegitimate births* (JB).

1446 *My servants* may include all men. The devil will say to the sinners: I had no authority over you (14:22); see 1308.

1447 A true picture is drawn here of human nature, which turns to Allāh in affliction but forgets Him in ease.

1448 *Ḥāṣib* primarily means *a thrower or pelter of stones* and *rīḥ-un ḥāṣib-un*

1449, see next page.

SECTION 8 : **Opposition to the Prophet**

71 On the day when We shall call every people with their leader :[1450] then whoever is given his book in his right hand, these will read their book ; and they will not be dealt with a whit unjustly.[1451]

يَوْمَ نَدْعُوا كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِإِمَامِهِمْ ۚ فَمَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ فَأُولَٰٓئِكَ يَقْرَءُونَ كِتَابَهُمْ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا ﴿٧١﴾

72 And whoever is blind in this (world) he will be blind in the Hereafter, and further away from the path.[1452]

وَمَنْ كَانَ فِي هَٰذِهِ أَعْمَىٰ فَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَىٰ وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ﴿٧٢﴾

73 And surely they had purposed to turn thee away[1453] from that which We have revealed to thee, that thou shouldst forge against Us other than that, and then they would have taken thee for a friend.

وَإِنْ كَادُوا لَيَفْتِنُونَكَ عَنِ الَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ لِتَفْتَرِيَ عَلَيْنَا غَيْرَهُ ۖ وَإِذًا لَاتَّخَذُوكَ خَلِيلًا ﴿٧٣﴾

74 And if We had not made thee firm, thou mightest have indeed inclined to them a little ;

وَلَوْلَا أَنْ ثَبَّتْنَاكَ لَقَدْ كِدْتَ تَرْكَنُ إِلَيْهِمْ شَيْئًا قَلِيلًا ﴿٧٤﴾

75 Then We would have made thee taste a double (punishment) in life and a double (punishment) after death,

إِذًا لَأَذَقْنَاكَ ضِعْفَ الْحَيَاةِ وَضِعْفَ الْمَمَاتِ

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signifies *a violent wind that raises pebbles* (LL). The word is also applied *to a cloud raining hail.* It was by a violent wind that the combined forces of all the enemies of Islām were brought low in the battle of the Confederates, when, besieging Madīnah in the year 5 A.H., they had to flee in disorder.

1449 Distress is here likened to the sea.

1450 The meaning is that the righteous will follow the righteous leaders and the wicked will follow their wicked leaders. The word *imām,* or *leader,* here, is interpreted in several other ways, meaning *scripture, prophet, law, book of deeds.* The last of these significances also suits the context, as the books of deeds are spoken of in the words that follow.

1451 This book is the one mentioned in v. 14, i.e., the effect of one's deeds, which will be brought before every one in a palpable form on the day of Resurrection. The book of deeds is given in the right hand to those who hold the Book of God in their right hands here, i.e., act upon it. As against them are those spoken of in the next verse ; they remain blind to the Book of God, so they will be blind in the Hereafter.

1452 We are here told that those who remain blind to truth in this life remain blind in the life after death, which shows that it is here that a hellish life begins with spiritual blindness, and that the hell of the next life is also a blindness. This is corroborated by what is said in 57:13, that the faithful will have a light on that day.

1453 The commentators think the allusion to be to an incident which happened at Madīnah long after the revelation of this chapter. But there is a clear

and then thou wouldst not have found any helper against Us.[1454]

ثُمَّ لَا تَجِدُ لَكَ عَلَيْنَا نَصِيرًا ﴿٧٥﴾

76 And surely they purposed to unsettle thee from the land that they might expel thee from it, and then they will not tarry after thee but a little.[1455]

وَإِن كَادُوا لَيَسْتَفِزُّونَكَ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ لِيُخْرِجُوكَ مِنْهَا وَإِذًا لَّا يَلْبَثُونَ خِلٰفَكَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٧٦﴾

77 (This is Our) way with Our messengers whom We sent before thee, and thou wilt not find a change in Our course.[1456]

سُنَّةَ مَن قَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ مِن رُّسُلِنَا وَلَا تَجِدُ لِسُنَّتِنَا تَحْوِيلًا ﴿٧٧﴾

SECTION 9 : **Truth will prevail**

78 Keep up prayer from the declining of the sun till the darkness of the night, and the recital of the Qur'ān at dawn. Surely the recital of the Qur'ān at dawn is witnessed.[1457]

أَقِمِ الصَّلٰوةَ لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَىٰ غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْاٰنَ الْفَجْرِ ۖ إِنَّ قُرْاٰنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا ﴿٧٨﴾

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and well-authenticated incident regarding the attempt of the Quraish at Makkah, which, both as regards the offer of the Quraish and the firm reply of the Holy Prophet, exactly fits in with the statement of this verse and the one that follows. The chief men of the Quraish met in an assembly and invited the Prophet, saying to him that they were prepared to gather for him wealth or to make him their king, if he gave up speaking against their idols and their evil ways. The Prophet's reply was that he wanted neither of these things, but that it was for their welfare that he asked them to give up evil ways. On an earlier occasion, when a deputation of the Quraish went to Abū Ṭālib, the Prophet's uncle, to prevail upon him to dissuade the Prophet from speaking against their idols, and Abū Ṭālib told the Prophet that he, too, was unable to defend him against the Quraish, his reply was: "If they place the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left and ask me to give up my mission, I will not give it up until the truth prevail or I myself perish in the attempt" (IH).

1454 The word *idh-an* (*then* or *in that case*) refers to the concluding words of the last verse. It is thus made clear that notwithstanding all the attempts of his opponents, the Prophet never inclined to them in the least.

1455 When the opponents failed to make the Prophet swerve from the path of Truth, they planned to expel him from the land, though they were told beforehand that in that case they themselves would not retain power but for a short time. It was only eight years after the Hijrah that the Prophet entered Makkah as a conqueror.

1456 Elsewhere this law is stated thus: "And those who disbelieved said to their messengers, We will certainly drive you out of our land unless you come back to our religion. So their Lord revealed to them, We shall certainly destroy the wrongdoers and We shall certainly settle you in the land after them" (14:13, 14).

1457 After describing how the opponents wanted to bring the Prophet's mission to failure by temptations as well as by threats and by their determination to get rid of him by all means, the Prophet is told to resort to prayer as a solution of the great difficulties with which he was beset. From the declining

79 And during a part of the night, keep awake[1458] by it, beyond what is incumbent on thee; maybe thy Lord will raise thee to a position of great glory.[1459]

وَمِنَ الَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهٖ نَافِلَةً لَّكَ ۖ عَسٰٓى اَنْ يَّبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُوْدًا ﴿٧٩﴾

80 And say: My Lord, make me enter a truthful entering, and make me go forth a truthful going forth, and grant me from Thy presence an authority to help (me).[1460]

وَقُلْ رَّبِّ اَدْخِلْنِيْ مُدْخَلَ صِدْقٍ وَّاَخْرِجْنِيْ مُخْرَجَ صِدْقٍ وَّاجْعَلْ لِّيْ مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ سُلْطٰنًا نَّصِيْرًا ﴿٨٠﴾

81 And say: The Truth has come and falsehood vanished. Surely falsehood is ever bound to vanish.[1461]

وَقُلْ جَآءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ ۗ اِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوْقًا ﴿٨١﴾

82 And We reveal of the Qur'ān that which is a healing and a mercy to the believers, and it adds only to the perdition of the wrongdoers.[1462]

وَنُنَزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْاٰنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَآءٌ وَّرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۙ وَلَا يَزِيْدُ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ اِلَّا خَسَارًا ﴿٨٢﴾

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of the sun to sunset are two prayers, i.e., the *ẓuhr* and *'aṣr,* or the early afternoon and later afternoon prayers, while from sunset till darkness there are two others, i.e., the *maghrib* and the *'ishā',* or the sunset prayer and the prayer at nightfall. The fifth is the morning prayer, which is called here the *Qur'ān al-fajr,* or *the recital of the Qur'ān at dawn.* Thus this verse, which is one of the very early revelations, mentions all the five prayers. It should be noted that the four prayers from *ẓuhr* to *'ishā'* are mentioned together because they follow each other after small intervals, while the fifth, the morning prayer, which comes after a long interval, is mentioned separately. The name *Qur'ān al-fajr* given to it is an indication that there is usually a lengthy recitation of the Qur'ān in it. This recitation is called *mashhūd* or *witnessed,* as there is greater concentration of mind at that time.

1458 *Tahajjud* is derived from *hajada,* which means *he slept in the night,* and also *he was wakeful in the night* (LL). The addition of *by it,* meaning *by means of prayer,* shows the latter significance to be the one meant here. In Islamic religious terminology *tahajjud* invariably denotes *the prayer said after rising from sleep,* in the latter portion of the night. It is not an obligatory prayer but, as stated here, it is the means of raising a man to *a position of great glory.* The time at which it is said is most suited for the concentration of mind and for communion with God.

1459 The man whom the opponents had planned to expel from their city as a helpless man was to be raised to a position of eminent dignity through prayer to God, the prayer in the night in particular. As time passes on, the Prophet is ever rising to positions of greater and greater glory. But while the verse speaks in particular of the Prophet and of the great glory to which he was destined to rise, it gives a promise in general as well that whoever is sincere in calling upon God, especially at night, is raised to a position of glory.

1460 According to I'Ab the reference here is to the Prophet's Flight, *entering* Madīnah and *going forth* from Makkah (JB). The Prophet was thus told in early revelations that he would have to leave Makkah and find shelter in another place. But the words may also be taken in a general sense, man being taught here to pray that his entering into any affair or his exit may be marked by truthfulness, and that he may be granted Divine help in all his undertakings.

1461 The advent of the Prophet is here spoken of as the advent of the *Truth,* in reference to the prophecy in John 16:13 as to the coming of the "Spirit of Truth" to guide men into all truth: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth,

1462, see next page.

83 And when We bestow favours on man, he turns away and behaves proudly; and when evil afflicts him, he is in despair.

وَإِذَآ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ أَعْرَضَ وَنَا بِجَانِبِهِ ۚ وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ كَانَ يَؤُوسًا ﴿٨٣﴾

84 Say: Everyone acts according to his manner. But your Lord best knows who is best guided on the path.[1463]

قُلْ كُلٌّ يَعْمَلُ عَلَىٰ شَاكِلَتِهِ ۖ فَرَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ هُوَ أَهْدَىٰ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٤﴾

SECTION 10: **The Qur'ān — a Unique Guidance**

85 And they ask thee about the revelation.[1464] Say: The revelation is by the commandment of my Lord, and of knowledge you are given but a little.

وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ ۖ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَآ أُوتِيتُمْ مِّنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٨٥﴾

86 And if We please, We could certainly take away that which We have revealed to thee, then thou wouldst find none to plead (thy cause) against Us —

وَلَئِنْ شِئْنَا لَنَذْهَبَنَّ بِالَّذِيٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ لَا تَجِدُ لَكَ بِهِ عَلَيْنَا وَكِيلًا ﴿٨٦﴾

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is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come".

The vanishing of falsehood is here spoken of in the past tense to indicate the certainty of its occurrence. Falsehood finally disappeared from Makkah when the Prophet entered it as a conqueror, and as the House of the Holy One was cleared of the idols, the Prophet recited this verse, *The Truth has come and falsehood vanished* (B. 46:32), thus showing that he understood it to contain the prophecy of the conquest of Makkah. According to another report, he also recited on this occasion 34:49: "Truth has come, and falsehood leaves not a trace, nor will it return," showing that idol-worship was being swept away from Arabia for ever. The statement made here, however, is general and it means that falsehood cannot stand before Truth and that Truth must finally prevail in the whole world, as it prevailed in Arabia in the lifetime of the Prophet.

1462 The Qur'ān is here called a healing and a mercy for spiritual diseases, and it is a fact to which history bears testimony that spiritual diseases were all swept away by the Qur'ān. But, it is added, it is a healing for the believers who follow it, and not for those who reject it, and its rejection brings only greater loss.

1463 Both the believer and the disbeliever act according to the rules of conduct which they have set before themselves. Who is on the right path is made clear by the consequences which appear later but which are always known to God.

1464 For the word *rūḥ*, meaning *inspiration* or *revelation*, see 653. Here, before this verse as well as after it, the Qur'ān is the only topic of discussion, and therefore the context shows clearly that the question of the disbelievers is not

87 But it is a mercy from thy Lord. Surely His bounty to thee is abundant.

إِلَّا رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۚ إِنَّ فَضْلَهُ كَانَ عَلَيْكَ كَبِيرًا ﴿٨٧﴾

88 Say: If men and jinn should combine together to bring the like of this Qur'ān, they could not bring the like of it, though some of them were aiders of others.[1466]

قُل لَّئِنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَن يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا ﴿٨٨﴾

89 And certainly We have made clear for men in this Qur'ān every kind of description,[1467] but most men consent to naught save denying.

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِي هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنِ مِن كُلِّ مَثَلٍ فَأَبَىٰ أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ إِلَّا كُفُورًا ﴿٨٩﴾

90 And they say: We will by no means believe in thee, till thou cause a spring to gush forth from the earth for us,[1468]

وَقَالُوا لَن نُّؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ تَفْجُرَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ يَنبُوعًا ﴿٩٠﴾

91 Or thou have a garden of palms and grapes in the midst of which thou cause rivers to flow forth abundantly,

أَوْ تَكُونَ لَكَ جَنَّةٌ مِّن نَّخِيلٍ وَعِنَبٍ فَتُفَجِّرَ الْأَنْهَارَ خِلَالَهَا تَفْجِيرًا ﴿٩١﴾

92 Or thou cause the heaven to come down upon us in pieces, as thou thinkest, or bring Allāh and the angels face to face (with us),

أَوْ تُسْقِطَ السَّمَاءَ كَمَا زَعَمْتَ عَلَيْنَا كِسَفًا أَوْ تَأْتِيَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ قَبِيلًا ﴿٩٢﴾

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about the *soul* of man, for which the proper word is *nafs*, but about the Qur'ān itself, i.e., *the revelation* or *the spirit*.

1466 For the uniqueness of the Holy Qur'ān, see 36. It may be noted that out of the four places in which the disbelievers are challenged to produce the like of the Qur'ān, this is the only one where the *jinn* and the *men* are spoken of together; in all the other places the *shuhadā'*, or the *leaders*, take the place of the *jinn*. Bearing in mind that *jinnī* (plural *jinn*) means also a *man acting with penetrative energy in his affairs*, it becomes certain that the word *jinn* in this verse conveys the same significance as the word *shuhadā'* in other verses. This settles conclusively that the word *jinn* is used in the Holy Qur'ān for the leaders of evil.

1467 *Mathal* is synonymous with *waṣf* (R), and thus a description of anything may be called its *mathal*, though its application to a description by way of comparison or *a parable* is more general. It is here affirmed that all that contributes to the moral and spiritual welfare of man is made distinct in the Holy Qur'ān.

1468 The signs demanded in this and the following three verses relate to the promises made for the righteous and the threats of punishment for the wicked, as given in the Qur'ān, and they were no doubt fulfilled in due time. But the disbelievers wanted to see the spiritual blessings of communion with God in a physical shape. The believers were granted gardens with rivers running in them even in this life, and punishment from heaven overtook the opponents, but this was to come about, and did come about, gradually.

93 Or thou have a house of gold, or thou ascend into heaven. And we will not believe in thy ascending till thou bring down to us a book we can read. Say: Glory to my Lord! am I aught but a mortal messenger?[1469]

أَوْ يَكُونَ لَكَ بَيْتٌ مِّنْ زُخْرُفٍ أَوْ تَرْقَىٰ
فِي السَّمَآءِ ۗ وَلَنْ نُّؤْمِنَ لِرُقِيِّكَ حَتّٰى تُنَزِّلَ
عَلَيْنَا كِتٰبًا نَّقْرَؤُهٗ ۗ قُلْ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيْ
هَلْ كُنْتُ اِلَّا بَشَرًا رَّسُوْلًا ﴿٩٣﴾

SECTION 11 : **Justice of Retribution**

94 And nothing prevents people from believing, when the guidance comes to them, except that they say: Has Allāh raised up a mortal to be a messenger?

وَمَا مَنَعَ النَّاسَ اَنْ يُّؤْمِنُوْٓا اِذْ جَآءَهُمُ
الْهُدٰٓى اِلَّآ اَنْ قَالُوْٓا اَبَعَثَ اللّٰهُ بَشَرًا رَّسُوْلًا ﴿٩٤﴾

95 Say: Had there been in the earth angels walking about secure, We would have sent down to them from the heaven an angel as messenger.

قُلْ لَّوْ كَانَ فِي الْاَرْضِ مَلٰٓئِكَةٌ يَّمْشُوْنَ
مُطْمَئِنِّيْنَ لَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ
مَلَكًا رَّسُوْلًا ﴿٩٥﴾

96 Say: Allāh suffices for a witness between me and you. Surely He is ever Aware of His servants, Seeing.

قُلْ كَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ شَهِيْدًا بَيْنِيْ وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۗ
اِنَّهٗ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهٖ خَبِيْرًا بَصِيْرًا ﴿٩٦﴾

97 And he whom Allāh guides, he is on the right way; and he whom He leaves in error, for them thou wilt find no guardians besides Him. And We shall gather them together on the day of Resurrection on their faces, blind and dumb and deaf. Their abode is hell. Whenever it abates, We make them burn the more.

وَمَنْ يَّهْدِ اللّٰهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ ۚ وَمَنْ
يُّضْلِلْ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ اَوْلِيَآءَ مِنْ دُوْنِهٖ ۗ
وَنَحْشُرُهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ عَلٰى وُجُوْهِهِمْ
عُمْيًا وَّبُكْمًا وَّصُمًّا ۗ مَاْوٰىهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۗ
كُلَّمَا خَبَتْ زِدْنٰهُمْ سَعِيْرًا ﴿٩٧﴾

98 This is their retribution because they disbelieve in Our messages and say: When we are bones and decayed particles, shall we then be raised up into a new creation?

ذٰلِكَ جَزَآؤُهُمْ بِاَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا
وَقَالُوْٓا ءَاِذَا كُنَّا عِظَامًا وَّرُفَاتًا ءَاِنَّا
لَمَبْعُوْثُوْنَ خَلْقًا جَدِيْدًا ﴿٩٨﴾

1469 The answer to all the demands of the disbelievers is that the Prophet was only a mortal messenger, and the prophecies regarding his own great future or the discomfiture of his enemies would be brought to fulfilment gradually, as in the case of messengers before him.

99 See they not that Allāh, Who created the heavens and the earth, is able to create the like of them? And He has appointed for them a term, whereof there is no doubt. But the wrongdoers consent to naught but denying.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ
وَالْأَرْضَ قَادِرٌ عَلٰٓى أَنْ يَّخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُمْ
وَجَعَلَ لَهُمْ أَجَلًا لَّا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ ۚ فَأَبَى
الظّٰلِمُوْنَ إِلَّا كُفُوْرًا ﴿٩٩﴾

100 Say: If you control the treasures of the mercy of my Lord, then you would withold (them) for fear of spending. And man is ever niggardly.

قُلْ لَّوْ أَنْتُمْ تَمْلِكُوْنَ خَزَآئِنَ رَحْمَةِ
رَبِّيْٓ إِذًا لَّأَمْسَكْتُمْ خَشْيَةَ الْإِنْفَاقِ ۚ
وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ قَتُوْرًا ﴿١٠٠﴾

SECTION 12: **Comparison with Moses**

101 And certainly We gave Moses nine clear signs;[1470] so ask the Children of Israel. When he came to them, Pharaoh said to him: Surely I deem thee, O Moses, to be one bewitched.

وَلَقَدْ اٰتَيْنَا مُوْسٰى تِسْعَ اٰيٰتٍۭ بَيِّنٰتٍ
فَسْئَلْ بَنِيْٓ إِسْرَآءِيْلَ إِذْ جَآءَهُمْ
فَقَالَ لَهٗ فِرْعَوْنُ إِنِّيْ لَأَظُنُّكَ يٰمُوْسٰى
مَسْحُوْرًا ﴿١٠١﴾

102 He said: Truly thou knowest that none but the Lord of the heavens and the earth has sent these as clear proofs; and surely I believe thee, O Pharaoh, to be lost.

قَالَ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَآ أَنْزَلَ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِلَّا
رَبُّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ بَصَآئِرَ ۚ وَإِنِّيْ
لَأَظُنُّكَ يٰفِرْعَوْنُ مَثْبُوْرًا ﴿١٠٢﴾

103 So he desired to scare them from the land, but We drowned him and those with him, all together;[1471]

فَأَرَادَ أَنْ يَّسْتَفِزَّهُمْ مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ
فَأَغْرَقْنٰهُ وَمَنْ مَّعَهٗ جَمِيْعًا ﴿١٠٣﴾

104 And We said to the Children of Israel after him: Abide in the land.[1472] But when the latter promise came, We brought you all rolled up.[1473]

وَّقُلْنَا مِنْۭ بَعْدِهٖ لِبَنِيْٓ إِسْرَآءِيْلَ اسْكُنُوا
الْأَرْضَ فَإِذَا جَآءَ وَعْدُ الْاٰخِرَةِ جِئْنَا
بِكُمْ لَفِيْفًا ﴿١٠٤﴾

1470 These nine signs are detailed in 935, where it is shown that they agree with the signs mentioned in Exodus. These signs are the rod, the shining hand, the drought, the loss of fruits, widespread death, the locusts, the lice, the frogs and the blood.

1471 *Istafazza-hū* means *he unsettled him,* and also *he deceived him so as to cast him into destruction, and he slew him* (LL).

1472 By the *land* is meant the land promised to the Israelites; Moses had asked Pharaoh to allow his people to leave Egypt to settle in the Holy Land (20:47).

1473 The latter promise here relates to the promise given to Moses for the

105 And with truth have We revealed it, and with truth did it come. And We have not sent thee but as a giver of good news and as a warner.

وَبِالْحَقِّ اَنْزَلْنٰهُ وَبِالْحَقِّ نَزَلَ ؕ وَمَاۤ اَرْسَلْنٰكَ اِلَّا مُبَشِّرًا وَّنَذِيْرًا ﴿۱۰۵﴾

106 And it is a Qur'ān We have made distinct, so that thou mayest read it to the people by slow degrees, and We have revealed it in portions.

وَقُرْاٰنًا فَرَقْنٰهُ لِتَقْرَاَهٗ عَلَى النَّاسِ عَلٰى مُكْثٍ وَّنَزَّلْنٰهُ تَنْزِيْلًا ﴿۱۰۶﴾

107 Say: Believe in it or believe not. Surely those who are given the knowledge before it, fall down prostrate on their faces, when it is recited to them,

قُلْ اٰمِنُوْا بِهٖۤ اَوْ لَا تُؤْمِنُوْا ؕ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهٖۤ اِذَا يُتْلٰى عَلَيْهِمْ يَخِرُّوْنَ لِلْاَذْقَانِ سُجَّدًا ﴿۱۰۷﴾

108 And say: Glory to our Lord! Surely the promise[1475] of our Lord was to be fulfilled.

وَّيَقُوْلُوْنَ سُبْحٰنَ رَبِّنَاۤ اِنْ كَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّنَا لَمَفْعُوْلًا ﴿۱۰۸﴾

109 And they fall down on their faces, weeping, and it adds to their humility.[1475a]

Prostration

وَيَخِرُّوْنَ لِلْاَذْقَانِ يَبْكُوْنَ وَيَزِيْدُهُمْ خُشُوْعًا ۩ ﴿۱۰۹﴾ السجدة

110 Say: Call on Allāh or call on the Beneficent.[1476] By whatever (name) you call on Him, He has the best names. And utter not thy prayer loudly nor be silent in it, and seek a way between these.[1477]

قُلِ ادْعُوا اللّٰهَ اَوِ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمٰنَ ؕ اَيًّا مَّا تَدْعُوْا فَلَهُ الْاَسْمَآءُ الْحُسْنٰى ۚ وَلَا تَجْهَرْ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا تُخَافِتْ بِهَا وَابْتَغِ بَيْنَ ذٰلِكَ سَبِيْلًا ﴿۱۱۰﴾

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raising up of another prophet like him. This is corroborated by what is said in the next verse about the revelation of the Qur'ān, which came with truth, i.e., in fulfilment of a true promise. By the rolling up of the Israelites is meant that they would make way for another people, who would inherit the kingdom of God.

1475 The *promise* spoken of here is no doubt the promise given to the former prophets regarding the advent of the Holy Prophet; and by *knowledge* in the previous verse is also meant *knowledge of the prophecies.*

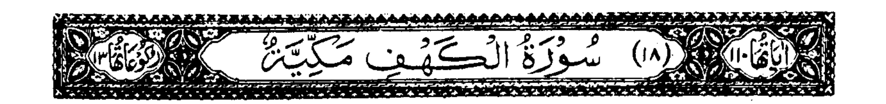
1475a The recital of this verse is followed by an actual prostration; see 978.

1476 The name *Raḥmān* (Beneficent), seems to have been particularly objectionable to the Arabs, who objected to its use even so late as the truce at Ḥudaibiyah. The Christians also do not recognize Allāh to be *Raḥmān,* because it means that Allāh shows mercy to His creatures without their having done anything to deserve it, while the Christian doctrine of atonement is based on the belief that Allāh cannot show mercy to His creatures without receiving some satisfaction.

1477 The two extremes with regard to prayer are its utterance in a very loud voice or not uttering any word at all with the tongue, thinking that Allāh knows what is in the hearts. The Muslims are told to take the middle course between these two extremes. Utterance of words makes the prayer go deeper down into the heart of man, and thus makes it more effective.

111 And say: Praise be to Allāh! Who has not taken to Himself a son, and Who has not a partner in the kingdom, and Who has not a helper because of weakness; and proclaim His greatness, magnifying (Him).

وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِىْ لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا
وَّلَمْ يَكُنْ لَّهٗ شَرِيْكٌ فِى الْمُلْكِ
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَّهٗ وَلِىٌّ مِّنَ الذُّلِّ
وَكَبِّرْهُ تَكْبِيْرًا ﴿١١١﴾



CHAPTER 18

Al-Kahf : THE CAVE

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 12 *sections*; 110 *verses*)

This chapter deals entirely with the Christian religion and the Christian nations, and that is the reason for giving it the name *The Cave*. The distinctive characteristic of Christianity is its institution of monkery, which required for its practice such corners of solitude as caves. The story of the *Dwellers of the Cave* is in fact the story of the Christian religion, whose first condition was one of dwelling in caves in perfect seclusion, but whose last condition is that of material engagements in trade and industry, hinted at in the word *raqīm* or *inscription*; see v. 9; 1481.

The last chapter is brought to a close by pointing out the error of attributing a son to the Divine Being, while that very doctrine is denounced at the commencement of this chapter, thereby clearly establishing the connection of the two. The chapter opens with a plain denunciation of the Christian doctrine of the sonship of Jesus, and then refers to the earthly "embellishments" which hinder the Christian nations from accepting the truth; yet, we are told, it was their ancestors who cut off all worldly connections for the sake of their religion. The second and the third sections deal with a certain story of Christian youths who sought refuge in a cave, but the story has evidently beneath it a deeper significance, and contains prophetical reference to the later history of Christianity itself. The fourth section shows that true guidance is now offered in the Holy Qur'ān. The fifth illustrates in a parable that the Christians will reject the truth at first because of their greater power and wealth. The next two sections deal with the bringing of the guilty to judgment and their ultimate helplessness, while the eighth indicates how warning is disregarded when first given. The ninth and tenth sections take us back to the story of Moses, whose travels in search of knowledge make him discover a man of God superior in knowledge to himself. If the story be taken as speaking of the *Mi'rāj*, or Ascension, of Moses, it may be interpreted as affording a contrast between the narrow limits of the Mosaic dispensation and the universal nature and the high ideals of the Islamic dispensation. The eleventh section speaks of Darius I, the two-horned one of Daniel's vision, and of his great efforts against two tribes known as Gog and Magog, the real object being a prophetical allusion to their latter-day representatives. The last section of the chapter again refers, not only to the basic doctrine of the Christian religion, but also to the great ingenuity in manufactures of the nations professing that religion, whose *labour is lost in this world's life*, and thus draws a very true picture of the present condition of the Christian nations.

The whole of this chapter was revealed at Makkah, and, as shown in the introductory note on ch. 17, is an early Makkan revelation.

SECTION 1 **A Warning to the Christians**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Praise be to Allāh ! Who revealed the Book to His servant, and allowed not therein any crookedness,[1478]

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِيْۤ اَنْزَلَ عَلٰى عَبْدِهِ الْكِتٰبَ وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ لَّهٗ عِوَجًا ۜ ①

2 Rightly directing,[1478a] to give warning of severe punishment from Him and to give good news to the believers who do good that theirs is a goodly reward,

قَيِّمًا لِّيُنْذِرَ بَاْسًا شَدِيْدًا مِّنْ لَّدُنْهُ وَيُبَشِّرَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ الَّذِيْنَ يَعْمَلُوْنَ الصّٰلِحٰتِ اَنَّ لَهُمْ اَجْرًا حَسَنًا ②

3 Staying in it for ever ;

مّٰكِثِيْنَ فِيْهِ اَبَدًا ③

4 And to warn those who say: Allāh has taken to Himself a son.

وَّيُنْذِرَ الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللّٰهُ وَلَدًا ④

5 They have no knowledge of it, nor had their fathers. Grievous is the word that comes out of their mouths. They speak nothing but a lie.

مَا لَهُمْ بِهٖ مِنْ عِلْمٍ وَّلَا لِاٰبَآئِهِمْ ؕ كَبُرَتْ كَلِمَةً تَخْرُجُ مِنْ اَفْوَاهِهِمْ ؕ اِنْ يَّقُوْلُوْنَ اِلَّا كَذِبًا ⑤

1478 In connection with this chapter, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: He who remembers the first ten verses of the chapter entitled the "Cave" is protected from the tribulation of Dajjāl (Antichrist) (Mus. 6:42). Shi'bah mentions the last ten verses of *The Cave* instead of the first ten (AD. 36:12).

Now in the first and the last sections of this chapter the Christian doctrine of the divinity of Jesus is condemned. In the first section a warning is given to those who say *Allāh has taken to Himself a son* (v. 4), in the last two to those *who take My servants for Protecting Friends* (v. 102), and this doctrine, the doctrine of sonship and of the Divinity of a servant of God, is the basic doctrine of the Christian religion. Moreover in the concluding ten verses, a true description of the occupation of Christian nations is given in the words *whose labour is lost in this world's life* (v. 104). The Holy Qur'ān does not speak of the appearance of Dajjāl, or Antichrist, anywhere, but the Prophet's saying quoted above plainly shows that the Dajjāl of the Ḥadīth is the same as the upholders of the erroneous Christian doctrine of the sonship and divinity of Jesus Christ. Christianity, in its present form, being opposed to the true teachings of Christ, is thus the only Antichrist known to the Qur'ān. It may be added that Dajjāl signifies *one who conceals the truth with falsehood,* or *a liar* or *a great deceiver* (LL).

1478a The Qur'ān is here described as possessing two qualifications. The first refers to its own perfection, *there is no crookedness in it ;* and the second speaks of it as a book suited to make others perfect, for it is called *qayyim,* as meaning one that rightly directs others. Or, it is called *qayyim,* meaning *maintainer,* as regulating the affairs of men or as maintaining the spiritual truth, which indeed would have been entirely lost to the world but for its being guarded by the Holy Qur'ān.

6 Then maybe thou wilt kill thyself with grief, sorrowing after them, if they believe not in this announcement.[1479]

فَلَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَّفْسَكَ عَلٰٓى اٰثَارِهِمْ اِنْ لَّمْ يُؤْمِنُوْا بِهٰذَا الْحَدِيْثِ اَسَفًا ﴿٦﴾

7 Surely We have made whatever is on the earth an embellishment for it, so that We may try which of them is best in works.

اِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْاَرْضِ زِيْنَةً لَّهَا لِنَبْلُوَهُمْ اَيُّهُمْ اَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ﴿٧﴾

8 And We shall surely make what is on it dust, without herbage.[1480]

وَاِنَّا لَجٰعِلُوْنَ مَا عَلَيْهَا صَعِيْدًا جُرُزًا ﴿٨﴾

9 Or, thinkest thou that the companions of the Cave and the Inscription were of Our wonderful signs?[1481]

اَمْ حَسِبْتَ اَنَّ اَصْحٰبَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيْمِ كَانُوْا مِنْ اٰيٰتِنَا عَجَبًا ﴿٩﴾

1479 This verse gives us an insight into the anxiety which the Holy Prophet had on account of a fallen humanity, an anxiety so great that he is spoken of here as *almost killing himself with grief*. His was a life of absolute devotion to the cause of humanity, his only concern being that man should rise to the true dignity for which God had made him. This anxiety was not only for those who were directly addressed by him, but, as the context shows, it was as deep for another people, who attributed a son to the Divine Being, and whom outward finery was to mislead to such an extent as to make them strangers to spiritual truth. Reading the next verse along with this, no doubt is left that the Prophet was shown the earthly embellishments which are so great a trial for Christendom to-day.

The word *ḥadīth* means *new* or *recent*, and hence is applied to a *narration* or *announcement* which is new or which gives some new information. It here refers to the Qur'ān.

1480 Vv. 7 and 8 direct man's attention to the fact that the finery of this life does not last for ever. A dweller in the desert of Arabia, with no sight before his eyes but that of the sands of the desert and bare, rugged hills, could not imagine the earth being embellished. The picture drawn here is evidently of the beautiful cities of the modern age, with all their attractions and luxuries, which so engross men that they neither pay attention to the preaching of truth nor to the pursuit of righteousness. Yet where there is growth there is decay, and those who indulge in luxuries do not escape ruin; it is their ruin that is indicated in the words *dust, without herbage*. We have already seen how clearly the Qur'ān states that a severe punishment would overtake the world and destroy populous towns: *There is not a town but We will destroy it before the day of Resurrection or chastise it with a severe chastisement* (17:58); see 1439. The earth will be first beautified to its utmost, we are told here, and then laid waste, by man's own hands, lofty buildings being reduced to dust and beautiful gardens being turned into bare earth without any herbage on it. All prophecies made known through the righteous servants of God, the prophets of the Old Testament and Jesus Christ, and then through the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth, point to world-wide conflicts in the latter days, of nation rising against nation, of great calamities, of destruction of cities on a vast scale. All these things this generation has seen with its own eyes. Science first embellished the earth and science is now turning it into a waste, by its atom bombs and other diabolic inventions. The powerful hand of God is thus seen clearly working in the history of the world.

1481 *Kahf* signifies a *cave* as well as *a place of refuge*, and *raqīm* means *an inscription* or *a tablet with a writing upon it*. Now *The Cave*, as I have already stated, stands for that peculiar aspect of the Christian religion which finds manifestation in its institution of monkery, this being the distinctive characteristic

10 When the youths sought refuge in the Cave, they said: Our Lord, grant us mercy from Thyself, and provide for us a right course in our affair.

إِذْ أَوَى الْفِتْيَةُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا ﴿١٠﴾

11 So We prevented them from hearing in the Cave for a number of years,[1482]

فَضَرَبْنَا عَلَى آذَانِهِمْ فِي الْكَهْفِ سِنِينَ عَدَدًا ﴿١١﴾

12 Then We raised them up that We might know which of the two parties was best able to calculate the time for which they remained[1482a]

ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِنَعْلَمَ أَيُّ الْحِزْبَيْنِ أَحْصَى لِمَا لَبِثُوا أَمَدًا ﴿١٢﴾

SECTION 2: **The Dwellers in the Cave**

13 We relate to thee their story with truth. Surely they were youths who believed in their Lord and We increased them in guidance.[1483]

نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ نَبَأَهُمْ بِالْحَقِّ إِنَّهُمْ فِتْيَةٌ آمَنُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ وَزِدْنَاهُمْ هُدًى ﴿١٣﴾

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which it assumed soon after its birth. But what about the Inscription? This word contains a prophetical reference to another aspect of the Christian religion, quite opposed to its first aspect of growth in the *Cave*. *Inscription* (or Advertisement) is, in fact, as prominent a feature of the business activities of the Christian nations of to-day as the *Cave* was a feature of their religious activities in the early days. The Holy Qur'ān seems to have chosen these epithets to designate the Christian nations by thus indicating their most prominent characteristics in their early and their latter days. The first and the last conditions of Christianity thus seem to be hinted at in the *Cave* and the *Inscription* respectively, *a religion of monkery turned into a religion of business.* As for the story of the dwellers in the *Cave*, see 1483.

1482 The words *ḍarabnā 'alā ādhān-i-him* are explained as *mana'nā hum al-sam'a*, i.e., *we prevented them from hearing*. This is Dk's explanation, and it is nearest the original sense of the words, for one significance of *ḍaraba* is *ṣadda*, i.e., *he prevented* (T, LL). *The preventing from hearing* is then understood to be equivalent to *causing to sleep*, but the original meaning is favoured by the context, the significance being that these people remained cut off from the rest of the world for a number of years. Thus the Holy Qur'ān neither supports the story of these men remaining in the cave for hundreds of years, nor of their being actually in a condition of continuous sleep all this while.

1482a *The raising them up* might signify *raising them up from sleep*, as also *raising them up into a condition of activity*, after their remaining cut off from the world, as stated in the previous verse. What it means with reference to the story itself, or with reference to the history of Christianity, is explained in the second and the third sections.

1483 The memorable story of the "seven sleepers", with whom *the companions of the Cave and the Inscription* are identified, is a story of the reign

14 And We strengthened their hearts when they stood up and said: Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth; we call upon no god beside Him, for then indeed we should utter an enormity.[1483a]

وَّرَبَطْنَا عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ اِذْ قَامُوْا فَقَالُوْا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ لَنْ نَّدْعُوَا مِنْ دُوْنِهٖۤ اِلٰهًا لَّقَدْ قُلْنَاۤ اِذًا شَطَطًا ⑭

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of the Emperor Decius. Seven noble youths of Ephesus, it is said, took refuge in a cave to escape Decius' persecution. But the Emperor, eventually learning this, ordered the entrance to the cave to be firmly secured with a pile of large stones. It is stated that the youths fell asleep as soon as they were shut up in the cave, and awoke 187 years after this in the reign of Theodosius, when the stones were removed by the slaves of one Adollius to supply building material for some edifice. They then sent one of their number, Jamblicus, to bring food for them from the city, but he was taken to the judge on presenting a coin of the reign of Decius, and thus the youths were discovered. It is related that the Emperor himself saw their radiant faces. This is the account given by Gibbon. But some state that these youths remained in that condition for 375 years.

That there may be a modicum of truth underlying this story is not only most probable, but almost certain, for the story could not otherwise have found such wide prevalence. The story as narrated in the Qur'ān does not credit the unnatural incidents of the above account. It only speaks of some men having taken refuge in a dark cave on account of a religious persecution; where and when it does not state. That is all that is stated in this section of the story, and apparently it seems to be continued in the third, while, according to another view, the third section may be a prophetic description of the later growth of Christianity itself. Taking, however, the first view, what is related in the third section is, that, after they had rested for a part of a day, they made arrangements to get their food from outside, and remained in this condition for "a number of years" (v. 11), but were subsequently discovered, and an edifice being built at the mouth of the cave caused their death. It mentions conjectures as to their number and the number of years they remained in the cave, but does not go beyond saying that there were *some* men who remained in the cave for *some* years.

There is another very plausible suggestion that the persons referred to here were Joseph of Arimathaea and some other early Christians, their place of refuge being Glastonbury in England, which on account of its northern position well answers the description of the Cave as given in the Qur'ān. According to William of Malmesbury, Joseph of Arimathaea "was sent to Britain by St. Philip, and having received a small island in Somersetshire, there constructed with twisted twigs the first Christian church in Britain, afterwards to become the abbey of Glastonbury. The legend says that his staff planted in the ground became a thorn, flowering twice a year" (En. Br. Art. "Joseph of Arimathaea"). In the tenth edition of En. Br. Joseph of Arimathaea is said to have "wandered into Britain in the year 63". "The Glastonbury thorn, which is said to be a distinct variety, was regularly visited by pilgrims until it was destroyed about the Reformation times." Again we find in the En. Br. under Glastonbury: "According to the legends which grew up under the care of the monks, the first church of Glastonbury was a little wattled building erected by Joseph of Arimathaea as the leader of the twelve apostles sent over to Britain from Gaul by St. Philip". The legends of the "Holy Grail" again connect the name of Joseph of Arimathaea with Britain. According to one of these the Grail, which was the dish of the last supper, was confined to the care of Joseph, while according to another, "the Grail is said to have followed Joseph to Britain" (En. Br., Art. "Grail"). All these may be legends, but they are certainly not without an undercurrent of truth. The connection of the name of Joseph of Arimathaea with Britain is the strong central fact

1483a, see next page.

15 These our people have taken gods beside Him. Why do they not bring clear authority for them? Who is then more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allāh?

هٰٓؤُلَآءِ قَوۡمُنَا اتَّخَذُوۡا مِنۡ دُوۡنِهٖۤ اٰلِهَةً ؕ لَوۡ لَا یَاۡتُوۡنَ عَلَیۡهِمۡ بِسُلۡطٰنٍۭ بَیِّنٍ ؕ فَمَنۡ اَظۡلَمُ مِمَّنِ افۡتَرٰی عَلَی اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا ﴿ؕ۱۵﴾

16 And when you withdraw from them and what they worship save Allāh, take refuge in the Cave; your Lord will spread forth for you of His mercy, and provide for you a profitable course in your affair.

وَ اِذِ اعۡتَزَلۡتُمُوۡهُمۡ وَ مَا یَعۡبُدُوۡنَ اِلَّا اللّٰهَ فَاۡوٗۤا اِلَی الۡكَهۡفِ یَنۡشُرۡ لَكُمۡ رَبُّكُمۡ مِّنۡ رَّحۡمَتِهٖ وَ یُهَیِّئۡ لَكُمۡ مِّنۡ اَمۡرِكُمۡ مِّرۡفَقًا ﴿۱۶﴾

17 And thou mightest see the sun, when it rose, decline from their Cave to the right, and when it set leave them behind on the left, while they were in a wide space thereof. This is of the signs of Allāh. He whom Allāh guides, he is on the right way; and whom He leaves in error, thou wilt not find for him a friend to guide aright.[1484]

وَ تَرَی الشَّمۡسَ اِذَا طَلَعَتۡ تَّزٰوَرُ عَنۡ كَهۡفِهِمۡ ذَاتَ الۡیَمِیۡنِ وَ اِذَا غَرَبَتۡ تَّقۡرِضُهُمۡ ذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ وَ هُمۡ فِیۡ فَجۡوَةٍ مِّنۡهُ ؕ ذٰلِكَ مِنۡ اٰیٰتِ اللّٰهِ ؕ مَنۡ یَّهۡدِ اللّٰهُ فَهُوَ الۡمُهۡتَدِ ۚ وَ مَنۡ یُّضۡلِلۡ فَلَنۡ تَجِدَ لَهٗ وَلِیًّا مُّرۡشِدًا ﴿۱۷﴾

underlying them all. What makes it still more significant is the fact that Joseph of Arimathaea, who appears very prominently in the closing scenes of the Gospels, so much so that one Gospel looks upon him as a disciple of Jesus, altogether disappears from the history of Christianity as imaged in the propagandic efforts of the apostles. Does this not show that he had changed the scene of his exertions? May then Joseph of Arimathaea and his companions be taken as being referred to in the story of the *Companions of the Cave and the Inscription?* If an answer could be found in the affirmative, then England could definitely be said to be the *Cave* referred to in the Holy Qur'ān, and the description of the *Cave* given in v. 17 well applies to it; see 1484. But even if our answer to that question is in the negative, the story itself is not without a deeper meaning, and more statements than one show that there is a reference to the history of Christianity itself in the story

1483a This is to show that the early followers of Christianity were Unitarians.

1484 The verse does not speak of any miraculous change in the sun's course; it does not speak of any change at all. It simply describes the position of the cave, which was so situated that it did not admit sunshine. This could easily happen in a cave with its mouth to the north, situated in the northern hemisphere and above the tropic of Cancer. In fact, the description applies to any country in the northern hemisphere north of the tropic of Cancer. The whole of Europe thus, in one sense, answers the description of the cave. It is a fact that Christianity spread first in Europe.

SECTION 3 : **The Dwellers in the Cave**

18 And thou mightest think them awake while they were asleep, and We turned them about to the right and to the left, with their dog outstretching its paws at the entrance. If thou didst look at them, thou wouldst turn back from them in flight, and thou wouldst be filled with awe because of them.[1485]

وَتَحْسَبُهُمْ أَيْقَاظًا وَهُمْ رُقُودٌ ۚ وَنُقَلِّبُهُمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ ۖ وَكَلْبُهُمْ بَاسِطٌ ذِرَاعَيْهِ بِالْوَصِيدِ ۚ لَوِ اطَّلَعْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَوَلَّيْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِرَارًا وَلَمُلِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ رُعْبًا ۝١٨

19 And thus did We rouse them that they might question each other. A speaker from among them said : How long have you tarried ? They said : We have tarried for a day or a part of a day. (Others) said : Your Lord knows best how long you have tarried.[1486] Now send one of you with this silver (coin) of yours to the city, then let him see what food is purest, and bring you provision from it, and let him behave with gentleness, and not make your case known to anyone.[1487]

وَكَذَٰلِكَ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِيَتَسَاءَلُوا بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِنْهُمْ كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ ۖ قَالُوا لَبِثْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ ۚ قَالُوا رَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثْتُمْ فَابْعَثُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرِقِكُمْ هَٰذِهِ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَيُّهَا أَزْكَىٰ طَعَامًا فَلْيَأْتِكُمْ بِرِزْقٍ مِنْهُ وَلْيَتَلَطَّفْ وَلَا يُشْعِرَنَّ بِكُمْ أَحَدًا ۝١٩

1485 What is related in this section is clearly applicable to the story of the seven sleepers, as also to the later history of Christianity. Taking the first view, the meaning is that the youths, who fled for fear of persecution and betook themselves to a cave, slept for some time with a dog at the door of the cave. The whole scene was rather awe-inspiring ; a dark cave, in some distant and uninhabited part of the country, with some men sleeping in it and a dog at the door, would have inspired awe into the heart of a casual looker-on. Applied to the history of Christianity the statement is equally true. In this case it should be borne in mind that *ruqūd* also means *inactive*, or *stagnant*. Thus *raqada* means *qa'ada, ta'akhkhara*, i.e., *he abstained* or *held back from the affair* (T, LL). *Raqadati-l-sūqu* is equivalent to *kasadat*, i.e., *the market became stagnant* or *dull with respect to traffic* (LL), and *ruqūd* is the infinitive noun of *raqada*. Similarly *aiqāẓ* is plural of *yaqiẓ*, which means a man *vigilant, wary, in a state of caution*, or *a man having his attention much roused* (LL). *Tayaqqaẓa-li l-amr* means *tanabbaha*, i.e., *he had his attention roused to the affair* (T). The *turning about to the right and to the left*, which signifies an uneasy condition while sleeping, may be used as expressing the activities of a man or a nation. Thus there may be a reference here to the lethargy in which the Christian nations remained for a long time, and to their subsequent going about in the world

1486, 1487, see next page.

20 For if they prevail against you, they would stone you to death or force you back to their religion, and then you would never succeed.

إِنَّهُمْ إِنْ يَظْهَرُوْا عَلَيْكُمْ يَرْجُمُوْكُمْ
أَوْ يُعِيْدُوْكُمْ فِيْ مِلَّتِهِمْ وَلَنْ
تُفْلِحُوْٓا إِذًا أَبَدًا ۝

21 And thus did We make (men) to get knowledge of them,[1488] that they might know that Allāh's promise is true and that the Hour — there is no doubt about it.[1489] When they disputed among themselves about their affair and said: Erect an edifice over them.[1490] Their Lord knows best about them. Those who prevailed in their affair said: We shall certainly build a place of worship over them.[1491]

وَكَذٰلِكَ أَعْثَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَعْلَمُوْٓا أَنَّ
وَعْدَ اللّٰهِ حَقٌّ وَّأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَا رَيْبَ
فِيْهَا ۚ إِذْ يَتَنَازَعُوْنَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَمْرَهُمْ
فَقَالُوا ابْنُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ بُنْيَانًا ۭ رَبُّهُمْ
أَعْلَمُ بِهِمْ ۭ قَالَ الَّذِيْنَ غَلَبُوْا عَلٰٓى
أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ مَّسْجِدًا ۝

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to the *right and to the left*, i.e., spreading in all directions. It may also be noted that Europeans are generally fond of dogs.

1486 The question and the answer may refer either to the time for which the youths slept or to the centuries of inactivity or tardiness of the Christian nations. A day of a thousand years is spoken of in the Holy Qur'ān on more occasions than one (see 22:47, etc.), and therefore the word *day*, applied to the history of a nation, may signify a thousand years.

1487 After having been refreshed with sleep, which might have been brought on by the fatigue of the journey, they thought of procuring food for themselves in that solitary cave and sent one of them to the city, and impressed on him that he should be gentle and should not give an inkling of their whereabouts to anyone. In reference to the history of Christianity, the passage may be said to speak of the commercial activities of the Christian nations.

1488 That is, they would have remained hidden had it not been for the necessities of life, which they had still to procure from the city. It was their going out to purchase food that brought them to the knowledge of the outside world. It is not stated how long they continued in this state: they may have passed some days or months or years, but their daily going out at last made their hiding-place known to others. Comparing this with v. 11, however, we may say that they passed several years in this condition.

1489 The result of their becoming known is described in words which show that they were put to death, because the promise of Allāh as to a future state of life is fully realized only after death.

1490 These words show how their death was brought about: it was by closing the mouth of the cave. This is what is meant by the erection of an edifice over them. The words may also signify the erection of a monument.

1491 The *masjid*, or the *mosque*, is the house of worship of the Muslims in particular, but it may mean any house of worship. The people spoken of here are those *who prevailed in their affair*. This is a later incident, when Christianity became the dominant religion of the Roman Empire, and the reference here seems to be to the saint-worship which prevailed in Christianity.

22 (Some) say: (They were) three, the fourth of them their dog; and (others) say: Five, the sixth of them their dog, making conjectures about the unseen. And (others) say: Seven, and the eighth of them their dog. Say: My Lord best knows their number — none knows them but a few. So contend not in their matter but with an outward contention, and question not any of them concerning them.[1492]

سَيَقُولُونَ ثَلٰثَةٌ رَّابِعُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ وَ
يَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةٌ سَادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًا
بِالْغَيْبِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَبْعَةٌ وَّ ثَامِنُهُمْ
كَلْبُهُمْ قُل رَّبِّيْ أَعْلَمُ بِعِدَّتِهِمْ مَّا
يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ فَلَا تُمَارِ فِيهِمْ
إِلَّا مِرَآءً ظَاهِرًا وَّلَا تَسْتَفْتِ فِيهِمْ
مِّنْهُمْ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٢﴾

SECTION 4: **The Qur'ān as a Guidance**

23 And say not of anything: I will do that to-morrow,[1493]

وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَايْءٍ إِنِّي فَاعِلٌ ذٰلِكَ غَدًا ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Unless Allāh please. And remember thy Lord when thou forgettest and say: Maybe my Lord will guide me to a nearer course to the right than this.[1494]

إِلَّآ أَنْ يَّشَآءَ اللّٰهُ وَاذْكُرْ رَّبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ
وَقُلْ عَسٰٓى أَنْ يَّهْدِيَنِ رَبِّيْ لِأَقْرَبَ
مِنْ هٰذَا رَشَدًا ﴿٢٤﴾

1492 This verse and v. 25, coming as they do after the story is finished, show that these are only conjectures of the people with regard to them. Their number and the number of years during which they remained in the cave are both matters which are said to be only known to Allāh. I'Ab is, however, of opinion that the words condemning the first two as conjectures show that the last-mentioned number, i.e., seven, is correct.

Who are the people referred to in the concluding words, *any of them?* According to IJ, the people of the Book, or the Christians, are referred to here, though they are not expressly mentioned in what has gone before. It is clear from this that it is really the history of Christianity that is dealt with in the story of the Companions of the Cave. V. 25, which again speaks of the same people who are spoken of here, makes it clear that it is the history of Christianity that is really aimed at.

1493 Though the words are general, there seems to be a special prophetic reference to the Prophet's Flight and his taking refuge in a cave. He had entirely to trust in Allāh, Who was to bring it about as He thought best for him.

1494 The meaning is that the difficulties which had to be experienced by the dwellers in the cave would be removed from the Prophet's way. He had to pass only three days in the cave, and though a powerful enemy exerted itself to its utmost, his hiding-place at only a distance of three miles from the city, whither food was conveyed to him, could not be discovered. Or, in *the nearer course* there is a reference to the unprecedented triumph of Islām, which spread over the whole of Arabia within twenty-three years, and spread from Spain in the west to China in the east within a century, whereas Christianity remained in

25 And they remained in their cave three hundred years, and they add nine.[1495]

وَلَبِثُوْا فِيْ كَهْفِهِمْ ثَلٰثَ مِائَةٍ سِنِيْنَ
وَازْدَادُوْا تِسْعًا ﴿۲۵﴾

26 Say: Allāh knows best how long they remained. His is the unseen of the heavens and the earth. How clear His sight and His hearing! There is no guardian for them beside Him, and He associates none in His judgment.[1496]

قُلِ اللّٰهُ اَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثُوْا ۚ لَهٗ غَيْبُ
السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ؕ اَبْصِرْ بِهٖ وَاَسْمِعْ ؕ
مَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِهٖ مِنْ وَّلِيٍّ ۫ وَّلَا يُشْرِكُ
فِيْ حُكْمِهٖۤ اَحَدًا ﴿۲۶﴾

27 And recite that which has been revealed to thee of the Book of thy Lord. There is none who can alter His words.[1497] And thou wilt find no refuge beside Him.

وَاتْلُ مَاۤ اُوْحِيَ اِلَيْكَ مِنْ كِتَابِ رَبِّكَ ۚ
لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمٰتِهٖ ۚ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ مِنْ
دُوْنِهٖ مُلْتَحَدًا ﴿۲۷﴾

28 And keep thyself with those who call on their Lord morning and evening desiring His goodwill, and let not thine eyes pass from them, desiring the beauties of this world's life. And follow not him whose heart We have made unmindful of Our remembrance, and he follows his low desires and his case exceeds due bounds.

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ
رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدٰوةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيْدُوْنَ
وَجْهَهٗ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنٰكَ عَنْهُمْ ۚ تُرِيْدُ
زِيْنَةَ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ
اَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهٗ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوٰىهُ
وَكَانَ اَمْرُهٗ فُرُطًا ﴿۲۸﴾

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a state of subjection in its birth-place for three hundred years, as stated in the verse that follows.

1495 Commentators consider this verse as being conjoined to v. 22 with the words *they say* as being understood. But as shown in 1492, the history of Christianity, which runs like an undercurrent in the story of the Companions of the Cave, finds a clear expression now. There is no tradition that the Companions of the Cave remained in the Cave for three hundred years, but Christianity itself remained in a Cave for full three hundred years. It is a fact that Christianity rose to power with the conversion of Constantine, and at the same time it lost its purity with the formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity, which was promulgated in 325 A.D. It is, moreover, now almost agreed that Jesus Christ was born five or six years before the reputed date of his birth. Bishop Barnes says in *The Rise of Christianity* that he may have been born in 6-5 B.C. So if he began his ministry at the age of thirty, the Christian religion may be said to have been born at about 25 A.D., and thus exactly after three hundred years it lost its purity by the promulgation of the Trinitarian doctrine, emerging at the same time as a State religion. Thus it remained in the Cave for three hundred years.

But what does this, the addition of nine years, mean? To reduce solar years to lunar years, three years have to be added to every hundred years, and

1496, 1497, see next page.

29 And say: The Truth is from your Lord; so let him who please believe, and let him who please disbelieve. Surely We have prepared for the iniquitous a Fire, an enclosure of which will encompass them. And if they cry for water, they are given water like molten brass, scalding their faces.[1498] Evil the drink! And ill the resting-place!

وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَّبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَآءَ
فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَّمَنْ شَآءَ فَلْيَكْفُرْ إِنَّآ
أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظّٰلِمِيْنَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهِمْ
سُرَادِقُهَا وَإِنْ يَّسْتَغِيْثُوْا يُغَاثُوْا بِمَآءٍ
كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوْهَ بِئْسَ الشَّرَابُ
وَسَآءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿٢٩﴾

30 As for those who believe and do good, We waste not the reward of him who does a good work.

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ
إِنَّا لَا نُضِيْعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلًا ﴿٣٠﴾

31 These it is for whom are Gardens of perpetuity wherein flow rivers; they are adorned therein with bracelets of gold, and they wear green robes of fine silk and thick brocade, reclining therein on raised couches.[1499] Excellent the recompense! And goodly the resting-place!

أُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ جَنّٰتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ
تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهٰرُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيْهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ
مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَّيَلْبَسُوْنَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا
مِّنْ سُنْدُسٍ وَّإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُّتَّكِـِٔيْنَ
فِيْهَا عَلَى الْأَرَآئِكِ نِعْمَ الثَّوَابُ
وَحَسُنَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿٣١﴾

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to the three centuries another nine years are thus added. It is due to this computation that nine years are spoken of as being *added*.

1496 *Abṣir bi-hī wa asmi'* means *mā abṣara wa asmá'a*, or *what a sight He has and what a hearing!* The reference here is to the prophecies of the ultimate triumph of the Prophet and Islām.

1497 By *kalimāt* are meant here *prophecies*, because it is the prophecy of the Prophet's Flight and his final triumph over his enemies that is referred to here. These prophecies, it is claimed, cannot be altered by men, and they must come to pass, however great the opposing forces.

1498 They refused the water of spiritual life in this life, and so they will have no water to quench their thirst in the life after death.

1499 It is after these things that men hanker in this life, but the ornaments and robes of this life are transitory. The righteous, who in this life desire and struggle for only spiritual ornaments and moral beauty, find these visible in the after-life. It should, however, be borne in mind that these prophecies were in one sense brought to fulfilment in this very life. The Arabs, whose only wealth consisted of their camels and horses, and whose clothes were made of skins or cloth of rough textures, found the treasures of Rome and Persia laid at their feet, and the bracelets of gold and the silk brocade interwoven with gold, which they had never seen before, were now brought to them in abundance, while the gardens of Mesopotamia and Persia were given to them for a permanent heritage.

SECTION 5 : A Parable

32 And set forth to them the parable of two men — for one of them We made two gardens of grape-vines, and We surrounded them with date-palms, and between them We made corn-fields.[1500]

وَاضْرِبْ لَهُمْ مَّثَلًا رَّجُلَيْنِ جَعَلْنَا لِأَحَدِهِمَا جَنَّتَيْنِ مِنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَّحَفَفْنٰهُمَا بِنَخْلٍ وَّجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمَا زَرْعًا ﴿٣٢﴾

33 Both these gardens yielded their fruits, and failed not in aught thereof, and We caused a river to gush forth in their midst,

كِلْتَا الْجَنَّتَيْنِ اٰتَتْ أُكُلَهَا وَلَمْ تَظْلِمْ مِّنْهُ شَيْـًٔا وَّفَجَّرْنَا خِلٰلَهُمَا نَهَرًا ﴿٣٣﴾

34 And he had fruit. So he said to his companion, while he argued with him : I have greater wealth than thou, and am mightier in followers.

وَّكَانَ لَهُ ثَمَرٌ فَقَالَ لِصَاحِبِهِ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ أَنَا أَكْثَرُ مِنْكَ مَالًا وَّأَعَزُّ نَفَرًا ﴿٣٤﴾

35 And he went into his garden, while he was unjust to himself. He said : I think not that this will ever perish,

وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُ وَهُوَ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِ قَالَ مَا أَظُنُّ أَنْ تَبِيْدَ هٰذِهِ أَبَدًا ﴿٣٥﴾

36 And I think not the Hour will come ; and even if I am returned to my Lord, I will certainly find a returning-place better than this.[1501]

وَّمَا أَظُنُّ السَّاعَةَ قَآئِمَةً وَّلَئِنْ رُّدِدْتُّ إِلٰى رَبِّيْ لَأَجِدَنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهَا مُنْقَلَبًا ﴿٣٦﴾

37 His companion said to him, while arguing with him : Disbelievest thou in Him Who created thee of dust, then of a small life-germ, then He made thee a perfect man ?

قَالَ لَهُ صَاحِبُهُ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ أَكَفَرْتَ بِالَّذِيْ خَلَقَكَ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ سَوّٰىكَ رَجُلًا ﴿٣٧﴾

38 But as for me, He, Allāh, is my Lord, and I associate none with my Lord.

لٰكِنَّا هُوَ اللّٰهُ رَبِّيْ وَلَآ أُشْرِكُ بِرَبِّيْ أَحَدًا ﴿٣٨﴾

39 And wherefore didst thou not say, when thou enteredst thy garden : It is as Allāh has pleased — there is no power save in Allāh ? If thou con-

وَلَوْلَآ إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَآءَ اللّٰهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ إِنْ تَرَنِ أَنَا أَقَلَّ

1500 The parable — it is clearly called a parable and is not at all a story — set forth here is undoubtedly a parable to illustrate the condition of the Christian and the Muslim nations. The former received an abundance of the wealth of this life, as is indicated by the gardens of the parable, while the latter, though poorer in worldly possessions, were richer in the heavenly blessings of Allāh. The former reject the message of Truth, of which the latter are the bearers, and their vaunt is the same as that of the wealthy man in the parable: *I have greater wealth than thou, and am mightier in followers.*

1501 By the "Hour" is meant the hour of doom which must overtake every people who reject the Truth.

sider me as less than thee in wealth and children —

مِنْكَ مَالًا وَّوَلَدًا ﴿٣٩﴾

40 Then maybe my Lord will give me better than thy garden, and will send on (thine) a reckoning from heaven so that it is dust without plant :

فَعَسٰى رَبِّيْٓ اَنْ يُّؤْتِيَنِ خَيْرًا مِّنْ جَنَّتِكَ وَيُرْسِلَ عَلَيْهَا حُسْبَانًا مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ فَتُصْبِحَ صَعِيْدًا زَلَقًا ﴿٤٠﴾

41 Or its water will sink down into the ground, so that thou art unable to find it.

اَوْ يُصْبِحَ مَآؤُهَا غَوْرًا فَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيْعَ لَهٗ طَلَبًا ﴿٤١﴾

42 And his fruit was destroyed ; so he began to wring his hands for what he had spent on it, while it lay waste, its roofs fallen down,[1502] and he said : Ah me ! would that I had ascribed no partners to my Lord !

وَاُحِيْطَ بِثَمَرِهٖ فَاَصْبَحَ يُقَلِّبُ كَفَّيْهِ عَلٰى مَآ اَنْفَقَ فِيْهَا وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلٰى عُرُوْشِهَا وَيَقُوْلُ يٰلَيْتَنِيْ لَمْ اُشْرِكْ بِرَبِّيْٓ اَحَدًا ﴿٤٢﴾

43 And he had no host to help him against Allāh, nor could he defend himself.

وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَّهٗ فِئَةٌ يَّنْصُرُوْنَهٗ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ وَمَا كَانَ مُنْتَصِرًا ﴿٤٣﴾

44 Thus protection is only Allāh's, the True One. He is Best to reward and Best in requiting.

هُنَالِكَ الْوَلَايَةُ لِلّٰهِ الْحَقِّ هُوَ خَيْرٌ ثَوَابًا وَّخَيْرٌ عُقْبًا ﴿٤٤﴾

SECTION 6 : **The Guilty are brought to Judgment**

45 And set forth to them the parable of the life of this world as water which We send down from the cloud, so the herbage of the earth becomes luxuriant thereby, then it becomes dry, broken into pieces which the winds scatter. And Allāh is the Holder of power over all things.

وَاضْرِبْ لَهُمْ مَّثَلَ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَآءٍ اَنْزَلْنٰهُ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ فَاخْتَلَطَ بِهٖ نَبَاتُ الْاَرْضِ فَاَصْبَحَ هَشِيْمًا تَذْرُوْهُ الرِّيٰحُ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّقْتَدِرًا ﴿٤٥﴾

46 Wealth and children are an adornment of the life of this world ; but the ever-abiding, the good works, are better with thy Lord in reward and better in hope.

اَلْمَالُ وَالْبَنُوْنَ زِيْنَةُ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْبٰقِيٰتُ الصّٰلِحٰتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَّخَيْرٌ اَمَلًا ﴿٤٦﴾

1502 Here we have an exact description of the havoc that is being wrought in the world before our eyes.

47 And the day when We cause the mountains to pass away, and thou seest the earth a levelled plain and We gather them together and leave none of them behind.[1503]

وَيَوْمَ نُسَيِّرُ الْجِبَالَ وَتَرَى الْأَرْضَ بَارِزَةً وَحَشَرْنَاهُمْ فَلَمْ نُغَادِرْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And they are brought before thy Lord in ranks. Now certainly you have come to Us as We created you at first. Nay, you thought that We had not made an appointment for you.

وَعُرِضُوا عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ صَفًّا لَقَدْ جِئْتُمُونَا كَمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ بَلْ زَعَمْتُمْ أَلَّنْ نَجْعَلَ لَكُمْ مَوْعِدًا ﴿٤٨﴾

49 And the book is placed, and thou seest the guilty fearing for what is in it, and they say : O woe to us ! what a book is this ! It leaves out neither a small thing nor a great one, but numbers them (all), and they find what they did confronting them. And thy Lord wrongs not any one.[1504]

وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يَا وَيْلَتَنَا مَالِ هَٰذَا الْكِتَابِ لَا يُغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَحْصَاهَا وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا وَلَا يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا ﴿٤٩﴾

SECTION 7 : **Their Helplessness**

50 And when We said to the angels : Make submission to Adam, they submitted except Iblīs. He was of the jinn, so he transgressed the commandment of his Lord.[1505] Will you then take him and his offspring for friends rather than Me, and they are your enemies ? Evil is the exchange for the unjust.

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ كَانَ مِنَ الْجِنِّ فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِ أَفَتَتَّخِذُونَهُ وَذُرِّيَّتَهُ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِي وَهُمْ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ بِئْسَ لِلظَّالِمِينَ بَدَلًا ﴿٥٠﴾

1503 Making the earth a levelled plain indicates the removal of all those mighty obstacles which stood in the way of the advancement of Truth, and these are the mountains which are made to pass away ; see 1604.

1504 This comprehensive book is the same as is spoken of in 17 : 13, 14 : " And We have made every man's actions to cling to his neck, and We shall bring forth to him on the day of Resurrection a book, which he will find wide open — Read thy book : thy own self suffices as a reckoner against thee this day ". There is not the slightest action, good or bad, which does not leave its effect behind.

1505 Iblīs is one of the jinn or the evil spirits, so it is an error to take him for an angel or a good spirit. The spirit of evil is always rebellious, and it is against this that man is warned, so that he should resist every evil tendency.

51 I made them not to witness the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor their own creation. Nor could I take those who mislead for aiders.

مَآ اَشْهَدْتُّهُمْ خَلْقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ
وَلَا خَلْقَ اَنْفُسِهِمْ ۖ وَمَا كُنْتُ مُتَّخِذَ
الْمُضِلِّيْنَ عَضُدًا ﴿٥١﴾

52 And one day He will say: Call on those whom you considered to be My partners. So they will call on them, but they will not answer them, and We shall cause a separation between them.[1506]

وَيَوْمَ يَقُوْلُ نَادُوْا شُرَكَآءِيَ الَّذِيْنَ
زَعَمْتُمْ فَدَعَوْهُمْ فَلَمْ يَسْتَجِيْبُوْا لَهُمْ
وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَّوْبِقًا ﴿٥٢﴾

53 And the guilty will see the Fire, and know that they are about to fall into it, and they will find no escape from it.

وَرَاَ الْمُجْرِمُوْنَ النَّارَ فَظَنُّوْٓا اَنَّهُمْ
مُّوَاقِعُوْهَا وَلَمْ يَجِدُوْا عَنْهَا مَصْرِفًا ﴿٥٣﴾

SECTION 8: **Warning is disregarded**

54 And certainly We have made distinct in this Qur'ān every kind of description; and man is in most things contentious.

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِيْ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنِ لِلنَّاسِ
مِنْ كُلِّ مَثَلٍ ۭ وَكَانَ الْاِنْسَانُ اَكْثَرَ
شَيْءٍ جَدَلًا ﴿٥٤﴾

55 And nothing prevents men from believing when the guidance comes to them, and from asking forgiveness of their Lord, but that (they wait) for the way of the ancients to overtake them, or that the chastisement should confront them.

وَمَا مَنَعَ النَّاسَ اَنْ يُّؤْمِنُوْٓا اِذْ جَآءَهُمُ
الْهُدٰى وَيَسْتَغْفِرُوْا رَبَّهُمْ اِلَّآ اَنْ
تَاْتِيَهُمْ سُنَّةُ الْاَوَّلِيْنَ اَوْ يَاْتِيَهُمُ
الْعَذَابُ قُبُلًا ﴿٥٥﴾

56 And We send not messengers but as givers of good news and warning, and those who disbelieve contend with falsehood to weaken thereby the Truth, and they take My messages and the warning for a mockery.

وَمَا نُرْسِلُ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ اِلَّا مُبَشِّرِيْنَ
وَمُنْذِرِيْنَ ۚ وَيُجَادِلُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا
بِالْبَاطِلِ لِيُدْحِضُوْا بِهِ الْحَقَّ وَاتَّخَذُوْٓا
اٰيٰتِيْ وَمَآ اُنْذِرُوْا هُزُوًا ﴿٥٦﴾

1506 *Bain* has three significances, viz., *disunion, union,* and *between* (LL), and *maubiq* means *perdition* or *separation,* or *fatal enmity* (T).

57 And who is more unjust than he who is reminded of the messages of his Lord, then he turns away from them and forgets what his hands have sent before? Surely We have placed veils over their hearts, lest they understand it, and a deafness in their ears.[1507] And if thou call them to the guidance, they will even then never follow the right course.

ومن اظلم ممن ذكر بايت ربه فاعرض عنها ونسي ما قدمت يداه انا جعلنا على قلوبهم اكنة ان يفقهوه وفي اذانهم وقرا وان تدعهم الى الهدى فلن يهتدوا اذا ابدا ۝٥٧

58 And thy Lord is Forgiving, Full of Mercy. Were He to punish them for what they earn, He would certainly hasten the chastisement for them. But for them there is an appointed time from which they will find no refuge.[1508]

وربك الغفور ذو الرحمة لو يؤاخذهم بما كسبوا لعجل لهم العذاب بل لهم موعد لن يجدوا من دونه موئلا ۝٥٨

59 And these towns — We destroyed them when they did wrong. And We have appointed a time for their destruction.[1509]

وتلك القرى اهلكنهم لما ظلموا وجعلنا لمهلكهم موعدا ۝٥٩

SECTION 9 : **Moses travels in Search of Knowledge**

60 And when Moses said to his servant:[1510] I will not cease until I reach the junction of the two rivers,[1511] otherwise I will go on for years.[1512]

واذ قال موسى لفتىه لا ابرح حتى ابلغ مجمع البحرين او امضي حقبا ۝٦٠

1507 It is when man becomes so iniquitous as to turn away from the truth and so callous as not to care for the evil that he does that a veil is placed over his heart.

1508 According to Kf, the appointed time referred to is the battle of Badr. But Truth is one and the same for all ages, and we see signs of the doom of the latter-day opposition to Islām clearly approaching.

1509 The personal pronoun *their* refers to the opponents of Truth, earlier as well as later.

1510 Some reports give his name as Joshua, the son of Nūn, the man who afterwards appears so prominently in the history of Israel.

The incidents narrated in the ninth and the tenth sections may be the actual experience of Moses or this journey may simply be an Ascension of Moses, like the Ascension of the Holy Prophet, referred to in the last chapter. What is stated in the next section makes the latter view more probable.

1511 The words *majma' al-Baḥrain* have been misunderstood generally. It should be borne in mind that Moses lived in Egypt for forty years, and the

1512, see next page.

61 So when they reached the junction of the two (rivers), they forgot their fish, and it took its way into the river, being free.[1513]

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَا مَجْمَعَ بَيْنِهِمَا نَسِيَا حُوتَهُمَا فَاتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُ فِي الْبَحْرِ سَرَبًا ﴿٦١﴾

62 But when they had gone further, he said to his servant: Bring to us our morning meal, certainly we have found fatigue in this our journey.

فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَا قَالَ لِفَتٰىهُ اٰتِنَا غَدَآءَنَا لَقَدْ لَقِيْنَا مِنْ سَفَرِنَا هٰذَا نَصَبًا ﴿٦٢﴾

63 He said: Sawest thou when we took refuge on the rock, I forgot the fish, and none but the devil made me forget to speak of it, and it took its way into the river; what a wonder![1514]

قَالَ اَرَءَيْتَ اِذْ اَوَيْنَآ اِلَى الصَّخْرَةِ فَاِنِّيْ نَسِيْتُ الْحُوْتَ وَمَآ اَنْسٰنِيْهُ اِلَّا الشَّيْطٰنُ اَنْ اَذْكُرَهٗ وَاتَّخَذَ سَبِيْلَهٗ فِي الْبَحْرِ عَجَبًا ﴿٦٣﴾

64 He said: This is what we sought for. So they returned retracing their footsteps.

قَالَ ذٰلِكَ مَا كُنَّا نَبْغِ فَارْتَدَّا عَلٰٓى اٰثَارِهِمَا قَصَصًا ﴿٦٤﴾

65 Then they found one of Our servants whom We had granted mercy

فَوَجَدَا عَبْدًا مِّنْ عِبَادِنَآ اٰتَيْنٰهُ رَحْمَةً

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junction of the two rivers is no other than the junction of the two great branches of the Nile at Khartoum. That the story of this journey of Moses is not found in the Bible or even in Rabbinical literature is no argument against it. Rabbinical literature relates things about Moses which give us strong reason to believe that such a journey was very probably undertaken by him. South of Egypt was the Kingdom of Ethiopia, whose southern boundary reached Khartoum, or the junction of the two Niles, and various accounts met with both in Rabbinical and Hellenistic literature (see *Jewish Encyclopaedia*) agree that Moses went to Ethiopia. According to one of these accounts, he became king of Ethiopia by reason of his great prowess in having defeated an enemy, and married the king's widow. This is corroborated to some extent by the statement in the Bible that "Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married" (Num. 12:1). Hence a journey to Khartoum, which was near the **southern** boundary of Ethiopia, made in search of knowledge, is most probable. The person to whom Moses went was Khaḍir (B. 3:44). Some commentators, however, do not take the words *majma' al-Baḥrain* literally, taking the meaning to be the union of the rivers of human and Divine knowledge. I would, however, suggest that if we accept this journey in the light of an Ascension, it would be an indication of the limitation of the Mosaic dispensation. Moses' going on for years until he reached the *Majma' al-Baḥrain* would mean that the Mosaic dispensation would see its termination after a time, the new dispensation taking its place being one which was to be guided by a prophet who is described here as being the *Majma' al-Baḥrain*, i.e., the union of the two seas of human and Divine knowledge, or one in whom the temporal and the spiritual would find their highest manifestation, such being the Holy Prophet Muḥammad.

1512 *Ḥuqub* signifies *a long time*, or *a year* or *seventy years* or *eighty years* (LL).

1513 The loss of the fish was, according to a report, to serve as a sign that the goal had been attained (B. 3:44). There is nothing either in the Holy Qur'ān or in the Ḥadīth to show, however, that this was a roasted fish.

1514 The taking refuge on the rock shows that they were staying at a place which was flooded by the river, and Moses' companion, when hastening for

from Us and whom We had taught knowledge from Ourselves.

مِّنْ عِنْدِنَا وَعَلَّمْنٰهُ مِنْ لَّدُنَّا عِلْمًا ﴿٦٥﴾

66 Moses said to him : May I follow thee that thou mayest teach me of the good thou hast been taught ?

قَالَ لَهٗ مُوْسٰى هَلْ اَتَّبِعُكَ عَلٰٓى اَنْ تُعَلِّمَنِ مِمَّا عُلِّمْتَ رُشْدًا ﴿٦٦﴾

67 He said : Thou canst not have patience with me.

قَالَ اِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيْعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴿٦٧﴾

68 And how canst thou have patience in that whereof thou hast not a comprehensive knowledge ?

وَكَيْفَ تَصْبِرُ عَلٰى مَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهٖ خُبْرًا ﴿٦٨﴾

69 He said : If Allāh please, thou wilt find me patient, nor shall I disobey thee in aught.

قَالَ سَتَجِدُنِيْٓ اِنْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ صَابِرًا وَّلَآ اَعْصِيْ لَكَ اَمْرًا ﴿٦٩﴾

70 He said : If thou wouldst follow me, question me not about aught until I myself speak to thee about it.

قَالَ فَاِنِ اتَّبَعْتَنِيْ فَلَا تَسْـَٔلْنِيْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ حَتّٰٓى اُحْدِثَ لَكَ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا ﴿٧٠﴾

SECTION 10 : Moses travels in Search of Knowledge

71 So they set out until, when they embarked in a boat, he made a hole in it. (Moses) said : Hast thou made a hole in it to drown its occupants ? Thou hast surely done a grievous thing.

فَانْطَلَقَا حَتّٰٓى اِذَا رَكِبَا فِي السَّفِيْنَةِ خَرَقَهَا ۗ قَالَ اَخَرَقْتَهَا لِتُغْرِقَ اَهْلَهَا ۚ لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْـًٔا اِمْرًا ﴿٧١﴾

72 He said : Did I not say that thou couldst not have patience with me ?

قَالَ اَلَمْ اَقُلْ اِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيْعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴿٧٢﴾

73 He said : Blame me not for what I forgot, and be not hard upon me for what I did.

قَالَ لَا تُؤَاخِذْنِيْ بِمَا نَسِيْتُ وَلَا تُرْهِقْنِيْ مِنْ اَمْرِيْ عُسْرًا ﴿٧٣﴾

74 So they went on, until, when they met a boy, he slew him. (Moses) said : Hast thou slain an innocent person, not guilty of slaying another ? Thou hast indeed done a horrible thing.

فَانْطَلَقَا حَتّٰٓى اِذَا لَقِيَا غُلٰمًا فَقَتَلَهٗ ۙ قَالَ اَقَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا زَكِيَّةًۢ بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ ۗ لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْـًٔا نُّكْرًا ﴿٧٤﴾

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refuge, forgot to take the fish along with him. The wonder is not expressed at the fish having gone down into the river, but because he had forgotten to mention the loss to Moses.

PART XVI

75 He said : Did I not say to thee that thou couldst not have patience with me?

قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكَ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴿٧٥﴾

76 He said : If I ask thee about anything after this, keep not company with me. Thou wilt then indeed have found an excuse in my case.

قَالَ إِنْ سَأَلْتُكَ عَنْ شَيْءٍ بَعْدَهَا فَلَا تُصَاحِبْنِي ۖ قَدْ بَلَغْتَ مِنْ لَدُنِّي عُذْرًا ﴿٧٦﴾

77 So they went on, until, when they came to the people of a town, they asked its people for food, but they refused to entertain them as guests. Then they found in it a wall which was on the point of falling, so he put it into a right state. (Moses) said : If thou hadst wished, thou couldst have taken a recompense for it.

فَانْطَلَقَا ۗ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَتَيَا أَهْلَ قَرْيَةٍ اسْتَطْعَمَا أَهْلَهَا فَأَبَوْا أَنْ يُضَيِّفُوهُمَا فَوَجَدَا فِيهَا جِدَارًا يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَنْقَضَّ فَأَقَامَهُ ۖ قَالَ لَوْ شِئْتَ لَاتَّخَذْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا ﴿٧٧﴾

78 He said : This is the parting between me and thee. Now I will inform thee of the significance[1515] of that with which thou couldst not have patience.

قَالَ هَٰذَا فِرَاقُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنِكَ ۚ سَأُنَبِّئُكَ بِتَأْوِيلِ مَا لَمْ تَسْتَطِعْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا ﴿٧٨﴾

79 As for the boat, it belonged to poor people working on the river, and I intended to damage it, for there was behind them a king who seized every boat by force.

أَمَّا السَّفِينَةُ فَكَانَتْ لِمَسَاكِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ فِي الْبَحْرِ فَأَرَدْتُ أَنْ أَعِيبَهَا وَكَانَ وَرَاءَهُمْ مَلِكٌ يَأْخُذُ كُلَّ سَفِينَةٍ غَصْبًا ﴿٧٩﴾

1515 The interpretation of the three incidents shows a manifestation of Divine wisdom in what takes place in the everyday life of man. Divine laws, as manifested in nature, are really working towards ultimate good, though sometimes they may appear to the outward eye to be working to the detriment of somebody. The beneficent hand of Allāh that works in nature is always directing humanity to the goal of great good, though that goal must necessarily be reached with apparent loss. Sometimes the loss is only apparent, as in the case of making a hole in the boat; there was no real loss, but the apparent loss served a great purpose and brought much benefit to the owner. The second instance is that in which there is real loss to a person, but it is for the good of humanity at large, for life must be sacrificed for the ultimate good of humanity. The third instance shows that, for the good of humanity, deeds must be done which bring no immediate reward, and that good done by one generation is not devoid of benefit to the next.

Moses himself had, in fact, to undergo the experience of his teacher, and the incidents seem no more than prophetic allegories of Moses' own life-work.

80 And as for the boy, his parents were believers and We feared lest he should involve them in wrongdoing and disbelief.[1516]

وَأَمَّا الْغُلَامُ فَكَانَ أَبَوَاهُ مُؤْمِنَيْنِ فَخَشِينَا أَنْ يُرْهِقَهُمَا طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا ﴿٨٠﴾

81 So We intended that their Lord might give them in his place one better in purity and nearer to mercy.

فَأَرَدْنَا أَنْ يُبْدِلَهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا خَيْرًا مِنْهُ زَكَاةً وَأَقْرَبَ رُحْمًا ﴿٨١﴾

82 And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the city, and there was beneath it a treasure belonging to them, and their father had been a righteous man. So thy Lord intended that they should attain their maturity and take out their treasure — a mercy from thy Lord — and I did not do it of my own accord. This is the significance of that with which thou couldst not have patience.

وَأَمَّا الْجِدَارُ فَكَانَ لِغُلَامَيْنِ يَتِيمَيْنِ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ وَكَانَ تَحْتَهُ كَنْزٌ لَهُمَا وَكَانَ أَبُوهُمَا صَالِحًا فَأَرَادَ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يَبْلُغَا أَشُدَّهُمَا وَيَسْتَخْرِجَا كَنْزَهُمَا رَحْمَةً مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَمَا فَعَلْتُهُ عَنْ أَمْرِي ذَٰلِكَ تَأْوِيلُ مَا لَمْ تَسْطِعْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا ﴿٨٢﴾

SECTION 11 : Dhu-l-qarnain and Gog and Magog

83 And they ask thee about Dhu-l-qarnain.[1517] Say : I will recite to you an account of him.

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنْ ذِي الْقَرْنَيْنِ قُلْ سَأَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا ﴿٨٣﴾

84 Truly We established him in the land and granted him means of access to everything ;

إِنَّا مَكَّنَّا لَهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَآتَيْنَاهُ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ سَبَبًا ﴿٨٤﴾

Just as the scuttling of a boat causes apprehension to the safety of its occupants, Moses had to lead his people to a place where they thought they had only been brought to be drowned ; but their safe passage through the sea showed that it was for their good. Then he had to order his men to fight against an iniquitous people and to put them to death, but he was not shedding human blood to no purpose, for it was really a step towards the evolution of a better race. And finally, his devoting his own life to the Israelites, descendants of a righteous man, corresponded to his teacher's building the wall for the orphans without claiming recompense. Read in this light, the narration is clearly an Ascension of Moses, foreshadowing the great events which were to befall him.

1516 That the youth himself deserved death is abundantly clear. His inordinacy had now reached an extreme — the circumstances seem to have been known to Khaḍir, though not to Moses — when it was feared that his innocent parents would be involved in the trouble which must befall him as a result of his wrongdoing. Note that the word used to indicate the youth's wrongdoing is *tughyān*, which means *exceeding all limits in wrongdoing.*

1517 The word *qarn* means a *horn,* as also a *generation* or a *century,* and *Dhu-l-qarnain* therefore literally means *the two-horned one,* or *one belonging to two generations* or *two centuries.* The reference here seems to be to the two-horned ram of Daniel's vision (Dan. 8 : 3), which he interpreted as the Kingdoms

85 So he followed a course.

فَاَتْبَعَ سَبَبًا ﴿۸۵﴾

86 Until, when he reached the setting-place of the sun,[1518] he found it going down into a black sea,[1519] and found by it a people. We said: O Dhu-l-qarnain, either punish them or do them a benefit.

حَتّٰۤى اِذَا بَلَغَ مَغْرِبَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَغْرُبُ فِيْ عَيْنٍ حَمِئَةٍ وَّوَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا قَوْمًا ۬ؕ قُلْنَا يٰذَا الْقَرْنَيْنِ اِمَّاۤ اَنْ تُعَذِّبَ وَ اِمَّاۤ اَنْ تَتَّخِذَ فِيْهِمْ حُسْنًا ﴿۸۶﴾

87 He said: As for him who is unjust, we shall chastise him, then he will be returned to his Lord, and He will chastise him with an exemplary chastisement.

قَالَ اَمَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ فَسَوْفَ نُعَذِّبُهٗ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّ اِلٰى رَبِّهٖ فَيُعَذِّبُهٗ عَذَابًا نُّكْرًا ﴿۸۷﴾

88 And as for him who believes and does good, for him is a good reward, and We shall speak to him an easy word of Our command.[1520]

وَ اَمَّا مَنْ اٰمَنَ وَ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهٗ جَزَآءَ ۨالْحُسْنٰى ۚ وَ سَنَقُوْلُ لَهٗ مِنْ اَمْرِنَا يُسْرًا ﴿۸۸﴾

89 Then he followed a course.

ثُمَّ اَتْبَعَ سَبَبًا ﴿۸۹﴾

90 Until, when he reached the (land of) the rising sun, he found it rising on a people to whom We had given no shelter from it —[1521]

حَتّٰۤى اِذَا بَلَغَ مَطْلِعَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَطْلُعُ عَلٰى قَوْمٍ لَّمْ نَجْعَلْ لَّهُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِهَا سِتْرًا ﴿۹۰﴾

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of Media and Persia, which were combined into a single kingdom under one ruler, Cyrus, who is erroneously called Darius in the Bible (En. Bib. and Jewish En., Art. "Darius"). The reference in Daniel's vision is, however, not to Cyrus but to Darius I Hystaspes (521-485 B.C.), "who allowed the Jews to rebuild their temple, and is referred to in Ezra 4:5, 24; 5:5; 6:1; Hag. 1:1; 2:10; Zech. 1:7, and probably in Neh. 12:22. His liberality towards the Jews is in complete accord with what we know otherwise of his general policy in religious matters towards the subject nations" (En. Bib. "Darius").

That "the two-horned ram" of Daniel's vision is the king of Media and Persia is made plain in Daniel's book, where the interpretation of the dream is given in the following words: "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the Kings of Media and Persia" (Dan. 8:20). The reference in the Qur'ān in the history of Dhu-l-qarnain is to Darius I: "Darius was the organizer of the Persian Empire. His conquests served to round off the boundaries of his realm in Armenia, the Caucasus, and India, and along the Turanian steppes and the highlands of Central Asia" (Jewish En., "Darius I"). The following remarks in the En. Br. strengthen this view: "Darius in his inscriptions appears as a fervent believer in the true religion of Zoroaster. But he was also a great statesman and organizer. The time of conquests had come to an end; the wars which Darius undertook, like those of Augustus, only served the purpose of gaining strong natural frontiers for the empire and keeping down the barbarous tribes on its borders. Thus Darius subjugated the wild nations of the Pontic and Armenian mountains, and extended the Persian dominion to the Caucasus; for the same reason he fought against the Sacae and other Turanian tribes". The references in this quotation to Darius being a fervent believer in the true religion of Zoroaster, to his subduing the barbarous tribes on the borders, to his gaining strong natural frontiers for the empire, and to his fighting against the Sacae clearly point him out as the Dhu-l-qarnain of the Qur'ān.

1518-21, see next page.

91 So it was. And We had full knowledge of what he had.

كَذٰلِكَ ۗ وَقَدْ اَحَطْنَا بِمَا لَدَيْهِ خُبْرًا ﴿۹۱﴾

92 Then he followed a course.

ثُمَّ اَتْبَعَ سَبَبًا ﴿۹۲﴾

93 Until, when he reached (a place) between the two mountains, he found on that side of them a people who could hardly understand a word.[1522]

حَتّٰۤى اِذَا بَلَغَ بَيْنَ السَّدَّيْنِ وَجَدَ مِنْ دُوْنِهِمَا قَوْمًا ۙ لَّا يَكَادُوْنَ يَفْقَهُوْنَ قَوْلًا ﴿۹۳﴾

94 They said: O Dhu-l-qarnain, Gog and Magog do mischief in the land. May we then pay thee tribute on condition that thou raise a barrier between us and them?[1523]

قَالُوْا يٰذَا الْقَرْنَيْنِ اِنَّ يَاْجُوْجَ وَمَاْجُوْجَ مُفْسِدُوْنَ فِى الْاَرْضِ فَهَلْ نَجْعَلُ لَكَ خَرْجًا عَلٰۤى اَنْ تَجْعَلَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمْ سَدًّا ﴿۹۴﴾

1518 *Maghrib al-shams*, or *the setting-place of the sun*, signifies the westernmost point of his empire, because going towards the west he could not go beyond it.

1519 The words in Arabic are *'ain-in hami'at-in*, which literally mean a *black sea*, *'ain* meaning an *abundance of water*, or a place in which water remains and collects, and *hamiat* means *black mud* (T, LL). The place referred to is no other than the Black Sea, as, Armenia being within the Kingdom of Persia, the Black Sea formed the north-western boundary of the empire.

1520 Being a true follower of Zoroaster, the well-known Persian prophet, Darius seems to have invited these tribes to his religion.

1521 The three journeys alluded to seem to have been undertaken with the object of strengthening the frontiers of the empire, the most important of these being that spoken of in v. 93, the part of the frontier between the Caspian and the Black Seas, where the Caucasus afforded a natural protection against the attacks of the Scythians. Darius goes first westward to the Black Sea (v. 85, 86). Then he undertakes an eastward journey — the land of the rising sun. The description of the people found here, a people who had no shelter from the sun, is a description of the barbarous aboriginal tribes on the shores of the Caspian. The En. Br. says in the article on Media: "The names in the Assyrian inscriptions prove that the tribes in the Zagros and the northern parts of Media were not Iranians nor Indo-Europeans, but an aboriginal population, like the early inhabitants of Armenia, perhaps connected with the numerous tribes of the Caucasus. We can see how the Iranian element gradually became dominant: princes with Iranian names occasionally occur as the rulers of these tribes. But the Galae, Tapuri, Cadusii, Amardi, Utii, and other tribes in Northern Media and on the shores of the Caspian, were not Iranians".

1522 The two mountains are the mountains of Armenia and Azarbaijan. The people settling there spoke a different language and could not understand the Iranian language.

1523 This verse brings us face to face with an all-important subject, viz., the identity of Gog and Magog. The Bible references to Gog and Magog are somewhat loose. In Gen. 10:2 and 1 Chron. 1:5, "Magog is mentioned as the second son of Japheth, between Gomer and Madai, Gomer representing the Cimmerians and Madai the Medes. Magog must be a people located east of the Cimmerians and west of the Medes. But in the list of nations, Gen. 10, the term connotes rather the complex of barbarian peoples dwelling at the extreme north and north-east of the geographical survey covered by that chapter. . . . In Ezek. 38:2 Magog occurs as the name of a country; in Ezek. 39:6 as that of a northern people, the leader of whom is Gog" (Jewish En., Art. "Gog and

95 He said: That wherein my Lord has established me is better, so if only you help me with strength (of men), I will make a fortified barrier between you and them:

قَالَ مَا مَكَّنِّيْ فِيهِ رَبِّيْ خَيْرٌ فَأَعِينُونِيْ بِقُوَّةٍ أَجْعَلْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ رَدْمًا ﴿٩٥﴾

Magog"). "Josephus identifies them with the Scythians, a name which among the classical writers stands for a number of unknown ferocious tribes. According to Jerome, Magog was situated beyond the Caucasus near the Caspian Sea" (Jewish En.). The En. Br. considers the traditional identification of Gog and Magog with the Scythians to be "plausible", and then adds: "This plausible opinion has been generally followed", with this reservation, that the word may be applied to "any or all of the numerous but partially known tribes of the north; and any attempt to assign a more definite locality to Magog can only be very hesitatingly made".

All these writers have, however, not paid sufficient attention to the words of Ezek. 38:2: "Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal". Tubal and Meshech are almost always mentioned together, and their identification has been a task of great difficulty, so much so that a renowned Biblical critic suggests the names of certain nations in South Palestine. But this contradicts the views of ancient writers like Josephus, who settle the Magog north of the Caucasus. If we go, however, to the north of the Caucasus, we find still two rivers bearing the names of Tobal and Moskoa, on the latter of which is situated the ancient city of Moscow, and on the former the more recent town of Tobolsk. It seems almost certain that these two rivers received their names from the two tribes of Ezek. 38:2, the Tubal and Meshech, and then gave their names to the two above-mentioned cities, thus keeping the names of these tribes. This view is in accordance with the opinion of Josephus, who identifies Magog with the Scythians, for "throughout classical literature Scythia generally meant all regions to the north and north-east of the Black Sea, and a Scythian any barbarian coming from these parts".

It is clear from the above that the name Magog stands for tribes which occupied territories to the north and north-east of the Black Sea, tribes which gave their names directly or indirectly to the towns of Tobolsk and Moscow.

There is, however, another point worth considering, and that is the gigantic effigies of Gog and Magog in Guildhall, London. "It is known," says the En. Br., "that effigies similar to the present existed in London as early as the time of Henry V". An explanation of this remarkable circumstance is given by Geoffrey of Monmouth: "Gaemot or Gaemagot (probably a corrupted form of Gog and Magog) was a giant who, along with his brother Gorineous, tyrannized in the western horn of England until slain by foreign invaders" (En. Br., Art. "Gog and Magog"). It is very difficult to speak with anything bordering on accuracy about the early connections of different races, but the preservation of the effigies of Gog and Magog in England, which can be traced to a very early period in English history, makes it probable that the Angles or the Saxons had in very ancient times some connection with the Scythians or other tribes living north of the Caucasus or the Black Sea. The relations of the different nations in early history are very complicated, and it is out of place to enter into any such discussion here. But it may be noted that the Goths, who are considered to be the easternmost of the Teutonic races, are said to have migrated into Scythia (En. Br., "Goths"), which shows the existence of connection between the two races. And again, "the Batharnae also, who in the third century B.C. invaded and settled in the regions between the Carpathians and the Black Sea, are said by several ancient writers to have been Teutonic by origin, though they had largely intermarried with the native inhabitants" (En. Br., "Teutonic Peoples").

It is thus clear that the ancestors of the present Teutonic and Slav races are the Gog and Magog spoken of in the Holy Qur'ān. The effigies of Gog and Magog in London and the names of Tobal and Moskoa, occurring in the Bible, are clear indications of this fact.

96 Bring me blocks of iron.[1524] At length, when he had filled up the space between the two mountain sides, he said, Blow. Till, when he had made it (as) fire, he said: Bring me molten brass to pour over it.

آتُونِي زُبَرَ الْحَدِيدِ ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا سَاوَىٰ بَيْنَ الصَّدَفَيْنِ قَالَ انفُخُوا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَعَلَهُ نَارًا قَالَ آتُونِي أُفْرِغْ عَلَيْهِ قِطْرًا ﴿٩٦﴾

97 So they were not able to scale it, nor could they make a hole in it.

فَمَا اسْطَاعُوا أَن يَظْهَرُوهُ وَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا لَهُ نَقْبًا ﴿٩٧﴾

98 He said: This is a mercy from my Lord, but when the promise of my Lord comes to pass He will crumble it, and the promise of my Lord is ever true.[1524a]

قَالَ هَٰذَا رَحْمَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّي ۖ فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي جَعَلَهُ دَكَّاءَ ۖ وَكَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي حَقًّا ﴿٩٨﴾

99 And on that day We shall let some of them surge against others and the trumpet will be blown, then We shall gather them all together,[1525]

وَتَرَكْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَمُوجُ فِي بَعْضٍ ۖ وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَجَمَعْنَاهُمْ جَمْعًا ﴿٩٩﴾

Next we come to the statement that the tribes found by Darius between Azerbaijan and the Armenian mountains were constantly harassed by their northern neighbours, the Scythians. History bears evidence to the truth of this statement. The Scythians, or, according to some writers, the Sacae, constantly troubled Asia. According to Herodotus the Scyths ruled Media for twenty-eight years (En. Br., Art. "Scythia"). "About 512 Darius undertook a war against the Scythians. . . . The purpose of this war can only have been to attack the nomadic Turanian tribes in the rear, and *thus to secure peace on the northern frontier of the empire*" (En. Br., Art. "Darius"). The portion which I give in italics shows that Darius exerted himself to his utmost in securing peace on the northern frontier of his empire, where the Caucasus, bounded on both sides by the Black and Caspian Seas, afforded a natural protection.

The barrier referred to in this verse, and described in the verses that follow, is the famous wall at Derbent (Ar. *Darband*). An account of this wall is given by Muslim geographers and historians, for instance, in *Marasid al-Ittilā'* and *Ibn al-Faqīh*. The following account, however, taken from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* should be more convincing: "Derbent or *Darband,* a town of Caucasia, in the province of Daghestan, on the western shore of the Caspian. . . . It occupies a narrow strip of land beside the sea, from which it climbs up the steep heights inland. . . . And to the south lies the seaward extremity of the Caucasian wall (50 miles long), otherwise known as Alexander's Wall, blocking up the narrow pass of the Iron Gate or Caspian Gate (*Portae Albanae,* or *Portae Caspae*). This, when entire, had a height of 29 feet and a thickness of about 10 feet, and with *its iron gates* and numerous watch-towers formed a *valuable defence of the Persian frontier.*" (Italics in the last sentence are mine, for which see the next footnote.) The misnomer *Alexander's Wall* seems to have been due to the mistake made by Muslim historians in supposing Dhu-l-qarnain to be Alexander.

1524 The blocks of iron were needed for the iron gates in the wall, for which see the concluding lines of the last note.

1524a From the historical narration of the past, the subject is now changed to the future. Gog and Magog are described as two nations, and after describing the history of these nations, whose depredations on peaceful nations were brought

1525, see next page.

100 And We shall bring forth hell, exposed to view, on that day before the disbelievers,[1525a]

وَّ عَرَضۡنَا جَهَنَّمَ يَوۡمَئِذٍ لِّلۡكٰفِرِيۡنَ عَرۡضَا ۙ﴿۱۰۰﴾

101 Whose eyes were under a cover from My Reminder, and they could not bear to hear.[1525b]

الَّذِيۡنَ كَانَتۡ اَعۡيُنُهُمۡ فِىۡ غِطَآءٍ عَنۡ ذِكۡرِىۡ وَ كَانُوۡا لَا يَسۡتَطِيۡعُوۡنَ سَمۡعًا ﴿۱۰۱﴾

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to an end by Darius, we are now told that Gog and Magog will again be let loose in the latter days. In fact, this is clearly foretold in another chapter of the same period: "At length, when Gog and Magog are let loose, and they will sally forth from every point of eminence" (21:96). This is the only other occasion on which Gog and Magog are spoken of in the Holy Qur'ān. The crumbling of the wall which withheld Gog and Magog for a time is thus explained by the Qur'ān itself, as the letting loose of Gog and Magog. Just as the building of the wall indicated the confinement of Gog and Magog to their own territorial bounds, the crumbling of the wall means that they will at some future time be let loose and they will then dominate the whole world. This domination is spoken of in the Ḥadīth in various ways. According to one ḥadīth, "No one will have the power to fight against them" (Ms. 52:20). According to another, "they will drink the water of the whole world" (KU, vol. 7, p. 2157). According to a third, God said: "I have created some of My servants whom no one can destroy but Myself" (KU, p. 3021). As shown in 1523, the ancestors of Gog and Magog are the Slav and Teutonic races, and in the world-domination of Gog and Magog is thus clearly hinted the domination of the European nations over the whole world, and the prophecy has thus found fulfilment in our days.

1525 A mighty conflict of the nations is clearly spoken of here, and the words no doubt refer to some catastrophe like that which is predicted in the Gospels in the words: "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows" (Matt. 24:7, 8).

The Qur'ān makes it clear that the reference in nation rising against nation is to the great European conflicts which we are witnessing nowadays. Gog and Magog, or the European nations, having subdued the whole world, could not agree on the division of the spoils, and they are rushing at one another's throats, and the whole world being subject to them, their struggle has assumed the form of a world conflict. One World-War ends only to be followed by another. But if the first part of the verse speaks of the destruction due to these wars, the second part raises a great hope. Will this great world-conflict bring the world to an end? Human efforts to restore the balance to the world are a failure. But the Qur'ān tells us that a mighty Revolution will come about. That is what is meant by the *blowing of the trumpet*. This revolution will be a change in the mentality of the nations. A silver lining is introduced in this dark picture by the words, *then We shall gather them all together*. The revolution would unite them; it would drive them to one common faith. Material benefits having turned man into the enemy of man, a spiritual awakening will, we are told, be brought about which will change the world entirely. Instead of cutting one another's throats men will learn to love one another, and they will all be but one nation. There is a broad enough hint here at the nation of Islām, for there is but one faith, the faith of Islām, which has been able to weld diverse people into one whole. The day of peace for this world will dawn with the dawning of the idea on the mind of man that there is only a single nation, the human nation, that lives on this earth: "All people are a single nation" (2:213). And actually Islām is the only religion in the world which has been successful in uniting different nations into one whole and in obliterating distinctions of race and colour.

1525a These words complete the picture of the great conflict spoken of in the previous verse. It in fact describes the severity of the conflict, it will reduce the world to a veritable hell. We have seen hell raging on this earth in World-War II. What World-War III may bring, no one can say.

1525b The reason is given in these words why these disasters will be brought

SECTION 12 : **Christian Nations**

102 Do those who disbelieve think that they can take My servants to be friends besides Me?[1526] Surely We have prepared hell as an entertainment for the disbelievers.

أَفَحَسِبَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا عِبَادِي مِنْ دُونِي أَوْلِيَاءَ ۚ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا جَهَنَّمَ لِلْكٰفِرِينَ نُزُلًا ﴿١٠٢﴾

103 Say : Shall We inform you who are the greatest losers in respect of deeds?

قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَالًا ﴿١٠٣﴾

104 Those whose effort goes astray in this world's life, and they think that they are making good manufactures.[1527]

اَلَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا ﴿١٠٤﴾

105 Those are they who disbelieve in the messages of their Lord and meeting with Him, so their works are vain. Nor shall We set up a balance for them on the day of Resurrection.[1528]

أُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِاٰيٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَلِقَآئِهٖ فَحَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَلَا نُقِيمُ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ وَزْنًا ﴿١٠٥﴾

106 That is their reward — hell, because they disbelieved and held My messages and My messengers in mockery.

ذٰلِكَ جَزَآؤُهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ بِمَا كَفَرُوا وَاتَّخَذُوٓا اٰيٰتِي وَرُسُلِي هُزُوًا ﴿١٠٦﴾

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on man: ***These are people whose eyes are under a cover from My Reminder.*** Nay, they are so estranged from God that they cannot even *bear to hear* His Reminder. So thoroughly have lust and greed engrossed the civilized world!

1526 The Christians are meant here, because theirs is the most prominent example of having taken a servant of Allāh, a prophet, for God. In fact, Jesus Christ is the only person whom the Qur'ān recognizes as a righteous servant of God and who has been taken for God by nearly half the world.

1527 This is a clear description of the present attitude of the civilized nations to their moral and spiritual needs — their effort is entirely wasted in this world's life, and they cannot give a moment's consideration to the life after death. The portrait of the material civilization, to which Christianity has led, as drawn in this section, attains to its most vivid clearness in these words. Manufacture is the one speciality and pride of the West. But they are so engrossed in the contest of manufactures that they have no thought of God left in their minds. Production and more production, that is the be-all and end-all of life with them.

1528 Their works are vain because what they do relates to the vanities of life. They have no vision for the higher values of life, for the ultimate end, which is here spoken of as the *meeting with the Lord.* Hence we are told that no balance will be set up for them on the day of Resurrection, because all their deeds relate to this life, and end where this life ends.

107 As for those who believe and do good deeds, for them are Gardens of Paradise, an entertainment,

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَنّٰتُ الْفِرْدَوْسِ نُزُلًا ﴿١٠٧﴾

108 To abide therein; they will not desire removal therefrom.

خٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يَبْغُونَ عَنْهَا حِوَلًا ﴿١٠٨﴾

109 Say: If the sea were ink for the words of my Lord, the sea would surely be exhausted before the words of my Lord were exhausted, though We brought the like of it to add (thereto).[1529]

قُلْ لَّوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مِدَادًا لِّكَلِمٰتِ رَبِّي لَنَفِدَ الْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنْفَدَ كَلِمٰتُ رَبِّي وَلَوْ جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِ مَدَدًا ﴿١٠٩﴾

110 Say: I am only a mortal like you — it is revealed to me that your God is one God. So whoever hopes to meet his Lord, he should do good deeds, and join no one in the service of his Lord.

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحٰى إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلٰهُكُمْ إِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَّلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا ﴿١١٠﴾

1529 In these words there is a refutation of the Christian doctrine that "the word was with God", or that "the word was God" (John 1:1). The words of God are so numerous, we are here told, that the sea would be exhausted, if it were to serve as ink for writing them. In fact, everything created is a word of God according to the Holy Qur'ān, and things created know no end.



CHAPTER 19

Maryam : **MARY**

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 6 *sections*; 98 *verses*)

The controversy with Christianity is continued in this chapter, and the title is taken from the name of Jesus' mother, *Mary*. The circumstances connected with her having given birth to Jesus are narrated here. But while the last chapter deals at greater length with the history of Christianity than with its doctrines, this aims at proving the falsity of the Christian religious dogmas, which it shows to be absolute innovations and quite foreign to the teachings of all the prophets.

The first two sections deal with the last representatives of prophecy in the house of Israel, viz., John and Jesus. The false doctrines that grew up round the name of the latter are clearly denounced at the end of the second section. The history of Abraham in the third, and that of some other prophets in the fourth, are referred to as showing that God always sent men as His prophets to reform the world. Towards the close of the fourth section it is stated that mere faith unattended with good deeds is nothing, and that faith cannot benefit a people except when it is translated into practice. The fifth section deals with the opponents of the prophets generally, while the sixth brings to a close the discussion of the Christian religion by outspokenly denouncing the false doctrine of the sonship of Jesus.

It is quite certain that the most important portion of this chapter, viz., that relating to the history of Mary and Jesus, was revealed early at Makkah, most probably about the fifth year of the Holy Prophet's mission, because this portion was recited by Ja'far, head of the first batch of the Muslim immigrants in Ethiopia, before the Christian king of that country, when a deputation of the Quraish urged the king to expel the Muslim refugees from his country (Ah. vol. I, p. 203). The emigration took place in the fifth year, and this chapter, therefore, must have been revealed before that.

SECTION 1 **Zacharias and John**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

1 Sufficient, Guide, Blessed, Knowing, Truthful God.[1530]

كٓهٰيٰعٓصٓ ۚ ﴿١﴾

2 A mention of the mercy of thy Lord to His servant Zacharias —

ذِكْرُ رَحْمَتِ رَبِّكَ عَبْدَهٗ زَكَرِيَّا ۚ ﴿٢﴾

3 When he called upon his Lord, crying in secret.

إِذْ نَادٰى رَبَّهٗ نِدَآءً خَفِيًّا ﴿٣﴾

4 He said: My Lord, my bones are weakened, and my head flares with hoariness, and I have never been unsuccessful in my prayer to Thee, my Lord.

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّيْ وَهَنَ الْعَظْمُ مِنِّيْ وَاشْتَعَلَ الرَّأْسُ شَيْبًا وَّلَمْ أَكُنْۢ بِدُعَآئِكَ رَبِّ شَقِيًّا ﴿٤﴾

5 And I fear my kinsfolk after me, and my wife is barren, so grant me from Thyself an heir[1531]

وَإِنِّيْ خِفْتُ الْمَوَالِيَ مِنْ وَّرَآءِيْ وَكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِيْ عَاقِرًا فَهَبْ لِيْ مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا ۙ ﴿٥﴾

6 Who should inherit me and inherit of the Children of Jacob, and make him, my Lord, acceptable (to Thee).[1532]

يَّرِثُنِيْ وَيَرِثُ مِنْ اٰلِ يَعْقُوْبَ ۖ وَاجْعَلْهُ رَبِّ رَضِيًّا ﴿٦﴾

7 O Zacharias, We give thee good news of a boy, whose name is John: We have not made before anyone his equal.[1533]

يٰزَكَرِيَّآ إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلٰمِ ۣ اسْمُهٗ يَحْيٰى ۙ لَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَّهٗ مِنْ قَبْلُ سَمِيًّا ﴿٧﴾

8 He said: My Lord, how shall I have a son, and my wife is barren, and I have reached extreme old age?

قَالَ رَبِّ أَنّٰى يَكُوْنُ لِيْ غُلٰمٌ وَّكَانَتِ امْرَأَتِيْ عَاقِرًا وَّقَدْ بَلَغْتُ مِنَ الْكِبَرِ عِتِيًّا ﴿٨﴾

9 He said: So (it will be). Thy Lord says: It is easy to Me, and indeed I created thee before, when thou wast nothing.

قَالَ كَذٰلِكَ ۚ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّنٌ وَّقَدْ خَلَقْتُكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَمْ تَكُ شَيْئًا ﴿٩﴾

1530 *Kāf* stands for *Kāf-in, Sufficient, hā* for *Hād-in, Guide, yā* for *Yamīn, Blessed, 'ain* for *'Alīm, Knowing,* and *ṣād* for *Ṣādiq, Truthful. Yā* has also been interpreted as being a letter of interjection, meaning *O,* but according to JA, *yā* stands for *Yamīn,* One possessing *yumn* or *blessings.*

1531 His fear was due to their not leading righteous lives, and he feared

1532, 1533, see next page.

10 He said: My Lord, give me a sign. He said: Thy sign is that thou speak not to people three nights, being in sound health.[1534]

قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِّيْۤ اٰيَةً ؕ قَالَ اٰيَتُكَ اَلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلٰثَ لَيَالٍ سَوِيًّا ﴿۱۰﴾

11 So he went forth to his people from the sanctuary and proclaimed to them: Glorify (Allāh) morning and evening.

فَخَرَجَ عَلٰى قَوْمِهٖ مِنَ الْمِحْرَابِ فَاَوْحٰۤى اِلَيْهِمْ اَنْ سَبِّحُوْا بُكْرَةً وَّ عَشِيًّا ﴿۱۱﴾

12 O John, take hold of the Book with strength. And We granted him wisdom when a child,

يٰيَحْيٰى خُذِ الْكِتٰبَ بِقُوَّةٍ ؕ وَ اٰتَيْنٰهُ الْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا ﴿۱۲﴾

13 And kind-heartedness from Us and purity. And he was dutiful,

وَّ حَنَانًا مِّنْ لَّدُنَّا وَ زَكٰوةً ؕ وَ كَانَ تَقِيًّا ﴿۱۳﴾

14 And kindly to his parents, and he was not insolent, disobedient.[1535]

وَّ بَرًّۢا بِوَالِدَيْهِ وَ لَمْ يَكُنْ جَبَّارًا عَصِيًّا ﴿۱۴﴾

15 And peace on him the day he was born and the day he died, and the day he is raised to life!

وَ سَلٰمٌ عَلَيْهِ يَوْمَ وُلِدَ وَ يَوْمَ يَمُوْتُ وَ يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُ حَيًّا ﴿۱۵﴾

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there would be none to lead people into the ways of righteousness after him.

1532 The inheritance of the Children of Jacob is the inheritance of the Divine blessing of prophethood, which had been promised to Jacob's children.

1533 *Samī* means a *competitor,* or *contender for superiority* in eminence or glory; hence also an *equal,* or a *like.* The word occurs again in this chapter in v. 65 and bears the same meaning, not *namesake,* because there it is spoken about Allāh. It is not, of course, meant that one like John or equal to him was never before created in the world. According to the Gospels: "Among them that are born of woman, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist" (Matt. 11:11). The meaning is that one like him was not born in Zacharias' family, because in the previous verse it is his own relatives about whom Zacharias says that he feared, and therefore an assurance was now given to him that the promised son would not be like the other members of his family whom he feared. Or the meaning may be, that one like him had not appeared in that age.

1534 The word *lail,* i.e., *night,* is interpreted as including the day, as *yaum,* or *day,* includes the *night.* Moreover, in 3:40 the words are *three days,* thus showing that three days and three nights are meant. It should also be noted that the Qur'ān does not support the idea that Zacharias was struck dumb, because it speaks of him as being *in sound health.* The object of assuming silence was to be engaged solely in prayer to the Divine Being, and hence Zacharias told his people also to glorify God; see also 420.

1535 The various aspects of the character of John deserve to be noted. He was pure and sinless and never disobeyed God. In fact, what is said of one prophet is equally true of all. They are all pure from birth, and never disobey God.

SECTION 2 : **Mary and Jesus**

16 And mention Mary in the Book. When she drew aside from her family to an eastern place ;

وَاذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتٰبِ مَرْيَمَ ۘ إِذِ انْتَبَذَتْ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا مَكَانًا شَرْقِيًّا ﴿١٦﴾

17 So she screened herself from them. Then We sent to her Our spirit and it appeared to her as a well-made man.[1536]

فَاتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ حِجَابًا ۖ فَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا ﴿١٧﴾

18 She said : I flee for refuge from thee to the Beneficent, if thou art one guarding against evil.

قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمٰنِ مِنْكَ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَقِيًّا ﴿١٨﴾

19 He said : I am only bearer of a message of thy Lord : That I will give thee a pure boy.[1537]

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ ۖ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلٰمًا زَكِيًّا ﴿١٩﴾

20 She said : How can I have a son and no mortal has yet touched me, nor have I been unchaste ?

قَالَتْ أَنّٰى يَكُونُ لِي غُلٰمٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِي بَشَرٌ وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا ﴿٢٠﴾

21 He said : So (it will be). Thy Lord says : It is easy to Me ; and that We may make him a sign to men and a mercy from us.[1537a] And it is a matter decreed.[1537b]

قَالَ كَذٰلِكِ ۚ قَالَ رَبُّكِ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّنٌ ۚ وَلِنَجْعَلَهُ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِنَّا ۚ وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَقْضِيًّا ﴿٢١﴾

22 Then she conceived him ; and withdrew with him to a remote place.

فَحَمَلَتْهُ فَانْتَبَذَتْ بِهِ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا ﴿٢٢﴾

1536 This shows that it was in a vision that the spirit came, and the conversation that follows also took place in a vision. The word *tamaththala* used here lends support to this, for the word signifies *assuming the likeness of another thing,* and this happens only in a vision. Further the spirit or angel of God appears to His chosen ones only in vision, and angels are not seen by the physical eye.

1537 The words *I will give thee a pure boy* are the words of the message. The Spirit, in fact, only conveyed the Divine message, as it always does. Every word of the Holy Qur'ān is the word of God, but every word was delivered to the Prophet by the angel.

1537a Jesus was a *sign* to men, in the sense that he was made a prophet, and every prophet is a sign, because the Divine revelation which is granted to him affords a clear proof of the existence of the Divine Being. Or, he was a sign to the Israelites in particular, because with him prophethood came to an end among the Israelites.

1537b She conceived him in the ordinary way in which women conceive children ; see 422.

23 And the throes of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm-tree.[1538] She said: Oh, would that I had died before this, and had been a thing quite forgotten![1539]

فَاَجَآءَهَا الْمَخَاضُ اِلٰى جِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ ۚ قَالَتْ يٰلَيْتَنِىْ مِتُّ قَبْلَ هٰذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسْيًا مَّنْسِيًّا ﴿٢٣﴾

24 So a voice came to her from beneath her: Grieve not, surely thy Lord has provided a stream beneath thee.

فَنَادٰىهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَاۤ اَلَّا تَحْزَنِىْ قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And shake towards thee the trunk of the palm-tree, it will drop on thee fresh ripe dates.[1539a]

وَهُزِّىْۤ اِلَيْكِ بِجِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ تُسٰقِطْ عَلَيْكِ رُطَبًا جَنِيًّا ﴿٢٥﴾

26 So eat and drink and cool the eye. Then if thou seest any mortal, say: Surely I have vowed a fast to the Beneficent, so I will not speak to any man to-day.[1539b]

فَكُلِىْ وَاشْرَبِىْ وَقَرِّىْ عَيْنًا ۚ فَاِمَّا تَرَيِنَّ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ اَحَدًا ۙ فَقُوْلِىْۤ اِنِّىْ نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمٰنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ اُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ اِنْسِيًّا ﴿٢٦﴾

27 Then she came to her people with him, carrying him.[1540] They said: O Mary, thou hast indeed brought a strange thing![1541]

فَاَتَتْ بِهٖ قَوْمَهَا تَحْمِلُهٗ ۚ قَالُوْا يٰمَرْيَمُ لَقَدْ جِئْتِ شَيْـًٔا فَرِيًّا ﴿٢٧﴾

1538 This shows that Mary gave birth to Jesus while on a journey; hence the reference to water and food in vv. 24 and 25, such as one can only find in a journey. That she was going to a distant place is shown by v. 22. She may have had recourse to the trunk of a palm-tree to find a support in the throes of childbirth.

1539 Mary gave birth to Jesus under the ordinary circumstances which women experience in giving birth to children. The throes of childbirth were too severe for her to bear, and hence she gave utterance to such words. The reference to the throes of childbirth clearly shows that an ordinary human child was coming into the world. Or, there may be a reference to Gen. 3:16, *in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children*.

1539a The Qur'ān does not accept that Jesus was born on 25th December. It was the time when fresh ripe dates are found on palm-trees. It is now a recognized fact that the 25th December was not Jesus' birthday. Bishop Barnes says in the *Rise of Christianity*: "There is, moreover, no authority for the belief that December 25 was the actual birthday of Jesus. If we can give any credence to the birth-story of Luke, with the shepherds keeping watch by night in the fields near Bethlehem, the birth of Jesus did not take place in winter, when the night temperature is so low in the hill country of Judaea that snow is not uncommon. After much argument our Christmas day seems to have been accepted about A.D. 300" (p. 79). Bishop Barnes then goes on to relate that the 25th of December was taken from the Persian cult, Mithra being the God of the invincible sun: "And his festal day was suitably that on which, after the winter solstice, the sun again began clearly to show his strength".

1539b It was really a kind of fast. Zacharias, as we have already seen, was told not to speak to people for three days.

1540 The conversation that is related to have taken place in the verses that

1541, see next page.

28 O sister of Aaron,[1542] thy father was not a wicked man, nor was thy mother an unchaste woman!

يَٰٓأُخۡتَ هَٰرُونَ مَا كَانَ أَبُوكِ ٱمۡرَأَ سَوۡءٖ وَمَا كَانَتۡ أُمُّكِ بَغِيّٗا ٢٨

29 But she pointed to him. They said: How should we speak to one who is a child in the cradle?[1543]

فَأَشَارَتۡ إِلَيۡهِۖ قَالُواْ كَيۡفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَن كَانَ فِي ٱلۡمَهۡدِ صَبِيّٗا ٢٩

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follow is alone sufficient to make it clear that the coming of Mary to her people with her son, as stated in this verse, relates to a time when Jesus had grown sufficiently old to have been raised to the dignity of a prophet, and to have received Divine revelation, as he speaks of having been given the book in v. 30. The commentators, merely because the verse follows one in which the birth of Jesus is spoken of, understand the incident to relate to a time when Jesus was still a baby. But it should be noted that the Holy Qur'ān does not relate stories in all their details, and often omits a number of incidents which are not needed for its purpose. Compare, for instance, the 11th and 12th verses, the first of which relates only Zacharias' receiving the joyful news of a son, while the second asks that son to take hold of the Book with strength. Jesus could only say that he was made a prophet, when he was actually entrusted with the mission of a prophet, and not before, and Jesus' address to his people, as related in vv. 30 and 31, clearly shows that he had already been entrusted with that mission. Moreover, it is unreasonable to suppose that, as soon as Mary gave birth to the child, she took it to her people to make a show of it. The Qur'ān, v. 22, states that she was then going to some remote place, and thus the incident related here could not have taken place immediately after delivery. The word *carrying* does not show that she was carrying him in her arms; it means that he was being carried on an animal. Compare 9:92, where some of the companions are spoken of as coming to the Prophet that he might *carry* them, and he is related as saying in reply that he had not that on which to *carry* them. Compare Matt. 21:1-7. There the story is related of Jesus entering Jerusalem riding an ass, or an ass and a colt: "And brought the ass and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon" (Matt. 21:7).

1541 The reference in Mary's *bringing a strange thing* may be to her having given birth to a son who claimed greater authority than the elders of Israel, with a deeper hint to the calumny against her, for which see 644. But the word *farī* also signifies *a forger of lies*. It is remarkable that in his reply Jesus does not make a single reference to the circumstances of his birth. Hence the inference is quite reasonable that the question, whichever significance of the words may be taken, was directed against the mission of Jesus and not against the circumstances relating to his birth.

1542 As shown in 412, Mary belonged to the priestly class, as Wherry also admits, "because she was of the Levitical race, as by her being related to Elizabeth it would seem she was," and therefore she is rightly called *ukht Hārūn*, or *sister of Aaron*, the word *ukht* being by no means limited to the close blood-relationship like its equivalent in English; see 412 for further explanation. IJ relates the following incident: Ṣafiyyah (the Prophet's wife) came to the Messenger of Allāh (may peace and the blessings of Allāh be upon him!) and said: "The women say to me, a Jewess, daughter of two Jews". He said to her: "Why didst thou not say: Surely my father is Aaron and my uncle is Moses and my husband is Muḥammad?"

1543 Old and learned Jews would no doubt speak of a young man who was born and brought up before their eyes as *a child in the cradle*, as if disdaining to address one so young. See what follows, vv. 30, 31, wherein it is made quite clear that the incident mentioned here relates to a time when Jesus was a grown-up man.

30 He said: I am indeed a servant of Allāh. He has given me the Book and made me a prophet:[1544]

قَالَ إِنِّي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ آتَانِيَ الْكِتَابَ وَجَعَلَنِي نَبِيًّا ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And He has made me blessed wherever I may be, and He has enjoined on me prayer and poor-rate so long as I live:[1545]

وَجَعَلَنِي مُبَارَكًا أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُ وَأَوْصَانِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا ﴿٣١﴾

32 And to be kind to my mother; and He has not made me insolent, unblessed.[1546]

وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَتِي وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْنِي جَبَّارًا شَقِيًّا ﴿٣٢﴾

33 And peace on me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I am raised to life.

وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا ﴿٣٣﴾

34 Such is Jesus son of Mary — a statement of truth about which they dispute.

ذَلِكَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قَوْلَ الْحَقِّ الَّذِي فِيهِ يَمْتَرُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 It beseems not Allāh that He should take to Himself a son. Glory be to Him! when He decrees a matter He only says to it, Be, and it is.

مَا كَانَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ مِنْ وَلَدٍ سُبْحَانَهُ إِذَا قَضَى أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 And surely Allāh is my Lord and your Lord, so serve Him. This is the right path.[1547]

وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 But parties from among them differed; so woe to those who disbelieve, because of their presence on a grievous day!

فَاخْتَلَفَ الْأَحْزَابُ مِنْ بَيْنِهِمْ فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ مَشْهَدِ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

1544 It is clear that this conversation did not take place when Jesus was an infant in the cradle, but when he had actually been made a prophet.

1545 It is absurd to suppose that prayers and alms were enjoined on Jesus while he was only a day old and that he really observed these injunctions at that age. In fact, Jesus' answer clearly shows that he was addressing his people after he had been entrusted with the mission of prophethood.

1546 Here only the mother is spoken of, whereas in a similar case in v. 14 John is spoken of as being kind to both parents. This may be due to the fact that Joseph may not have been living at the time when Jesus spoke these words. Joseph was already an old man when he married Mary, and by the time that the ministry of Jesus begins we find no mention of him even in the Gospels, the mother and brothers being the only relations mentioned. Or, the mother alone is mentioned because the Gospels relate an incident showing that Jesus was rude to his mother (Matt. 12:48), and this verse disproves the statement, it being one of the objects of the Qur'ān to clear Jesus of all false charges.

1547 According to Matthew, when Jesus was tempted of the devil, who asked him to worship him, Jesus' reply was: "For it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. 4:10).

38 How clearly will they hear and see on the day when they come to Us; but the wrongdoers are to-day in manifest error.

أَسْمِعْ بِهِمْ وَأَبْصِرْ يَوْمَ يَأْتُونَنَا لٰكِنِ
الظّٰلِمُونَ الْيَوْمَ فِي ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 And warn them of the day of Regret,[1548] when the matter is decided. And they are (now) in negligence and they believe not.

وَأَنْذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْحَسْرَةِ إِذْ قُضِيَ
الْأَمْرُ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ وَّهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 Surely We inherit the earth and those thereon, and to Us they are returned.

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَرِثُ الْأَرْضَ وَمَنْ عَلَيْهَا
وَإِلَيْنَا يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

SECTION 3: **Abraham**

41 And mention Abraham in the Book. Surely he was a truthful man, a prophet.

وَاذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتٰبِ إِبْرٰهِيمَ ۚ
إِنَّهُ كَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿٤١﴾

42 When he said to his sire: O my sire, why worshippest thou that which hears not, nor sees, nor can it avail thee aught?

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ يٰأَبَتِ لِمَ تَعْبُدُ مَا لَا
يَسْمَعُ وَلَا يُبْصِرُ وَلَا يُغْنِي عَنْكَ شَيْئًا ﴿٤٢﴾

43 O my sire, to me indeed has come the knowledge which has not come to thee; so follow me, I will guide thee on a right path.

يٰأَبَتِ إِنِّي قَدْ جَاءَنِي مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَمْ
يَأْتِكَ فَاتَّبِعْنِي أَهْدِكَ صِرَاطًا سَوِيًّا ﴿٤٣﴾

44 O my sire, serve not the devil. Surely the devil is disobedient to the Beneficent.

يٰأَبَتِ لَا تَعْبُدِ الشَّيْطٰنَ ۖ إِنَّ الشَّيْطٰنَ
كَانَ لِلرَّحْمٰنِ عَصِيًّا ﴿٤٤﴾

45 O my sire, surely I fear lest a punishment from the Beneficent should afflict thee, so that thou become a friend of the devil.

يٰأَبَتِ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يَمَسَّكَ عَذَابٌ
مِّنَ الرَّحْمٰنِ فَتَكُونَ لِلشَّيْطٰنِ وَلِيًّا ﴿٤٥﴾

46 He said: Dislikest thou my gods, O Abraham? If thou desist not, I will certainly drive thee away. And leave me for a time.

قَالَ أَرَاغِبٌ أَنْتَ عَنْ اٰلِهَتِي يٰإِبْرٰهِيمُ ۚ
لَئِنْ لَّمْ تَنْتَهِ لَأَرْجُمَنَّكَ وَاهْجُرْنِي مَلِيًّا ﴿٤٦﴾

47 He said: Peace be to thee! I shall pray my Lord to forgive thee. Surely He is ever Kind to me.

قَالَ سَلٰمٌ عَلَيْكَ ۚ سَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكَ رَبِّي ۖ
إِنَّهُ كَانَ بِي حَفِيًّا ﴿٤٧﴾

1548 The day of Judgment is here called the day of Regret, because man will then regret that he wasted the opportunity given to him to work for his own good.

48 And I withdraw from you and that which you call on beside Allāh, and I call upon my Lord. Maybe I shall not remain unblessed in calling upon my Lord.

وَأَعْتَزِلُكُمْ وَمَا تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَأَدْعُوا رَبِّي عَسَىٰ أَلَّا أَكُونَ بِدُعَاءِ رَبِّي شَقِيًّا ﴿٤٨﴾

49 So, when he withdrew from them and that which they worshipped besides Allāh, We gave him Isaac and Jacob. And each (of them) We made a prophet.[1549]

فَلَمَّا اعْتَزَلَهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَٰقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا نَبِيًّا ﴿٤٩﴾

50 And We gave them of Our mercy, and We granted them a truthful mention of eminence.[1550]

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِنَا وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ عَلِيًّا ﴿٥٠﴾

SECTION 4 : **Other Prophets are raised**

51 And mention Moses in the Book. Surely he was one purified, and was a messenger, a prophet.[1551]

وَاذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَٰبِ مُوسَىٰ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مُخْلَصًا وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَبِيًّا ﴿٥١﴾

52 And We called to him from the blessed side of the mountain, and We made him draw nigh in communion.

وَنَٰدَيْنَٰهُ مِنْ جَانِبِ الطُّورِ الْأَيْمَنِ وَقَرَّبْنَٰهُ نَجِيًّا ﴿٥٢﴾

53 And We gave him out of Our mercy his brother Aaron, a prophet.

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ مِنْ رَحْمَتِنَا أَخَاهُ هَٰرُونَ نَبِيًّا ﴿٥٣﴾

1549 It is elsewhere made clear that Jacob was his grandson (11 : 71 ; 21 : 72). Nor should it be supposed that *giving* signifies only the giving of a son, for of Moses it is said a few verses further on, *We gave him his brother Aaron, a prophet,* though Aaron was older than Moses.

1550 The literal significance is, *We made for them the tongue of truth to be lofty.* As *the tongue* is the vehicle of expression, therefore *lisāna ṣidq-in* stands for *a truthful mention.* However humble a life a prophet may lead, he is granted an eminence among later generations, but the distinguishing characteristic of a prophet is that his record of eminence is a truthful one.

1551 *Rasūl,* or *messenger,* means *one who is sent with a message* for the regeneration of men, while *nabī,* or *prophet,* is one who has the gift of prophecy, i.e., who receives a *naba'* or *information* from on high. The elect who are chosen for the regeneration of man are called *prophets* as receiving knowledge from Allāh, and *messengers* as delivering to humanity the messages they receive.

54 And mention Ishmael in the Book. Surely he was truthful in promise, and he was a messenger, a prophet.[1552]

وَاذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتٰبِ اِسْمٰعِيْلَ ۫ اِنَّهٗ كَانَ صَادِقَ الْوَعْدِ وَكَانَ رَسُوْلًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿۵۴﴾

55 And he enjoined on his people prayer and almsgiving, and was one in whom his Lord was well pleased.

وَكَانَ يَاْمُرُ اَهْلَهٗ بِالصَّلٰوةِ وَالزَّكٰوةِ ۪ وَكَانَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهٖ مَرْضِيًّا ﴿۵۵﴾

56 And mention Idrīs in the Book. Surely he was a truthful man, a prophet,

وَاذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتٰبِ اِدْرِيْسَ ۫ اِنَّهٗ كَانَ صِدِّيْقًا نَّبِيًّا ﴿۵۶﴾

57 And We raised him to an elevated state.[1553]

وَّرَفَعْنٰهُ مَكَانًا عَلِيًّا ﴿۵۷﴾

58 These are they on whom Allāh bestowed favours, from among the prophets, of the seed of Adam, and of those whom We carried with Noah, and of the seed of Abraham and Israel, and of those whom We guided and chose. When the messages of the Beneficent were recited to them, they fell down in submission, weeping.[1553a]

Prostration

اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ اَنْعَمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنَ النَّبِيّٖنَ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّةِ اٰدَمَ ۗ وَمِمَّنْ حَمَلْنَا مَعَ نُوْحٍ ۫ وَّمِنْ ذُرِّيَّةِ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ وَاِسْرَآءِيْلَ ۫ وَمِمَّنْ هَدَيْنَا وَاجْتَبَيْنَا ؕ اِذَا تُتْلٰى عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتُ الرَّحْمٰنِ خَرُّوْا سُجَّدًا وَّبُكِيًّا ﴿۵۸﴾

59 But there came after them an evil generation, who wasted prayers and followed lusts, so they will meet perdition,

فَخَلَفَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِهِمْ خَلْفٌ اَضَاعُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاتَّبَعُوا الشَّهَوٰتِ فَسَوْفَ يَلْقَوْنَ غَيًّا ﴿۵۹﴾

60 Except those who repent and believe and do good — such will enter the Garden, and they will not be wronged in aught :

اِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَاٰمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَاُولٰٓئِكَ يَدْخُلُوْنَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُوْنَ شَيْـًٔا ﴿۶۰﴾

61 Gardens of perpetuity which the Beneficent has promised to His ser-

جَنّٰتِ عَدْنِ ِالَّتِيْ وَعَدَ الرَّحْمٰنُ عِبَادَهٗ

1552 Ishmael was a prophet. When Abraham prayed to the Lord "that Ishmael might live before Thee" (Gen. 17 : 18), the reply was: "And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee" (Gen. 17 : 20), which shows that Ishmael was made a prophet; see 168 and 169. In the Holy Qur'ān Ishmael is mentioned by name on the following occasions as one of the prophets: 2 : 125, 127-129, 133, 136, 140; 6 : 8. ; 19 : 54, 55 ; 21 : 85 ; 38 : 48 ; while he is referred to in 37 : 101-107.

1553 Idrīs is the same as Enoch. The word *raf'*, which is used of Jesus, is also used of Enoch, and some commentators therefore misinterpret the words as indicating that Enoch was taken up to heaven alive. But the same mistake is made in both cases, for *raf'* signifies *raising to high dignity*; see 437. The mistake seems to have arisen from what is said of Enoch in the Bible. Thus, in Gen. 5 : 24: "And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him". The New Testament is plainer yet: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him"

1553a see next page.

vants in the Unseen. Surely His promise ever comes to pass.

بِالْغَيْبِ ۚ إِنَّهُ كَانَ وَعْدُهُ مَأْتِيًّا ﴿٦١﴾

62 They will hear therein no vain discourse, but only, Peace! And they have their sustenance therein, morning and evening.[1554]

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا إِلَّا سَلٰمًا ۖ وَلَهُمْ رِزْقُهُمْ فِيهَا بُكْرَةً وَّعَشِيًّا ﴿٦٢﴾

63 This is the Garden which We cause those of Our servants to inherit who keep their duty.[1555]

تِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي نُورِثُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا مَنْ كَانَ تَقِيًّا ﴿٦٣﴾

64 And we descend not but by the command of thy Lord. To Him belongs what is before us and what is behind us and what is between these, and thy Lord is never forgetful.[1556]

وَمَا نَتَنَزَّلُ إِلَّا بِأَمْرِ رَبِّكَ ۚ لَهُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِينَا وَمَا خَلْفَنَا وَمَا بَيْنَ ذٰلِكَ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ نَسِيًّا ﴿٦٤﴾

65 Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, so serve Him and be patient in His service. Knowest thou any one equal to Him?

رَبُّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فَاعْبُدْهُ وَاصْطَبِرْ لِعِبَادَتِهِ ۖ هَلْ تَعْلَمُ لَهُ سَمِيًّا ﴿٦٥﴾

SECTION 5: **How the Opponents were Dealt with**

66 And says man: When I am dead, shall I truly be brought forth alive?

وَيَقُولُ الْإِنْسَانُ ءَإِذَا مَا مِتُّ لَسَوْفَ أُخْرَجُ حَيًّا ﴿٦٦﴾

67 Does not man remember that We created him before, when he was nothing?

أَوَلَا يَذْكُرُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنٰهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَمْ يَكُ شَيْئًا ﴿٦٧﴾

(Heb. 11:5). Only once again is he mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān, viz., in 21:85.

1553a Here the reciter prostrates himself; see 978.

1554 This description of the Hereafter is really to show that the Muslim in this world talks of nothing but peace. Islām is really *peace,* and it is by making peace here with the Creator and His creatures that one can find peace hereafter. This is the great truth underlying the Islamic idea of paradise, for of paradise it is frequently stated in the Holy Qur'ān that there will be nothing but peace therein.

1555 The state of *perfect peace* spoken of in the previous verse is here called the *Garden* which the righteous will inherit.

1556 The words, *we descend not,* are generally understood to refer to the coming of angels with Divine revelation. There is no doubt that the reference here is to the revelation of the Holy Prophet, the significance being that, as the angels brought revelation to previous prophets, so they now bring revelation, by the command of the Lord, to the Holy Prophet Muḥammad. The concluding words of the verse, *thy Lord is never forgetful,* signify that the promises and prophecies made by God through His prophets could not be forgotten. Thus an account of the previous prophets is concluded with a reference to the revelation

68 So by thy Lord! We shall certainly gather them together and the devils, then shall We bring them around hell on their knees.[1557]

فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَحْشُرَنَّهُمْ وَالشَّيٰطِيْنَ ثُمَّ لَنُحْضِرَنَّهُمْ حَوْلَ جَهَنَّمَ جِثِيًّا ﴿٦٨﴾

69 Then We shall draw forth from every sect those most rebellious against the Beneficent.

ثُمَّ لَنَنْزِعَنَّ مِنْ كُلِّ شِيْعَةٍ اَيُّهُمْ اَشَدُّ عَلَى الرَّحْمٰنِ عِتِيًّا ﴿٦٩﴾

70 Again, We certainly know best those who deserve most to be burned therein.

ثُمَّ لَنَحْنُ اَعْلَمُ بِالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ اَوْلٰى بِهَا صِلِيًّا ﴿٧٠﴾

71 And there is not one of you but shall come to it. This is an unavoidable decree of thy Lord.[1558]

وَاِنْ مِّنْكُمْ اِلَّا وَارِدُهَا ۚ كَانَ عَلٰى رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴿٧١﴾

72 And We shall deliver those who guard against evil,[1559] and leave the wrongdoers therein on their knees.[1560]

ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا وَّنَذَرُ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ فِيْهَا جِثِيًّا ﴿٧٢﴾

73 And when Our clear messages are recited to them, those who disbelieve say to those who believe: Which of the two parties is better in position and better in assembly?[1561]

وَاِذَا تُتْلٰى عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتُنَا بَيِّنٰتٍ قَالَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا ۙ اَيُّ الْفَرِيْقَيْنِ خَيْرٌ مَّقَامًا وَّاَحْسَنُ نَدِيًّا ﴿٧٣﴾

74 And how many a generation have We destroyed before them, who had better possessions and appearance!

وَكَمْ اَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِّنْ قَرْنٍ هُمْ اَحْسَنُ اَثَاثًا وَّرِءْيًا ﴿٧٤﴾

75 Say: As for him who is in error, the Beneficent will prolong his length of days; until they see what they were

قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الضَّلٰلَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ لَهُ الرَّحْمٰنُ مَدًّا ۚ حَتّٰٓى اِذَا رَاَوْا مَا

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of the Holy Prophet, and this is the subject dealt with in the remaining sections of the chapter.

Some, however, think that these are the words of the faithful, which they will speak when they enter paradise (Rz).

1557 The *devils* here are clearly those who lead others to evil.

1558 The *wicked* only are spoken of, as the context shows clearly. That the righteous will not go to hell is made clear further on: "The day on which We shall gather those who guard against evil to the Beneficent to receive honour, and We shall drive the guilty to hell thirsty" (vv. 85, 86). According to 21:102, *the righteous will not hear the faintest sound of hell.*

1559 For the meaning of *thumma,* see 45. It is wrong to suppose that the righteous will be first cast into hell and then delivered; see 1558.

1560, 1561. see next page.

threatened with, either the punishment or the Hour.[1562] Then they will know who is worse in position and weaker in forces.[1563]

يُوعَدُونَ إِمَّا الْعَذَابَ وَإِمَّا السَّاعَةَ فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَّأَضْعَفُ جُندًا ﴿٧٥﴾

76 And Allāh increases in guidance those who go aright. And deeds that endure, the good deeds, are, with thy Lord, better in recompense and yield better return.

وَيَزِيدُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا هُدًى وَالْبٰقِيٰتُ الصّٰلِحٰتُ خَيْرٌ عِندَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَّخَيْرٌ مَّرَدًّا ﴿٧٦﴾

77 Hast thou seen him who disbelieves in Our messages and says: I shall certainly be given wealth and children?[1565]

أَفَرَءَيْتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ بِاٰيٰتِنَا وَقَالَ لَأُوتَيَنَّ مَالًا وَّوَلَدًا ﴿٧٧﴾

78 Has he gained knowledge of the unseen, or made a covenant with the Beneficent?

أَطَّلَعَ الْغَيْبَ أَمِ اتَّخَذَ عِندَ الرَّحْمٰنِ عَهْدًا ﴿٧٨﴾

79 By no means! We write down what he says, and We shall lengthen to him the length of the chastisement,

كَلَّا سَنَكْتُبُ مَا يَقُولُ وَنَمُدُّ لَهُ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ مَدًّا ﴿٧٩﴾

80 And We shall inherit from him what he says, and he will come to Us alone.[1566]

وَّنَرِثُهُ مَا يَقُولُ وَيَأْتِينَا فَرْدًا ﴿٨٠﴾

81 And they have taken gods besides Allāh, that they should be to them a source of strength —

وَاتَّخَذُوا مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ اٰلِهَةً لِّيَكُونُوا لَهُمْ عِزًّا ﴿٨١﴾

82 By no means! They will soon deny their worshipping them, and be their adversaries.

كَلَّا سَيَكْفُرُونَ بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ وَيَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ ضِدًّا ﴿٨٢﴾

1560 Compare v. 68, where it is said that the guilty will be brought to hell *on their knees*.

1561 That is, they are proud of their great wealth and numerous forces.

1562 The *Hour* signifies the *hour of doom*, the time of destruction, when their power will be utterly destroyed. The *'adhāb*, in comparison with the doom, signifies a lighter punishment.

1563 In these words it is clearly indicated that the time will come when they will find themselves in an evil condition, and their forces weaker than the forces of Truth.

1565 They have no eye for the higher values of life; all they want is wealth and children.

1566 The reference is to his saying in v. 77: "I shall certainly be given wealth and children". God's inheriting thus means that their wealth and children will be taken away from them and ultimately be a source of strength to Islām.

SECTION 6 : **False Doctrine of Sonship**

83 Seest thou not that We send the devils against the disbelievers, inciting them incitingly?

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَا الشَّيٰطِينَ عَلَى الْكٰفِرِينَ تَؤُزُّهُمْ أَزًّا ﴿٨٣﴾

84 So make no haste against them. We only number out to them a number (of days).[1568]

فَلَا تَعْجَلْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ إِنَّمَا نَعُدُّ لَهُمْ عَدًّا ﴿٨٤﴾

85 The day when We gather the dutiful to the Beneficent to receive honours,[1569]

يَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ الْمُتَّقِينَ إِلَى الرَّحْمٰنِ وَفْدًا ﴿٨٥﴾

86 And drive the guilty to hell, as thirsty beasts.[1570]

وَّنَسُوقُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ إِلٰى جَهَنَّمَ وِرْدًا ﴿٨٦﴾

87 They have no power of intercession, save him who has made a covenant with the Beneficent.

لَا يَمْلِكُونَ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلَّا مَنِ اتَّخَذَ عِنْدَ الرَّحْمٰنِ عَهْدًا ﴿٨٧﴾

88 And they say: The Beneficent has taken to Himself a son.

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمٰنُ وَلَدًا ﴿٨٨﴾

89 Certainly you make an abominable assertion!

لَقَدْ جِئْتُمْ شَيْئًا إِدًّا ﴿٨٩﴾

90 The heavens may almost be rent thereat, and the earth cleave asunder, and the mountains fall down in pieces,

تَكَادُ السَّمٰوٰتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِنْهُ وَتَنْشَقُّ الْأَرْضُ وَتَخِرُّ الْجِبَالُ هَدًّا ﴿٩٠﴾

91 That they ascribe a son to the Beneficent!

أَنْ دَعَوْا لِلرَّحْمٰنِ وَلَدًا ﴿٩١﴾

92 And it is not worthy of the Beneficent that He should take to Himself a son.[1571]

وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِلرَّحْمٰنِ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا ﴿٩٢﴾

1568 Because their doom is already decreed.

1569 *Wafd* is *a party coming to a king to receive honours* (R, LA).

1570 *Wird* signifies *coming to or arriving at water* (LL); hence it signifies *thirsty,* because thirsty beasts are driven to water.

1571 The five verses 89-93 contain a most emphatic and clear condemnation of the Christian doctrine of the Godhead of Jesus Christ. It may be noted that this chapter belongs to about the fifth year of the Holy Prophet's mission, as portions of it were read out before the Negus by Ja'far, who was the head of the Muslim emigrants to Abyssinia. Thus Islām had set before itself from the very first the grand object of the reformation of Christianity. The particular point on which stress is laid in this chapter, as against the fundamental errors of the Christian religion, *Sonship* and *Atonement,* is that God is *Raḥmān,* and does not require any compensation to forgive sinners. It is for this reason that the name Raḥmān, in preference to all other names of the Divine Being, is mentioned over and over again in this chapter, and the key to the whole position is contained in v. 92 in the words: *It is not worthy of the Beneficent that He should take to Himself a son.* In fact, the doctrine of Atonement is contradicted by Christ's own words in the Lord's prayer: "And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors" (Matt. 6:12). A man is said to forgive his debtor when he remits the debt and does not exact any compensation. Even thus does God forgive the sinners; He needs no compensation.

93 There is none in the heavens and the earth but comes to the Beneficent as a servant.

إِنْ كُلُّ مَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّآ اٰتِي الرَّحْمٰنِ عَبْدًا ﴿٩٣﴾

94 Certainly He comprehends them, and has numbered them all.

لَقَدْ أَحْصٰهُمْ وَعَدَّهُمْ عَدًّا ﴿٩٤﴾

95 And every one of them will come to Him on the day of Resurrection, alone.

وَكُلُّهُمْ اٰتِيْهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ فَرْدًا ﴿٩٥﴾

96 Those who believe and do good deeds, for them the Beneficent will surely bring about love.[1572]

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ سَيَجْعَلُ لَهُمُ الرَّحْمٰنُ وُدًّا ﴿٩٦﴾

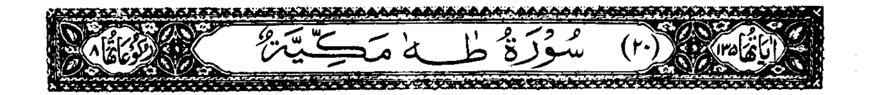
97 So We have made it easy in thy tongue only that thou shouldst give good news thereby to those who guard against evil, and shouldst warn thereby a contentious people.

فَإِنَّمَا يَسَّرْنٰهُ بِلِسَانِكَ لِتُبَشِّرَ بِهِ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ وَتُنْذِرَ بِهٖ قَوْمًا لُّدًّا ﴿٩٧﴾

98 And how many a generation before them have We destroyed! Canst thou see any one of them or hear a sound of them?

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِّنْ قَرْنٍ هَلْ تُحِسُّ مِنْهُمْ مِّنْ أَحَدٍ أَوْ تَسْمَعُ لَهُمْ رِكْزًا ﴿٩٨﴾

1572 Allāh's *bringing about love* for the righteous means that He loves them Himself and inspires love for them in the hearts of other people, while they also love Allāh as well as their fellow-beings. The righteous servants of God are opposed at first, but gradually their goodness prevails and they are loved and admired. There is a prophetic reference here to the great love with which the hearts of the enemies of the Prophet were to be inspired in the near future, and even to-day the hearts of men are being inspired with greater and greater love for him as the world witnesses the good which he did to humanity.



CHAPTER 20

ṬĀ HĀ

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 8 *sections;* 135 *verses*)

The initial letters of this chapter, for which see 1573, serve as its title. The greater part of it is devoted to the story of Moses, showing how Moses was successful after passing through various trials. The subject-matter of the chapter is given in the very first statement made in v. 2, that the Qur'ān was revealed to be triumphant in the world.

The last chapter deals at length with the story of Jesus, and is followed by one dealing in detail with the story of Moses. It opens with a comforting message to the Holy Prophet, to the effect that he should not be disheartened by the bitter opposition to his preaching, because his mission would assuredly be crowned with success. The first five sections (out of a total of eight) are taken up with the story of Moses, the Prophet's mission being introduced towards the close of the fifth section. The remaining three sections are taken up with the description of the opposition to the Prophet and the consequences of that opposition.

The revelation of this chapter belongs to the same period as that of the last chapter. Both Ibn Hishām and Ibn Sa'd connect this chapter with the story of 'Umar's conversion to Islām, which took place in the fifth year of the Prophet's Call. It was the recital of this chapter by his sister that changed 'Umar's murderous intention against the Prophet into a feeling of deep love and reverence for him.

SECTION 1 **Moses is Called**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسۡمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِيۡمِ

1 O man,[1573]

طٰهٰ ۚ‏ ﴿۱﴾

2 We have not revealed the Qur'ān to thee that thou mayest be unsuccessful;[1574]

مَاۤ اَنۡزَلۡنَا عَلَيۡكَ الۡقُرۡاٰنَ لِتَشۡقٰٓى ۙ‏ ﴿۲﴾

3 But it is a reminder to him who fears:

اِلَّا تَذۡكِرَةً لِّمَنۡ يَّخۡشٰى ۙ‏ ﴿۳﴾

4 A revelation from Him Who created the earth and the high heavens.[1575]

تَنۡزِيۡلًا مِّمَّنۡ خَلَقَ الۡاَرۡضَ وَالسَّمٰوٰتِ الۡعُلٰى ؕ‏ ﴿۴﴾

5 The Beneficent is established on the Throne of Power.

اَلرَّحۡمٰنُ عَلَى الۡعَرۡشِ اسۡتَوٰى‏ ﴿۵﴾

6 To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth and whatever is between them and whatever is beneath the soil.

لَهٗ مَا فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِى الۡاَرۡضِ وَمَا بَيۡنَهُمَا وَمَا تَحۡتَ الثَّرٰى‏ ﴿۶﴾

7 And if thou utter the saying aloud, surely He knows the secret, and what is yet more hidden.[1577]

وَاِنۡ تَجۡهَرۡ بِالۡقَوۡلِ فَاِنَّهٗ يَعۡلَمُ السِّرَّ وَاَخۡفٰى‏ ﴿۷﴾

8 Allāh — there is no God but He. His are the most beautiful names.

اَللّٰهُ لَاۤ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ‌ ؕ لَهُ الۡاَسۡمَآءُ الۡحُسۡنٰى‏ ﴿۸﴾

9 And has the story of Moses come to thee?

وَهَلۡ اَتٰٮكَ حَدِيۡثُ مُوۡسٰى‌ۘ‏ ﴿۹﴾

1573 *Ṭā hā,* a combination of the two letters *ṭā* and *hā* is, according to I'Ab and other early commentators, a word meaning *O man.* AH quotes two couplets of the poets of the tribe of 'Akk, showing that in their dialect *ṭā hā* is a well-known phrase meaning *O man,* so that one of them would not answer you if you said *yā rajulu,* but would reply if you said *ṭā hā.* The same authority says that *Ṭā hā* is one of the names of the Holy Prophet. It is also explained as meaning *be at rest* (T, LL), being thus a word of comfort to the Holy Prophet.

1574 That is, it could not be that the Prophet, to whom the Qur'ān was revealed, should remain unsuccessful in bringing about the transformation for which it was revealed. It is a consolation, and at the same time a clear prophecy, that a mighty transformation will be brought about, not only in Arabia but in the whole world, for that was the object which the Holy Qur'ān had set out to accomplish from the first.

1575 The Qur'ān cannot be a failure, because it is a manifestation of the will of Him Who holds sway over all.

1577 The *secret* is that which a man hides in his heart, and what is yet more hidden is that which is in the subconscious mind. The conscious and the subconscious are all alike known to Allāh.

10 When he saw a fire, he said to his people: Stay, I see a fire; haply I may bring to you therefrom a live coal or find guidance at the fire.[1578]

إِذْ رَا نَارًا فَقَالَ لِأَهْلِهِ امْكُثُوْٓا إِنِّيْٓ
اٰنَسْتُ نَارًا لَّعَلِّيْٓ اٰتِيْكُمْ مِّنْهَا بِقَبَسٍ
اَوْ اَجِدُ عَلَى النَّارِ هُدًى ⑩

11 So when he came to it, a voice came: O Moses,

فَلَمَّآ اَتٰىهَا نُوْدِيَ يٰمُوْسٰى ⑪

12 Surely I am thy Lord, so take off thy shoes; surely thou art in the sacred valley Tuwā.[1579]

اِنِّيْٓ اَنَا رَبُّكَ فَاخْلَعْ نَعْلَيْكَ اِنَّكَ
بِالْوَادِ الْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى ⑫

13 And I have chosen thee so listen to what is revealed:

وَاَنَا اخْتَرْتُكَ فَاسْتَمِعْ لِمَا يُوْحٰى ⑬

14 Surely I am Allāh, there is no God but I, so serve Me, and keep up prayer for My remembrance,

اِنَّنِيْٓ اَنَا اللّٰهُ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّآ اَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِيْ
وَاَقِمِ الصَّلٰوةَ لِذِكْرِيْ ⑭

15 Surely the Hour is coming — I am about to make it manifest[1580] — so that every soul may be rewarded as it strives.

اِنَّ السَّاعَةَ اٰتِيَةٌ اَكَادُ اُخْفِيْهَا
لِتُجْزٰى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا تَسْعٰى ⑮

16 So let not him, who believes not in it and follows his low desire, turn thee away from it, lest thou perish.

فَلَا يَصُدَّنَّكَ عَنْهَا مَنْ لَّا يُؤْمِنُ بِهَا
وَاتَّبَعَ هَوٰىهُ فَتَرْدٰى ⑯

17 And what is this in thy right hand, O Moses?

وَمَا تِلْكَ بِيَمِيْنِكَ يٰمُوْسٰى ⑰

18 He said: This is my staff — I lean on it, and I beat the leaves with it for my sheep, and I have other uses for it.

قَالَ هِيَ عَصَايَ اَتَوَكَّؤُا عَلَيْهَا وَاَهُشُّ
بِهَا عَلٰى غَنَمِيْ وَلِيَ فِيْهَا مَاٰرِبُ اُخْرٰى ⑱

1578 As the verses that follow show, Moses received a Divine revelation on this occasion, and his seeing the fire was also a part of the revelation; it was with the spiritual eye that he saw it. The Holy Qur'ān has stated elsewhere that revelation is received only in three ways (42:51), and in each of these the recipient is really given particular senses with which to feel and see things; see 2235.

1579 The command to take off the shoes is a metaphorical expression for *making the heart vacant from care for family and property* (Bd). According to others: "It is a command to stay; like as you say to him whom you desire to stay, Take off thy garment and thy boots and the like" (T, LL).

Some think that *Ṭuwā* is the name of the valley; others interpret it as meaning *twice* (*blessed*). R gives a third explanation, saying that the word *ṭuwā* (lit., *rolled up*) is spoken in reference to the election of Moses, so that he had not to exert himself to attain that great goal.

1580 Ikhfā' is one of the words which convey contrary significances, *concealing* or *removing that which conceals* a thing (LL). But that here it does not mean *concealing* is made clear by the context. It is the coming of the Hour and the meting out of rewards and punishments that the verse deals with, which is clearly *removing the veil* or *making* the hour *manifest*. It should be noted that the Hour does not necessarily signify the Resurrection; on the other hand,

19 He said: Cast it down, O Moses.

قَالَ أَلْقِهَا يَا مُوسَىٰ

20 So he cast it down, and lo! it was a serpent, gliding.[1581]

فَأَلْقَاهَا فَإِذَا هِيَ حَيَّةٌ تَسْعَىٰ

21 He said: Seize it and fear not. We shall return it to its former state.

قَالَ خُذْهَا وَلَا تَخَفْ سَنُعِيدُهَا سِيرَتَهَا الْأُولَىٰ

22 And press thy hand to thy side, it will come out white without evil— another sign:[1582]

وَاضْمُمْ يَدَكَ إِلَىٰ جَنَاحِكَ تَخْرُجْ بَيْضَاءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوءٍ آيَةً أُخْرَىٰ

23 That We may show thee of Our greater signs.

لِنُرِيَكَ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا الْكُبْرَى

24 Go to Pharaoh, surely he has exceeded the limits.

اذْهَبْ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَىٰ

SECTION 2: **Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh**

25 He said: My Lord, expand my breast for me:

قَالَ رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي

26 And ease my affair for me:

وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي

27 And loose the knot from my tongue,[1583]

وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِّن لِّسَانِي

28 (That) they may understand my word.

يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي

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it very often indicates the *doom* of a people, *the hour of the departure of their glory and power.*

1581 All this was experienced by Moses in that particular state in which the recipient of a revelation finds himself at the time of the revelation; see 926. What was shown to Moses on this occasion had a deeper significance beneath it; see v. 23, where the object of showing these signs is stated to be that *We may show thee of Our greater signs.* Thus the two signs mentioned here were really indications of something greater. The word *'aṣā* stands metaphorically for a community; see 96. Hence the sight of his staff becoming a gliding serpent was shown to him as an indication that his community, i.e., the Israelite people, who had been reduced to a state of slavery under Pharaoh, would soon become a living nation.

1582 Bearing in mind what has been said above, the *yad baiḍā'* has also a deeper meaning. Literally *a white hand,* it signifies *an argument made very clear* (T); and a *demonstrating* or *demonstrated argument* or *allegation* or *evidence* (LL). The deeper significance in this case was that his arguments would prevail.

1583 It is to put an unnatural interpretation on the words to search for the knot or impediment of the tongue in the burning of it. The *'uqdah of the tongue* is *the coarseness* or *roughness* of it (LA). And the man who has *'uqdah* (i.e., *knot*) in his tongue is called *'aqid,* explained as meaning *a man having an impediment in his tongue, unable to speak freely* (LL).

29 And give to me an aider from my family :[1584]

وَاجْعَلْ لِّيْ وَزِيْرًا مِّنْ اَهْلِيْ ﴿۲۹﴾

30 Aaron, my brother ;

هٰرُوْنَ اَخِي ﴿۳۰﴾

31 Add to my strength by him,

اشْدُدْ بِهٖۤ اَزْرِيْ ﴿۳۱﴾

32 And make him share my task —

وَاَشْرِكْهُ فِيْۤ اَمْرِيْ ﴿۳۲﴾

33 So that we may glorify Thee much,

كَيْ نُسَبِّحَكَ كَثِيْرًا ﴿۳۳﴾

34 And much remember Thee.

وَّنَذْكُرَكَ كَثِيْرًا ﴿۳۴﴾

35 Surely, Thou art ever Seeing us.

اِنَّكَ كُنْتَ بِنَا بَصِيْرًا ﴿۳۵﴾

36 He said : Thou art indeed granted thy petition, O Moses.

قَالَ قَدْ اُوْتِيْتَ سُؤْلَكَ يٰمُوْسٰى ﴿۳۶﴾

37 And indeed We bestowed on thee a favour at another time,

وَلَقَدْ مَنَنَّا عَلَيْكَ مَرَّةً اُخْرٰۤى ﴿۳۷﴾

38 When We revealed to thy mother that which was revealed :

اِذْ اَوْحَيْنَاۤ اِلٰۤى اُمِّكَ مَا يُوْحٰۤى ﴿۳۸﴾

39 Put him into a chest, then cast it into the river, the river will cast it upon the shore — there an enemy to Me and an enemy to him shall take him up. And I shed on thee love from Me ; and that thou mayest be brought up before My eyes.[1585]

اَنِ اقْذِفِيْهِ فِي التَّابُوْتِ فَاقْذِفِيْهِ فِي الْيَمِّ فَلْيُلْقِهِ الْيَمُّ بِالسَّاحِلِ يَاْخُذْهُ عَدُوٌّ لِّيْ وَعَدُوٌّ لَّهٗ ؕ وَاَلْقَيْتُ عَلَيْكَ مَحَبَّةً مِّنِّيْ ۚ وَلِتُصْنَعَ عَلٰى عَيْنِيْ ﴿۳۹﴾

40 When thy sister went and said : Shall I direct you to one who will take charge of him ? So We brought thee back to thy mother that her eye might be cooled and she should not grieve.[1586] And thou didst kill a man, then We delivered thee from grief, and tried thee with (many) trials. Then

اِذْ تَمْشِيْۤ اُخْتُكَ فَتَقُوْلُ هَلْ اَدُلُّكُمْ عَلٰى مَنْ يَّكْفُلُهٗ ؕ فَرَجَعْنٰكَ اِلٰۤى اُمِّكَ كَيْ تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا وَلَا تَحْزَنَ ؕ وَقَتَلْتَ نَفْسًا فَنَجَّيْنٰكَ مِنَ الْغَمِّ وَفَتَنّٰكَ فُتُوْنًا ۚ فَلَبِثْتَ سِنِيْنَ فِيْۤ اَهْلِ

1584 *Wazīr* (from *wizr,* meaning *burden*) is literally *one who bears a burden,* and hence *an aider* or *helper,* because he bears the burden of another. It may also be rendered as *minister,* as the word is extensively used as signifying *a minister of a king.*

1585 This is in accordance with the Bible narrative. Moses was born at a time when Pharaoh had commanded all male children born to the Israelites to be thrown into the Nile. Moses' mother kept him concealed for three months, and at last, unable to hide him any longer, cast him upon the river in an ark of bulrushes, whence he was picked up by Pharaoh's daughter (Exod. 2:1-10).

1586 See Exod. 2:7-9.

thou didst stay for years among the people of Midian. Then thou camest hither as ordained, O Moses.[1587]

مَدْيَنَ ۙ ثُمَّ جِئْتَ عَلٰى قَدَرٍ يّٰمُوْسٰى ﴿٤٠﴾

41 And I have chosen thee for Myself.

وَ اصْطَنَعْتُكَ لِنَفْسِيْ ﴿٤١﴾ۚ

42 Go thou and thy brother with My messages and be not remiss in remembering Me.

اِذْهَبْ اَنْتَ وَ اَخُوْكَ بِاٰيٰتِيْ وَ لَا تَنِيَا فِيْ ذِكْرِيْ ﴿٤٢﴾ۚ

43 Go both of you to Pharaoh, surely he is inordinate;

اِذْهَبَاۤ اِلٰى فِرْعَوْنَ اِنَّهٗ طَغٰى ﴿٤٣﴾ۚۖ

44 Then speak to him a gentle word, haply he may mind or fear.

فَقُوْلَا لَهٗ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا لَّعَلَّهٗ يَتَذَكَّرُ اَوْ يَخْشٰى ﴿٤٤﴾

45 They said: Our Lord, we fear lest he hasten to do evil to us or be inordinate.

قَالَا رَبَّنَاۤ اِنَّنَا نَخَافُ اَنْ يَّفْرُطَ عَلَيْنَاۤ اَوْ اَنْ يَّطْغٰى ﴿٤٥﴾

46 He said: Fear not, surely I am with you — I do hear and see.

قَالَ لَا تَخَافَاۤ اِنَّنِيْ مَعَكُمَاۤ اَسْمَعُ وَ اَرٰى ﴿٤٦﴾

47 So go you to him and say: Surely we are two messengers of thy Lord; so send forth the Children of Israel with us; and torment them not. Indeed we have brought to thee a message from thy Lord, and peace to him who follows the guidance.

فَاْتِيٰهُ فَقُوْلَاۤ اِنَّا رَسُوْلَا رَبِّكَ فَاَرْسِلْ مَعَنَا بَنِيْۤ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ ۙ۬ وَ لَا تُعَذِّبْهُمْ ؕ قَدْ جِئْنٰكَ بِاٰيَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكَ ؕ وَ السَّلٰمُ عَلٰى مَنِ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدٰى ﴿٤٧﴾

48 It has indeed been revealed to us that punishment will overtake him who rejects and turns away.[1588]

اِنَّا قَدْ اُوْحِيَ اِلَيْنَاۤ اَنَّ الْعَذَابَ عَلٰى مَنْ كَذَّبَ وَ تَوَلّٰى ﴿٤٨﴾

49 (Pharaoh) said: Who is your Lord, O Moses?

قَالَ فَمَنْ رَّبُّكُمَا يٰمُوْسٰى ﴿٤٩﴾

50 He said: Our Lord is He Who gives to everything its creation, then guides (it).[1589]

قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِيْۤ اَعْطٰى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهٗ ثُمَّ هَدٰى ﴿٥٠﴾

1587 See Exod. 2:11-15.

1588 This contains a clear warning to Pharaoh of his end in case of rejection. Moses and Aaron were directed to convey this message. The whole account of their actual going to Pharaoh and the delivery of this message is omitted here, and the next verse gives us Pharaoh's reply to their demand.

1589 This verse contains an argument for the necessity of Divine revelation.

51 He said: What then is the state of the former generations?

قَالَ فَمَا بَالُ الْقُرُوْنِ الْاُوْلٰى ﴿٥١﴾

52 He said: The knowledge thereof is with my Lord in a book; my Lord neither errs nor forgets —

قَالَ عِلْمُهَا عِنْدَ رَبِّيْ فِيْ كِتٰبٍ ۚ لَا يَضِلُّ رَبِّيْ وَلَا يَنْسَى ﴿٥٢﴾

53 Who made the earth for you an expanse and made for you therein paths and sent down water from the clouds. Then thereby We bring forth pairs of various herbs.

الَّذِيْ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْاَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَّسَلَكَ لَكُمْ فِيْهَا سُبُلًا وَّ اَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً ۭ فَاَخْرَجْنَا بِهٖٓ اَزْوَاجًا مِّنْ نَّبَاتٍ شَتّٰى ﴿٥٣﴾

54 Eat and pasture your cattle. Surely there are signs in this for men of understanding.

كُلُوْا وَارْعَوْا اَنْعَامَكُمْ ۭ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّاُولِي النُّهٰى ﴿٥٤﴾

SECTION 3: **Moses and the Enchanters**

55 From it We created you, and into it We shall return you, and from it raise you a second time.

مِنْهَا خَلَقْنٰكُمْ وَفِيْهَا نُعِيْدُكُمْ وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً اُخْرٰى ﴿٥٥﴾

56 And truly We showed him all Our signs but he rejected and refused.

وَلَقَدْ اَرَيْنٰهُ اٰيٰتِنَا كُلَّهَا فَكَذَّبَ وَاَبٰى ﴿٥٦﴾

57 Said he: Hast thou come to us to turn us out of our land by thy enchantment, O Moses?

قَالَ اَجِئْتَنَا لِتُخْرِجَنَا مِنْ اَرْضِنَا بِسِحْرِكَ يٰمُوْسٰى ﴿٥٧﴾

58 We too can bring to thee enchantment like it, so make an appointment between us and thee, which we break not, (neither) we nor thou, (in) a central place.

فَلَنَاْتِيَنَّكَ بِسِحْرٍ مِّثْلِهٖ فَاجْعَلْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكَ مَوْعِدًا لَّا نُخْلِفُهٗ نَحْنُ وَلَآ اَنْتَ مَكَانًا سُوًى ﴿٥٨﴾

59 (Moses) said: Your appointment is the day of the Festival, and let the people be gathered in the early forenoon.

قَالَ مَوْعِدُكُمْ يَوْمُ الزِّيْنَةِ وَاَنْ يُّحْشَرَ النَّاسُ ضُحًى ﴿٥٩﴾

It says that, as Allāh has created everything, and then given it the qualities and means by which it can attain to perfection — for this is the true significance of *hadā*, i.e., *guides it* (*to its goal*) — so man also stands in need of spiritual and moral directions for his attainment to perfection.

60 So Pharaoh went back and settled his plan, then came.

فَتَوَلّٰى فِرْعَوْنُ فَجَمَعَ كَيْدَهٗ ثُمَّ اَتٰى ﴿٦٠﴾

61 Moses said to them: Woe to you! Forge not a lie against Allāh, lest He destroy you by punishment, and he fails indeed who forges (a lie).

قَالَ لَهُمْ مُّوْسٰى وَيْلَكُمْ لَا تَفْتَرُوْا عَلَى اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا فَيُسْحِتَكُمْ بِعَذَابٍ ۚ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنِ افْتَرٰى ﴿٦١﴾

62 So they disputed one with another about their affair and kept the discourse secret.

فَتَنَازَعُوْٓا اَمْرَهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ وَاَسَرُّوا النَّجْوٰى ﴿٦٢﴾

63 They said: These are surely two enchanters who would drive you out from your land by their enchantment, and destroy your excellent institutions.

قَالُوْٓا اِنْ هٰذٰنِ لَسٰحِرٰنِ يُرِيْدٰنِ اَنْ يُّخْرِجٰكُمْ مِّنْ اَرْضِكُمْ بِسِحْرِهِمَا وَيَذْهَبَا بِطَرِيْقَتِكُمُ الْمُثْلٰى ﴿٦٣﴾

64 So settle your plan, then come in ranks, and he will succeed indeed this day who is uppermost.

فَاَجْمِعُوْا كَيْدَكُمْ ثُمَّ ائْتُوْا صَفًّا ۚ وَقَدْ اَفْلَحَ الْيَوْمَ مَنِ اسْتَعْلٰى ﴿٦٤﴾

65 They said: O Moses, wilt thou cast, or shall we be the first to cast down?

قَالُوْا يٰمُوْسٰٓى اِمَّآ اَنْ تُلْقِيَ وَاِمَّآ اَنْ نَّكُوْنَ اَوَّلَ مَنْ اَلْقٰى ﴿٦٥﴾

66 He said: Nay! Cast you down. Then lo! their cords and their rods — it appeared to him by their enchantment as if they ran.[1591]

قَالَ بَلْ اَلْقُوْا ۚ فَاِذَا حِبَالُهُمْ وَعِصِيُّهُمْ يُخَيَّلُ اِلَيْهِ مِنْ سِحْرِهِمْ اَنَّهَا تَسْعٰى ﴿٦٦﴾

67 So Moses conceived fear in his mind.[1591a]

فَاَوْجَسَ فِيْ نَفْسِهٖ خِيْفَةً مُّوْسٰى ﴿٦٧﴾

68 We said: Fear not, surely thou art the uppermost.

قُلْنَا لَا تَخَفْ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْاَعْلٰى ﴿٦٨﴾

69 And cast down what is in thy right hand — it will eat up what they have wrought. What they have wrought is only the trick of an enchanter, and the enchanter succeeds not wheresoever he comes from.

وَاَلْقِ مَا فِيْ يَمِيْنِكَ تَلْقَفْ مَا صَنَعُوْا ؕ اِنَّمَا صَنَعُوْا كَيْدُ سٰحِرٍ ؕ وَلَا يُفْلِحُ السّٰحِرُ حَيْثُ اَتٰى ﴿٦٩﴾

70 So the enchanters fell down prostrate, saying: We believe in the Lord of Aaron and Moses.

فَاُلْقِيَ السَّحَرَةُ سُجَّدًا قَالُوْٓا اٰمَنَّا بِرَبِّ هٰرُوْنَ وَمُوْسٰى ﴿٧٠﴾

1591 The forces of untruth appear to carry the day for a while, but are soon vanquished; see v. 69. Also compare 7:117, where these *cords and rods* are described as *their lies*.

1591a, see next page.

71 (Pharaoh) said: You believe in him before I give you leave! Surely he is your chief who taught you enchantment. So I shall cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides and I shall crucify you on the trunks of palm-trees, and you shall certainly know which of us can give the severer and the more abiding chastisement.

قَالَ آمَنْتُمْ لَهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ آذَنَ لَكُمْ ۖ
إِنَّهُ لَكَبِيرُكُمُ الَّذِي عَلَّمَكُمُ السِّحْرَ ۖ
فَلَأُقَطِّعَنَّ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ مِنْ
خِلَافٍ وَلَأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمْ فِي جُذُوعِ النَّخْلِ
وَلَتَعْلَمُنَّ أَيُّنَا أَشَدُّ عَذَابًا وَأَبْقَىٰ ﴿٧١﴾

72 They said: We cannot prefer thee to what has come to us of clear arguments and to Him Who made us, so decide as thou wilt decide. Thou canst only decide about this world's life.

قَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْثِرَكَ عَلَىٰ مَا جَاءَنَا مِنَ
الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالَّذِي فَطَرَنَا ۖ فَاقْضِ مَا أَنْتَ
قَاضٍ ۖ إِنَّمَا تَقْضِي هَٰذِهِ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ﴿٧٢﴾

73 Surely we believe in our Lord that He may forgive us our faults and the magic to which thou didst compel us. And Allāh is Best and ever Abiding.

إِنَّا آمَنَّا بِرَبِّنَا لِيَغْفِرَ لَنَا خَطَايَانَا وَمَا
أَكْرَهْتَنَا عَلَيْهِ مِنَ السِّحْرِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ
خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 Whoso comes guilty to his Lord, for him is surely hell. He will neither die therein, nor live.[1592]

إِنَّهُ مَنْ يَأْتِ رَبَّهُ مُجْرِمًا فَإِنَّ لَهُ
جَهَنَّمَ ۖ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَىٰ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 And whoso comes to Him a believer, having done good deeds, for them are high ranks —

وَمَنْ يَأْتِهِ مُؤْمِنًا قَدْ عَمِلَ الصَّالِحَاتِ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الدَّرَجَاتُ الْعُلَىٰ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 Gardens of perpetuity, wherein flow rivers, to abide therein. And such is the reward of him who purifies himself.

جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَاءُ مَنْ تَزَكَّىٰ ﴿٧٦﴾

SECTION 4: **The Israelites worship the Calf**

77 And certainly We revealed to Moses: Travel by night with My

وَلَقَدْ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ

1591a Moses feared that people might be misled.

1592 Those in hell are not alive, because spiritually they are dead, and they are not dead because death would mean the cessation of their torments.

servants, then strike for them a dry path in the sea, not fearing to be overtaken, nor being afraid.[1593]

أَسْرِ بِعِبَادِي فَاضْرِبْ لَهُمْ طَرِيقًا فِي الْبَحْرِ يَبَسًا لَا تَخَافُ دَرَكًا وَلَا تَخْشَىٰ ﴿٧٧﴾

78 So Pharaoh followed them with his armies, then there covered them of the sea that which covered them.

فَأَتْبَعَهُمْ فِرْعَوْنُ بِجُنُودِهِ فَغَشِيَهُمْ مِنَ الْيَمِّ مَا غَشِيَهُمْ ﴿٧٨﴾

79 And Pharaoh led his people astray and he guided not aright.

وَأَضَلَّ فِرْعَوْنُ قَوْمَهُ وَمَا هَدَىٰ ﴿٧٩﴾

80 O Children of Israel, We truly delivered you from your enemy, and made a covenant with you on the blessed side of the mountain, and sent to you the manna and the quails.

يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ قَدْ أَنْجَيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ عَدُوِّكُمْ وَوَاعَدْنَاكُمْ جَانِبَ الطُّورِ الْأَيْمَنَ وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَنَّ وَالسَّلْوَىٰ ﴿٨٠﴾

81 Eat of the good things We have provided for you, and be not inordinate in respect thereof, lest My wrath come upon you; and he on whom My wrath comes, he perishes indeed.

كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَلَا تَطْغَوْا فِيهِ فَيَحِلَّ عَلَيْكُمْ غَضَبِي ۖ وَمَنْ يَحْلِلْ عَلَيْهِ غَضَبِي فَقَدْ هَوَىٰ ﴿٨١﴾

82 And surely I am Forgiving toward him who repents and believes and does good, then walks aright.

وَإِنِّي لَغَفَّارٌ لِمَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدَىٰ ﴿٨٢﴾

83 And what made thee hasten from thy people, O Moses?

وَمَا أَعْجَلَكَ عَنْ قَوْمِكَ يَا مُوسَىٰ ﴿٨٣﴾

84 He said: They are here on my track, and I hastened on to Thee, my Lord, that Thou mightest be pleased.

قَالَ هُمْ أُولَاءِ عَلَىٰ أَثَرِي وَعَجِلْتُ إِلَيْكَ رَبِّ لِتَرْضَىٰ ﴿٨٤﴾

85 He said: Surely We have tried thy people in thy absence, and the Sāmirī has led them astray.[1595]

قَالَ فَإِنَّا قَدْ فَتَنَّا قَوْمَكَ مِنْ بَعْدِكَ وَأَضَلَّهُمُ السَّامِرِيُّ ﴿٨٥﴾

86 So Moses returned to his people angry, sorrowing. He said: O my people, did not your Lord promise you a goodly promise? Did the promised time, then, seem long to you, or did you wish that displeasure from your Lord should come upon you, so that you broke (your) promise to me?

فَرَجَعَ مُوسَىٰ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ غَضْبَانَ أَسِفًا ۚ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ أَلَمْ يَعِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ وَعْدًا حَسَنًا ۚ أَفَطَالَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْعَهْدُ أَمْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ يَحِلَّ عَلَيْكُمْ غَضَبٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُمْ مَوْعِدِي ﴿٨٦﴾

1593, 1595, see next page.

87 They said: We broke not the promise to thee of our own accord, but we were made to bear the burdens of the ornaments of the people, then we cast them away, and thus did the Sāmirī suggest.[1596]

قَالُوْا مَآ اَخْلَفْنَا مَوْعِدَكَ بِمَلْكِنَا وَلٰكِنَّا حُمِّلْنَآ اَوْزَارًا مِّنْ زِيْنَةِ الْقَوْمِ فَقَذَفْنٰهَا فَكَذٰلِكَ اَلْقَى السَّامِرِيُّ ﴿٨٧﴾

88 Then he brought forth for them a calf, a body, which had a hollow sound, so they said: This is your god and the god of Moses; but he forgot.[1597]

فَاَخْرَجَ لَهُمْ عِجْلًا جَسَدًا لَّهٗ خُوَارٌ فَقَالُوْا هٰذَآ اِلٰهُكُمْ وَاِلٰهُ مُوْسٰى ۵ فَنَسِيَ ﴿٨٨﴾

89 Could they not see that it returned no reply to them, nor controlled any harm or benefit for them?[1598]

اَفَلَا يَرَوْنَ اَلَّا يَرْجِعُ اِلَيْهِمْ قَوْلًا ۙ وَّلَا يَمْلِكُ لَهُمْ ضَرًّا وَّلَا نَفْعًا ﴿٨٩﴾

SECTION 5: **The End of Calf-worship**

90 And Aaron indeed had said to them before: O my people, you are only tried by it, and surely your Lord is the Beneficent God, so follow me and obey my order.[1599]

وَلَقَدْ قَالَ لَهُمْ هٰرُوْنُ مِنْ قَبْلُ يٰقَوْمِ اِنَّمَا فُتِنْتُمْ بِهٖ ۚ وَاِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ الرَّحْمٰنُ فَاتَّبِعُوْنِيْ وَاَطِيْعُوْٓا اَمْرِيْ ﴿٩٠﴾

1593 This shows that there was at that time a dry path in the sea; see 82.

1595 The verse shows that some person other than Aaron was responsible for making the calf. From Rabbinical literature (see Jewish En., Art. "Calf") it appears that the Egyptians who had come with the Israelites were foremost in demanding the making of the calf. And *'Aṭā'* held on the authority of I'Ab that he was an Egyptian who believed in Moses and came along with the Israelites. The opinion that he was of a people who worshipped the cow is also traceable to I'Ab (Rz).

1596 The Israelites may have borrowed ornaments from the Egyptians as stated in Exod. 12:35, and the reference may here be to those ornaments, or the significance may simply be that the nomadic tribes of Israel, who were unaccustomed to these things, had imbibed these habits from the Egyptians, and now gave up those ornaments at the suggestion of the Sāmirī. The reply of the people states clearly they had not done the thing of *their own accord*, and hence the reference in the concluding words is to the suggestions cast into the minds of the people by the Sāmirī. And you say, *alqā-hu 'alai-hi*, meaning *he put it into his mind*, or *he suggested it* (LL).

1597 According to I'Ab, it had neither a voice nor a soul, but it was only a sound produced by the air passing through the hollow metal of which it was made (JB).

1598 The argument made use of in this verse shows that God not only listens to prayers but also gives a reply to His true worshippers when they pray to Him.

1599 From this it is clear that not only had Aaron no part in making the calf, but he even enjoined his people to give up its worship. The Qur'ān here contradicts the Bible.

91 They said: We shall not cease to keep to its worship until Moses returns to us.

قَالُوا لَن نَّبْرَحَ عَلَيْهِ عَاكِفِينَ حَتَّىٰ يَرْجِعَ إِلَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ ﴿٩١﴾

92 (Moses) said: O Aaron, what prevented thee, when thou sawest them going astray,

قَالَ يَا هَارُونُ مَا مَنَعَكَ إِذْ رَأَيْتَهُمْ ضَلُّوا ﴿٩٢﴾

93 That thou didst not follow me? Hast thou, then, disobeyed my order?

أَلَّا تَتَّبِعَنِ ۖ أَفَعَصَيْتَ أَمْرِي ﴿٩٣﴾

94 He said: O son of my mother, seize me not by my beard, nor by my head. Surely I was afraid lest thou shouldst say: Thou hast caused division among the Children of Israel and not waited for my word.

قَالَ يَا ابْنَ أُمَّ لَا تَأْخُذْ بِلِحْيَتِي وَلَا بِرَأْسِي ۖ إِنِّي خَشِيتُ أَن تَقُولَ فَرَّقْتَ بَيْنَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَلَمْ تَرْقُبْ قَوْلِي ﴿٩٤﴾

95 (Moses) said: What was thy object, O Sāmirī?

قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكَ يَا سَامِرِيُّ ﴿٩٥﴾

96 He said: I perceived what they perceived not, so I took a handful from the footprints of the messenger then I cast it away. Thus did my soul embellish (it) to me.[1600]

قَالَ بَصُرْتُ بِمَا لَمْ يَبْصُرُوا بِهِ فَقَبَضْتُ قَبْضَةً مِّنْ أَثَرِ الرَّسُولِ فَنَبَذْتُهَا وَكَذَٰلِكَ سَوَّلَتْ لِي نَفْسِي ﴿٩٦﴾

97 He said: Begone then! It is for thee in this life to say, Touch (me) not. And for thee is a promise which shall not fail. And look at thy god to whose worship thou hast kept. We will certainly burn it, then we will scatter it in the sea.[1601]

قَالَ فَاذْهَبْ فَإِنَّ لَكَ فِي الْحَيَاةِ أَن تَقُولَ لَا مِسَاسَ ۖ وَإِنَّ لَكَ مَوْعِدًا لَّن تُخْلَفَهُ ۖ وَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ إِلَٰهِكَ الَّذِي ظَلْتَ عَلَيْهِ عَاكِفًا ۖ لَّنُحَرِّقَنَّهُ ثُمَّ لَنَنسِفَنَّهُ فِي الْيَمِّ نَسْفًا ﴿٩٧﴾

98 Your Lord is only Allāh, there is no God but He. He comprehends all things in (His) knowledge.

إِنَّمَا إِلَٰهُكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَسِعَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا ﴿٩٨﴾

1600 The stories which many commentators have related under this verse are all baseless, and even Rāzī has discredited them. The *rasūl*, or messenger, is evidently Moses himself; his *athar* signifies his *sunnah*, i.e., his *practices and sayings*, a significance to which all authorities agree (LL), the word being well-known in Muslim religious literature, and the *qabḍat* is *taking* or *following those practices in part*, because *qabḍat* denotes *a single act of taking*, or *only a handful*, i.e., *a small part of it*. The man who made the calf thus asserts that he had a clearer perception of things than the Israelites, that he accepted the teachings of Moses only partially, and confesses that he now threw off even that part and made a calf for worship.

1601 This shows that the ashes of the calf were thrown into the sea, and the story of the Israelites being made to drink of water mixed with the ashes of

99 Thus relate We to thee of the news of what has gone before. And indeed We have given thee a Reminder from Ourselves.

كَذٰلِكَ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ اَنْۢبَآءِ مَا قَدْ سَبَقَ ۚ وَقَدْ اٰتَيْنٰكَ مِنْ لَّدُنَّا ذِكْرًا ﴿٩٩﴾

100 Whoever turns away from it, he will surely bear a burden on the day of Resurrection,

مَنْ اَعْرَضَ عَنْهُ فَاِنَّهٗ يَحْمِلُ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ وِزْرًا ﴿١٠٠﴾

101 Abiding therein. And evil will be their burden on the day of Resurrection —

خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهِ ؕ وَسَآءَ لَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ حِمْلًا ﴿١٠١﴾

102 The day when the trumpet is blown; and We shall gather the guilty, blue-eyed, on that day,[1601a]

يَّوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِى الصُّوْرِ وَنَحْشُرُ الْمُجْرِمِيْنَ يَوْمَئِذٍ زُرْقًا ﴿١٠٢﴾

103 Consulting together secretly: You tarried but ten (days).[1602]

يَّتَخَافَتُوْنَ بَيْنَهُمْ اِنْ لَّبِثْتُمْ اِلَّا عَشْرًا ﴿١٠٣﴾

104 We know best what they say when the fairest of them in course would say: You tarried but a day.[1603]

نَحْنُ اَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَقُوْلُوْنَ اِذْ يَقُوْلُ اَمْثَلُهُمْ طَرِيْقَةً اِنْ لَّبِثْتُمْ اِلَّا يَوْمًا ﴿١٠٤﴾

SECTION 6: **The Prophet's Opponents**

105 And they ask thee about the mountains. Say: My Lord will scatter them, as scattered dust,

وَيَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ عَنِ الْجِبَالِ فَقُلْ يَنْسِفُهَا رَبِّىْ نَسْفًا ﴿١٠٥﴾

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the calf is not, therefore, credited by the Holy Qur'ān; see 137. The Bible is again contradicted here; see Exod. 32:20 and Deut. 9:21. The punishment given to the Sāmirī is that of an outcast in society, who is prohibited from having any intercourse or relations with the Israelite people.

1601a The word *zurq* means *blue-eyed*. According to Bd, blue being the colour of the eyes of the *Rūm* (i.e., the Greeks or the Romans), who were most hated by the Arabs, that colour was regarded by the Arabs as the worst colour for the eye. The word may also signify *blind*, in reference to the guilty being raised up blind in the Resurrection, for which see v. 124.

1602 The object of *'ashr*, ten, is omitted; but, as elsewhere the lovers of the world are described as loving to be *granted a life of a thousand years* (2:96), what is apparently indicated here is that they will have enjoyed ten centuries of great prosperity. Or, if the word *days* is understood, the ten days of the life of a nation would also mean ten centuries.

1603 Because a day is equal to a thousand years: "And they ask thee to

106 Then leave it a plain, smooth, level,[1604]

فَيَذَرُهَا قَاعًا صَفْصَفًا ﴿١٠٦﴾

107 Wherein thou seest no crookedness nor unevenness.

لَّا تَرٰى فِيهَا عِوَجًا وَّلَآ اَمْتًا ﴿١٠٧﴾

108 On that day they will follow the Inviter, in whom is no crookedness; and the voices are low before the Beneficent God, so that thou hearest naught but a soft sound.[1605]

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَّتَّبِعُوْنَ الدَّاعِيَ لَا عِوَجَ لَهٗ ۚ وَخَشَعَتِ الْاَصْوَاتُ لِلرَّحْمٰنِ فَلَا تَسْمَعُ اِلَّا هَمْسًا ﴿١٠٨﴾

109 On that day no intercession avails except of him whom the Beneficent allows, and whose word He is pleased with.

يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا تَنْفَعُ الشَّفَاعَةُ اِلَّا مَنْ اَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمٰنُ وَرَضِيَ لَهٗ قَوْلًا ﴿١٠٩﴾

110 He knows what is before them and what is behind them, while they cannot comprehend it in knowledge.

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيْطُوْنَ بِهٖ عِلْمًا ﴿١١٠﴾

111 And faces shall be humbled before the Living, the Self-subsistent. And he who bears iniquity is indeed undone.

وَعَنَتِ الْوُجُوْهُ لِلْحَيِّ الْقَيُّوْمِ ۭ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ حَمَلَ ظُلْمًا ﴿١١١﴾

112 And whoever does good works and he is a believer, he has no fear of injustice, nor of the withholding of his due.

وَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِنَ الصّٰلِحٰتِ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَا يَخٰفُ ظُلْمًا وَّلَا هَضْمًا ﴿١١٢﴾

113 And thus have We sent it down an Arabic Qur'ān, and have distinctly set forth therein of threats that they

وَكَذٰلِكَ اَنْزَلْنٰهُ قُرْاٰنًا عَرَبِيًّا وَّصَرَّفْنَا فِيْهِ مِنَ الْوَعِيْدِ لَعَلَّهُمْ

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hasten on the chastisement, and Allāh by no means fails in His promise, and surely a day with thy Lord is as a thousand years as you reckon" (22:47). It is the man who reminds them of this Divine promise that is called *the fairest in course*.

1604 The word *jabal* means a *mountain*, as well as the *lord* or *chief of a people* (LL). That the latter significance is intended here is shown by the context; see in particular v. 108: "On that day they will follow the Inviter". In the same sense are to be taken the two verses that follow: they point to the removal of all obstacles that hindered the advance of Truth.

1605 The Inviter in whom there is no crookedness is no other than the Holy Prophet, as is clearly stated elsewhere: "Who revealed the Book to His servant and did not make in him any crookedness" (18:1). The whole verse clearly points to a time when Islām would be completely established, and instead of

may guard against evil, or that it may be a reminder for them.

يَتَّقُوْنَ اَوْ يُحْدِثُ لَهُمْ ذِكْرًا ﴿١١٣﴾

114 Supremely exalted then is Allāh, the King, the Truth. And make not haste with the Qur'ān before its revelation is made complete to thee, and say: My Lord, increase me in knowledge.[1606]

فَتَعٰلَى اللّٰهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ ۚ وَلَا تَعْجَلْ بِالْقُرْاٰنِ مِنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يُّقْضٰۤى اِلَيْكَ وَحْيُهٗ ۫ وَقُلْ رَّبِّ زِدْنِيْ عِلْمًا ﴿١١٤﴾

115 And certainly We gave a commandment to Adam before, but he forgot; and We found in him no resolve (to disobey).[1607]

وَلَقَدْ عَهِدْنَاۤ اِلٰۤى اٰدَمَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَنَسِيَ وَلَمْ نَجِدْ لَهٗ عَزْمًا ﴿١١٥﴾

SECTION 7: **The Devil's misleading**

116 And when We said to the angels: Be submissive to Adam, they submitted except Iblīs; he refused.

وَاِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اسْجُدُوْا لِاٰدَمَ فَسَجَدُوْۤا اِلَّاۤ اِبْلِيْسَ ؕ اَبٰى ﴿١١٦﴾

117 We said: O Adam, this is an enemy to thee and to thy wife; so let him not drive you both out of the garden so that thou art unhappy.

فَقُلْنَا يٰۤاٰدَمُ اِنَّ هٰذَا عَدُوٌّ لَّكَ وَلِزَوْجِكَ فَلَا يُخْرِجَنَّكُمَا مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ فَتَشْقٰى ﴿١١٧﴾

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opposition the *voices would be low* before the Beneficent. The lowness of the voice indicates submission.

1606 The Prophet no doubt desired that it should be made clear to him how the great transformation would be brought about and when the severe opposition which he was facing would come to an end. Perhaps he also desired that the warning to the opponents should be made clearer, perchance they might benefit by it. The Prophet is here told that he should not make haste with regard to what was promised in the Qur'ān. The process will be gradual and meanwhile he should pray for more and more knowledge, for it was through knowledge that this great transformation was to be brought about. In fact, we are here told that as knowledge of the Truth spreads in the world, a change will come about and opposition will come to an end. Even to-day a spiritual transformation can be brought about by spreading knowledge of the Qur'ān, which is the greatest spiritual force that the world has ever seen, and it is only on account of being ignorant of this great spiritual force that the world remains in darkness. It is now for the followers of the Qur'ān to say, *Let there be light!*

1607 The use of the word *nasiya,* which means *he forgot,* makes it clear that there was no intention on Adam's part to disobey God's command, or *no resolve to disobey.*

118 Surely it is granted to thee therein that thou art not hungry, nor naked,

إِنَّ لَكَ أَلَّا تَجُوعَ فِيهَا وَلَا تَعْرٰى ﴿١١٨﴾

119 And that thou art not thirsty therein, nor exposed to the sun's heat.[1608]

وَأَنَّكَ لَا تَظْمَؤُا فِيهَا وَلَا تَضْحٰى ﴿١١٩﴾

120 But the devil made an evil suggestion to him; he said: O Adam, shall I lead thee to the tree of immortality and a kingdom which decays not?

فَوَسْوَسَ إِلَيْهِ الشَّيْطٰنُ قَالَ يٰٓاٰدَمُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلٰى شَجَرَةِ الْخُلْدِ وَمُلْكٍ لَّا يَبْلٰى ﴿١٢٠﴾

121 So they both ate of it, then their evil inclinations became manifest to them, and they began to cover themselves with the leaves of the garden. And Adam disobeyed his Lord, and was disappointed.[1609]

فَأَكَلَا مِنْهَا فَبَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْاٰتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفٰنِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِنْ وَّرَقِ الْجَنَّةِ ۚ وَعَصٰٓى اٰدَمُ رَبَّهٗ فَغَوٰى ﴿١٢١﴾

122 Then his Lord chose him, so He turned to him and guided (him).

ثُمَّ اجْتَبٰهُ رَبُّهٗ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ وَهَدٰى ﴿١٢٢﴾

123 He said: Go forth herefrom both — all (of you) — one of you (is) enemy to another. So there will surely come to you guidance from Me; then whoever follows My guidance, he will not go astray nor be unhappy.

قَالَ اهْبِطَا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ ۚ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِّنِّيْ هُدًى ۙ فَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَلَا يَشْقٰى ﴿١٢٣﴾

124 And whoever turns away from My Reminder, for him is surely a straitened life, and We shall raise him up blind on the day of Resurrection.[1610]

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَنْ ذِكْرِيْ فَإِنَّ لَهٗ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَّنَحْشُرُهٗ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ أَعْمٰى ﴿١٢٤﴾

125 He will say: My Lord, why hast Thou raised me up blind, while I used to see?

قَالَ رَبِّ لِمَ حَشَرْتَنِيْٓ أَعْمٰى وَقَدْ كُنْتُ بَصِيرًا ﴿١٢٥﴾

1608 The garden of which a picture is given here is an earthly garden in which all the comforts necessary for a man are made available to him. The words *thou art not hungry therein* should be read along with what is said elsewhere: *And eat from it a plenteous food wherever you wish* (2:35). Allegorically it signifies a state of contentment or rest in which there is no yearning either to good or to evil, being as it were a state of inertia, devoid of exertion or ambition.

1609 Ghawā means his *life became evil to him* (R). It is also interpreted as meaning *he was disappointed*, or *he acted ignorantly* (LL).

It should be noted that, while in the picture of the garden drawn above in

1610, see next page.

126 He will say: Thus did Our messages come to thee, but thou didst neglect them. And thus art thou forsaken this day.

قَالَ كَذٰلِكَ أَتَتْكَ اٰيٰتُنَا فَنَسِيْتَهَا ۚ
وَكَذٰلِكَ الْيَوْمَ تُنْسٰى ﴿١٢٦﴾

127 And thus do We recompense him who is extravagant and believes not in the messages of his Lord. And certainly the chastisement of the Hereafter is severer and more lasting.

وَكَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِيْ مَنْ أَسْرَفَ وَلَمْ
يُؤْمِنْ بِاٰيٰتِ رَبِّهٖ ۭ وَلَعَذَابُ الْاٰخِرَةِ
أَشَدُّ وَأَبْقٰى ﴿١٢٧﴾

128 Does it not manifest to them how many of the generations, in whose dwellings they go about, We destroyed before them? Surely there are signs in this for men of understanding.

أَفَلَمْ يَهْدِ لَهُمْ كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِّنَ
الْقُرُوْنِ يَمْشُوْنَ فِيْ مَسٰكِنِهِمْ ۭ إِنَّ فِيْ
ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّأُولِي النُّهٰى ﴿١٢٨﴾

SECTION 8: **Punishment is certain**

129 And had not a word gone forth from thy Lord, and a term been fixed, it would surely have overtaken them.

وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ لَكَانَ
لِزَامًا وَّأَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى ﴿١٢٩﴾

130 So bear patiently what they say, and celebrate the praise of thy Lord before the rising of the sun and before its setting, and glorify (Him) during the hours of the night and parts of the day, that thou mayest be well pleased.[1610a]

فَاصْبِرْ عَلٰى مَا يَقُوْلُوْنَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ
رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوْعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ
غُرُوْبِهَا ۚ وَمِنْ اٰنَآئِ الَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْ وَ
أَطْرَافَ النَّهَارِ لَعَلَّكَ تَرْضٰى ﴿١٣٠﴾

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vv. 118 and 119 mention is made of four things, the consequence of getting out of that state is only one, *the becoming manifest to them of their evil inclinations or their shame.* An explanation of this is found in 7:26, where it is said: "O children of Adam, We have indeed sent down to you clothing to cover your shame and clothing for beauty; and clothing that guards against evil, that is the best". Thus it is the clothing that guards against evil that is really spoken of here, and by the manifestation of the shame is meant the consciousness of having done something evil. The allegorical nature of what is so often related as the story of Adam is thus evident. It will be further seen that the remedy pointed out is of a spiritual nature, as here in vv. 123 and 124 and in 2:38. This shows that the spiritual aspect of man's life and not the physical one is the real theme of Adam's story.

1610 The man who shuts his eyes to the Reminder leads a straitened life because he does not receive spiritual blessings. It is only a contented mind that brings ease and comfort to man, and contentment comes only through faith in God.

1610a The Holy Prophet, while told to bear persecutions patiently for a time, is also told to seek comfort in prayer. Hence the injunction to bear patiently is

131 And strain not thine eyes toward that with which We have provided different classes of them, (of) the splendour of this world's life, that We may thereby try them. And the sustenance of thy Lord is better and more abiding.

وَلَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلٰى مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهٖٓ
أَزْوَاجًا مِّنْهُمْ زَهْرَةَ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ۙ
لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ؕ وَرِزْقُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَّأَبْقٰى ﴿١٣١﴾

132 And enjoin prayer on thy people, and steadily adhere to it. We ask not of thee a sustenance. We provide for thee. And the (good) end is for guarding against evil.

وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلٰوةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا ؕ
لَا نَسْـَٔلُكَ رِزْقًا ؕ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكَ ؕ
وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلتَّقْوٰى ﴿١٣٢﴾

133 And they say: Why does he not bring us a sign from his Lord? Has not there come to them a clear evidence of what is in the previous Books?[1610b]

وَقَالُوْا لَوْلَا يَأْتِيْنَا بِاٰيَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّهٖ ؕ أَوَلَمْ
تَأْتِهِمْ بَيِّنَةُ مَا فِي الصُّحُفِ الْأُوْلٰى ﴿١٣٣﴾

134 And if We had destroyed them with chastisement before it, they would have said: Our Lord, why didst Thou not send to us a messenger, so that we might have followed Thy messages before we met disgrace and shame?

وَلَوْ أَنَّآ أَهْلَكْنٰهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِهٖ لَقَالُوْا
رَبَّنَا لَوْلَآ أَرْسَلْتَ إِلَيْنَا رَسُوْلًا فَنَتَّبِعَ
اٰيٰتِكَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ نَّذِلَّ وَنَخْزٰى ﴿١٣٤﴾

135 Say: Every one (of us) is waiting, so wait. Soon you will come to know who is the follower of the even path and who goes aright.

قُلْ كُلٌّ مُّتَرَبِّصٌ فَتَرَبَّصُوْا ۚ فَسَتَعْلَمُوْنَ
مَنْ أَصْحٰبُ الصِّرَاطِ السَّوِيِّ وَمَنِ
اهْتَدٰى ﴿١٣٥﴾

at once followed by an injunction to pray. And he did find comfort in prayer under the severest persecutions. "The coolness of my eyes is in prayer," he is reported to have said (Msh. 25). This verse speaks of the five obligatory prayers and the two optional ones. Before the rising of the sun is the dawn prayer, before its setting the *'aṣr* prayer. Three prayers, the *maghrib, the 'ishā'* and the *tahajjud* (the last named being optional), occur during the hours of the night, while during parts of the day are the *zuhr* and the *ḍuḥā,* the latter again being optional, being a short prayer in the early forenoon.

1610b The Holy Qur'ān is here called a clear evidence of what is contained in the previous Books, because it fulfils their prophecies and corroborates their truth.



PART XVII

CHAPTER 21

Al-Anbiyā' : THE PROPHETS

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: *sections* ; 112 *verses*)

This chapter deals more with the deliverance of the righteous than the punishment of the wicked, more with the triumph of truth than the annihilation of falsehood, though the one no doubt implies the other. While it is devoted in part to general statements regarding the deliverance of the prophets, and the ultimate triumph of their cause, and hence goes under the name of *The Prophets*, the history of Abraham is particularly referred to, as is that of Moses in the last.

The chapter begins with the certainty of the punishment of the opponents and is followed by a clear declaration that the judgment approaches and the reckoning is nigh. We are then told that Truth must triumph now as it has always done, and this is shown in the second section. The third draws attention to the truth of revelation in general, and the revelation of the Prophet in particular. The fourth calls attention to the predominance of mercy in the Divine nature, for merciful dealing was specially to mark the punishment of the Holy Prophet's opponents, and in this respect Abraham was to be his prototype, whose history forms the subject-matter of the next section. The sixth shows how prophets have always been delivered from the hands of their enemies in the most critical circumstances, and the last adds that the righteous will be made to inherit the land and Truth will ultimately prevail. As regards the date of its revelation, see the introductory note on ch. 17.

SECTION 1 **Judgment approaches**

In the name of Allāh the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Their reckoning draws nigh to men, and they turn away in heedlessness.

اِقْتَرَبَ لِلنَّاسِ حِسَابُهُمْ وَهُمْ فِيْ
غَفْلَةٍ مُّعْرِضُوْنَ ١

2 There comes not to them a new Reminder from their Lord but they hear it while they sport,

مَا يَأْتِيْهِمْ مِّنْ ذِكْرٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّهِمْ مُّحْدَثٍ
اِلَّا اسْتَمَعُوْهُ وَهُمْ يَلْعَبُوْنَ ٢

3 Their hearts trifling. And they — the wrongdoers — counsel in secret: He is nothing but a mortal like yourselves; will you then yield to enchantment while you see?

لَاهِيَةً قُلُوْبُهُمْ ۚ وَاَسَرُّوا النَّجْوَى ۖ
الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا ۖ هَلْ هٰذَآ اِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ ۚ
اَفَتَاْتُوْنَ السِّحْرَ وَاَنْتُمْ تُبْصِرُوْنَ ٣

4 He said: My Lord knows (every) utterance in the heaven and the earth, and He is the Hearer, the Knower.

قٰلَ رَبِّيْ يَعْلَمُ الْقَوْلَ فِي السَّمَآءِ
وَالْاَرْضِ وَهُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ ٤

5 Nay, say they: Medleys of dreams! nay, he has forged it! nay, he is a poet! so let him bring to us a sign such as the former (prophets) were sent (with).[1611]

بَلْ قَالُوْٓا اَضْغَاثُ اَحْلَامٍ بَلِ
افْتَرٰىهُ بَلْ هُوَ شَاعِرٌ ۚ فَلْيَاْتِنَا
بِاٰيَةٍ كَمَآ اُرْسِلَ الْاَوَّلُوْنَ ٥

6 Not a town believed before them which We destroyed: will they then believe?[1612]

مَآ اٰمَنَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ مِّنْ قَرْيَةٍ اَهْلَكْنٰهَا ۚ
اَفَهُمْ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ٦

7 And We sent not before thee any but men to whom We sent revelation; so ask the followers of the Reminder if you know not.

وَمَآ اَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ اِلَّا رِجَالًا نُّوْحِيْٓ
اِلَيْهِمْ فَسْئَلُوْٓا اَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ
اِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ٧

1611 The Quraish seem to have been quite puzzled — and hostile critics of the Qur'ān are still puzzled — what they could liken the Qur'ān to. They first call it *siḥr*, i.e., *skilful eloquence* (T), because, notwithstanding their opposition to it, it had an attraction for them. But then there are prophecies which mere eloquence cannot produce, so they call it *medleys of dreams*. Then they think that there is a settled purpose therein, by reason of its asserting the Prophet's triumph and the discomfiture of his powerful enemies, so they call it an intentional *forgery*; and lastly, as if to devise one word combining all these, they call him a *poet*. Then they demand a sign the like of which was given to the former prophets, meaning their destruction, because the Qur'ān had repeatedly called their attention to the fate of those who had rejected the truth before them.

1612 They are told in reply that persistence in wickedness and disbelief has always been punished with destruction.

8 Nor did We give them bodies not eating food, nor did they abide.[1613]

وَمَا جَعَلْنٰهُمْ جَسَدًا لَّا يَأْكُلُوْنَ الطَّعَامَ وَمَا كَانُوْا خٰلِدِيْنَ ۝٨

9 Then We made Our promise good to them; so We delivered them and whom We pleased, and We destroyed the extravagant.

ثُمَّ صَدَقْنٰهُمُ الْوَعْدَ فَاَنْجَيْنٰهُمْ وَمَنْ نَّشَآءُ وَاَهْلَكْنَا الْمُسْرِفِيْنَ ۝٩

10 Certainly We have revealed to you a Book which will give you eminence. Do you not then understand?[1614]

لَقَدْ اَنْزَلْنَآ اِلَيْكُمْ كِتٰبًا فِيْهِ ذِكْرُكُمْ ۭ اَفَلَا تَعْقِلُوْنَ ۝١٠

SECTION 2: **Truth has always Triumphed**

11 And how many a town which was iniquitous did We demolish, and We raised up after it another people!

وَكَمْ قَصَمْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ كَانَتْ ظَالِمَةً وَّاَنْشَاْنَا بَعْدَهَا قَوْمًا اٰخَرِيْنَ ۝١١

12 So when they felt Our might, lo! they began to flee from it.

فَلَمَّآ اَحَسُّوْا بَاْسَنَآ اِذَا هُمْ مِّنْهَا يَرْكُضُوْنَ ۝١٢

13 Flee not and return to the easy lives which you led, and to your dwellings, that you may be questioned.

لَا تَرْكُضُوْا وَارْجِعُوْٓا اِلٰى مَآ اُتْرِفْتُمْ فِيْهِ وَمَسٰكِنِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُسْـَٔلُوْنَ ۝١٣

14 They said: O woe to us! Surely we were unjust.

قَالُوْا يٰوَيْلَنَآ اِنَّا كُنَّا ظٰلِمِيْنَ ۝١٤

15 And this cry of theirs ceased not till We made them cut off, extinct.[1615]

فَمَا زَالَتْ تِّلْكَ دَعْوٰىهُمْ حَتّٰى جَعَلْنٰهُمْ حَصِيْدًا خٰمِدِيْنَ ۝١٥

1613 Thus every prophet had a mortal body needing food for its support, and every one of them tasted of death. Therefore Jesus also must have had a body which stood in need of food and must have tasted of death. The idea that he is alive is clearly opposed to this verse.

1614 Whenever the opponents demand that the threatened punishment should come, the reply always is that the Qur'ān is a blessing and a mercy for them. The same truth is expressed here. They demand a sign like that of former prophets, but they are told that the Qur'ān has been revealed to make them a great and eminent nation in the world. *Dhikr* means *eminence, fame, renown, honour* as well as *reminder* (LL). Also see 2:152, 38:1, for this meaning of *dhikr.*

1615 The metaphor in *ḥaṣīd, cut off,* is taken from seed-produce which is reaped, and in *khāmid, extinct,* from fire which is extinguished, and the ashes of which are left smouldering. The above verses contain a clear warning for the opponents.

16 And We created not the heaven and the earth and what is between them for sport.[1616]

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَآءَ وَالْاَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا لٰعِبِيْنَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 Had We wished to take a pastime, We would have taken it from before Ourselves; by no means would We do (so).[1617]

لَوْ اَرَدْنَآ اَنْ نَّتَّخِذَ لَهْوًا لَّاتَّخَذْنٰهُ مِنْ لَّدُنَّآ ۖ اِنْ كُنَّا فٰعِلِيْنَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Nay, We hurl the Truth against falsehood, so it knocks out its brains, and lo! it vanishes.[1618] And woe to you for what you describe!

بَلْ نَقْذِفُ بِالْحَقِّ عَلَى الْبَاطِلِ فَيَدْمَغُهٗ فَاِذَا هُوَ زَاهِقٌ ۗ وَلَكُمُ الْوَيْلُ مِمَّا تَصِفُوْنَ ﴿١٨﴾

19 And to Him belongs whoever is in the heavens and the earth. And those who are with Him are not too proud to serve Him, nor are they weary.

وَلَهٗ مَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۗ وَمَنْ عِنْدَهٗ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُوْنَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهٖ وَلَا يَسْتَحْسِرُوْنَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 They glorify (Him) night and day: they flag not.

يُسَبِّحُوْنَ الَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ لَا يَفْتُرُوْنَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Or have they taken gods from the earth who give life?

اَمِ اتَّخَذُوْٓا اٰلِهَةً مِّنَ الْاَرْضِ هُمْ يُنْشِرُوْنَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 If there were in them gods besides Allāh, they would both have been in disorder. So glory be to Allāh, the Lord of the Throne, being above what they describe![1620]

لَوْ كَانَ فِيْهِمَآ اٰلِهَةٌ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ لَفَسَدَتَا ۚ فَسُبْحٰنَ اللّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُوْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾

1616 It is a continuance of the warning given in the previous verses. They were made to witness signs of the truth of the Prophet and they are now told to bear in mind that these signs were not in vain. In nature every cause has an effect and every end is achieved by means. Life must be taken seriously, not as a jest.

1617 The *in* is here *nāfiyah*, i.e., negativing the statement already made. Pastime, *lahw*, in this verse carries the same significance as *sporting* in the previous verse. The commentators say that *lahw*, in the dialect of Yaman, signifies *wife* or *child*, and thus the statement made in the verse is a refutation of the Christian doctrine that Jesus Christ is the son of God (IJ).

1618 Mark the deep conviction of the Prophet as to the ultimate triumph of Truth in the world. Certainly Truth had dawned on his mind in full resplendence. The forces of darkness and falsehood, which were uppermost in Arabia when these words were uttered, were brought to naught in his lifetime and, however powerful they may appear to be, they cannot even to-day make a stand before the onward march of Truth.

1620 There is order in the universe because one law pervades the whole of it, and one law clearly points to one Author and Maintainer of that law. The unity of law is a clear proof of the Unity of the Maker.

Note that here Allāh is spoken of as *Rabb al-'Arsh*, the nourisher unto perfection of the *'Arsh*, so that the *'Arsh*, or the Throne itself is sustained by God, and it is not God Who is sustained by the *'Arsh*.

23 He cannot be questioned as to what He does, and they will be questioned.

لَا يُسْـَٔلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْـَٔلُوْنَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Or, have they taken gods besides Him? Say: Bring your proof. This is the reminder of those with me and the reminder of those before me.[1621] Nay, most of them know not the Truth, so they turn away.

اَمِ اتَّخَذُوْا مِنْ دُوْنِهٖۤ اٰلِهَةً ؕ قُلْ هَاتُوْا بُرْهَانَكُمْ ۚ هٰذَا ذِكْرُ مَنْ مَّعِيَ وَذِكْرُ مَنْ قَبْلِيْ ؕ بَلْ اَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ۙ الْحَقَّ فَهُمْ مُّعْرِضُوْنَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And We sent no messenger before thee but We revealed to him that there is no God but Me, so serve Me.

وَمَاۤ اَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَّسُوْلٍ اِلَّا نُوْحِيْۤ اِلَيْهِ اَنَّهٗ لَاۤ اِلٰهَ اِلَّاۤ اَنَا فَاعْبُدُوْنِ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 And they say: The Beneficent has taken to Himself a son. Glory be to Him! Nay, they are honoured servants—[1623]

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمٰنُ وَلَدًا سُبْحٰنَهٗ ؕ بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكْرَمُوْنَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 They speak not before He speaks, and according to His command they act.[1624]

لَا يَسْبِقُوْنَهٗ بِالْقَوْلِ وَهُمْ بِاَمْرِهٖ يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they intercede not except for him whom He approves, and for fear of Him they tremble.

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يَشْفَعُوْنَ ۙ اِلَّا لِمَنِ ارْتَضٰى وَهُمْ مِّنْ خَشْيَتِهٖ مُشْفِقُوْنَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 And whoever of them should say, I am a god besides Him, such a

وَمَنْ يَّقُلْ مِنْهُمْ اِنِّيْۤ اِلٰهٌ مِّنْ

1621 The great and fundamental truth of the Unity of Allāh is common to all religions; no prophet ever taught polytheism.

1623 Refuting the doctrine that Jesus Christ is the son of God, it is added that *they are honoured servants.* The words draw our attention to the fact that others besides Jesus were spoken of as the sons of God, but that the title signified nothing more than that they were honoured servants, and that therefore Jesus was the son of God exactly in the same sense.

1624 This verse affords a conclusive testimony for the sinlessness of prophets. In the first place they speak not till Allāh has spoken, i.e., they speak according to what He has taught them, not speaking of their own accord. And secondly, when they act, they act according to His commandment. Thus both their words and deeds are in accordance with Divine will, and therefore sin or disobedience of God cannot be attributed to them. The context shows clearly that the verse speaks of prophets, and not of angels.

one We recompense with hell. Thus We reward the unjust.

دُوْنِهٖ فَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِيْهِ جَهَنَّمَ ؕ
كَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٢٩﴾

SECTION 3 : **Truth of Revelation**

30 Do not those who disbelieve see that the heavens and the earth were closed up, so We rent them.[1625] And We made from water[1626] everything living. Will they not then believe ?

اَوَلَمْ يَرَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اَنَّ السَّمٰوٰتِ
وَالْاَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنٰهُمَا ؕ
وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَآءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ ؕ
اَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And We made firm mountains in the earth lest it be convulsed with them, and We made in it wide ways that they might follow a right direction.[1627]

وَجَعَلْنَا فِي الْاَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ اَنْ
تَمِيْدَ بِهِمْ ۪ وَجَعَلْنَا فِيْهَا فِجَاجًا
سُبُلًا لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 And We have made the heaven a guarded canopy ; yet they turn away from its signs.[1628]

وَجَعَلْنَا السَّمَآءَ سَقْفًا مَّحْفُوْظًا ۚۖ
وَّهُمْ عَنْ اٰيٰتِهَا مُعْرِضُوْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾

1625 The heavens and the earth may stand here for the whole universe, or for the solar system in particular, which has developed out of a nebular mass, and the *fatq* or *separation* may refer to the starry creation or to the throwing off of the planets of the solar system, and the great symmetry of its arrangement and the motions of the various bodies. There is a reference to the orbits of the various planets further on in v. 33. But there may also be a deeper allusion in the *closing up* of the heavens and the earth to the cessation of Divine revelation for a time before the advent of the Holy Prophet, which was marked by the absence of a prophet in the world for six hundred years and the prevalence of corruption all over the world. The opening up of the heavens and the earth would in this case signify the coming of revelation, which brought life to the world. In physical nature too, rain opens up the earth.

1626 While this statement reveals a remarkable truth in the physical world, a truth which science has established only recently, and which was not known to the world generally at the time of the Prophet, viz., *that water is the source of all life*, it draws attention to the equally remarkable spiritual truth that it is only by Divine revelation, which is again and again compared with water in the Holy Qur'ān, that life is given to a world otherwise dead in sin and corruption.

1627 Compare 16:15, where nearly the same words occur. Another significance of the first part of the verse is *We made firm mountains in the earth that they might be a source of benefit to you*. Compare 79:32, 33 ; also see 1358. In the latter part there may be a deeper reference to the ways pointed out by prophets among every nation.

1628 Arabia had its spiritualists, the astrologers and the diviners who pretended to have access to the secrets of heaven ; for a full explanation of which see 2530. They are told that they cannot have any such access. Or, the meaning is that revelation from God (called here *heaven*) is guarded against all attacks.

33 And He it is Who created the night and the day and the sun and the moon. All float in orbits.

وَهُوَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ الَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ ۭ كُلٌّ فِيْ فَلَكٍ يَّسْبَحُوْنَ ۝٣٣

34 And We granted abiding for ever to no mortal before thee. If thou diest, will they abide?

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا لِبَشَرٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ الْخُلْدَ ۭ اَفَا۟ىِٕنْ مِّتَّ فَهُمُ الْخٰلِدُوْنَ ۝٣٤

35 Every soul must taste of death. And We test you by evil and good by way of trial. And to Us you are returned.[1629]

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَاۗىِٕقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۭ وَنَبْلُوْكُمْ بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً ۭ وَاِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُوْنَ ۝٣٥

36 And when those who disbelieve see thee, they treat thee not but with mockery: Is this he who speaks of your gods? And they deny when the Beneficent God is mentioned.[1630]

وَاِذَا رَاٰكَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اِنْ يَّتَّخِذُوْنَكَ اِلَّا هُزُوًا ۭ اَهٰذَا الَّذِيْ يَذْكُرُ اٰلِهَتَكُمْ ۚ وَهُمْ بِذِكْرِ الرَّحْمٰنِ هُمْ كٰفِرُوْنَ ۝٣٦

37 Man is created of haste.[1631] Soon will I show you My signs, so ask Me not to hasten them.

خُلِقَ الْاِنْسَانُ مِنْ عَجَلٍ ۭ سَاُورِيْكُمْ اٰيٰتِيْ فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوْنِ ۝٣٧

38 And they say: When will this threat come to pass, if you are truthful?[1633]

وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ مَتٰى هٰذَا الْوَعْدُ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ۝٣٨

39 If those who disbelieve but knew the time when they will not be able to ward off the fire from their faces, nor from their backs, and they will not be helped!

لَوْ يَعْلَمُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا حِيْنَ لَا يَكُفُّوْنَ عَنْ وُّجُوْهِهِمُ النَّارَ وَلَا عَنْ ظُهُوْرِهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنْصَرُوْنَ ۝٣٩

1629 They were afflicted with small evils, and the removal of these again brought to them a turn of good events. All this was by way of trial; the greater punishment, which was to bring about the final overthrow of their power, was yet in store for them.

1630 The Arabs, being an idolatrous people, would not, like the Christians, call Allāh by the name *al-Raḥmān* (see also 25:60); hence the Beneficent God is here spoken of in contrast with the idols.

1631 So prominent is the characteristic of haste in man that he may be said to have been created, as it were, of haste. The expression is explained by what follows: *Soon will I show you My signs, so ask Me not to hasten them.*

1633 The particular sign which they again and again demanded was that a destructive punishment like that which overtook former people should overtake them.

40 Nay, it will come to them all of a sudden and confound them, so they will not have the power to avert it, nor will they be respited.

بَلْ تَأْتِيهِمْ بَغْتَةً فَتَبْهَتُهُمْ فَلَا
يَسْتَطِيعُونَ رَدَّهَا وَلَا هُمْ يُنْظَرُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 And messengers before thee were indeed mocked, so there befell those of them who scoffed, that whereat they scoffed.[1634]

وَلَقَدِ اسْتُهْزِئَ بِرُسُلٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ
فَحَاقَ بِالَّذِينَ سَخِرُوا مِنْهُمْ مَّا
كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

SECTION 4 : **Allāh deals with Men mercifully**

42 Say : Who guards you by night and by day from the Beneficent ?[1635] Nay, they turn away at the mention of their Lord.

قُلْ مَنْ يَّكْلَؤُكُمْ بِالَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ
مِنَ الرَّحْمٰنِ ۭ بَلْ هُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ
رَبِّهِمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 Or, have they gods who can defend them against Us ? They cannot help themselves, nor can they be defended from Us.

أَمْ لَهُمْ اٰلِهَةٌ تَمْنَعُهُمْ مِّنْ دُونِنَا ۭ
لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ نَصْرَ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ
مِّنَّا يُصْحَبُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 Nay, We gave provision to these and their fathers, until life was prolonged to them. See they not then that We are visiting the land, curtailing it of its sides ? Can they then prevail ?

بَلْ مَتَّعْنَا هٰٓؤُلَاءِ وَاٰبَاءَهُمْ حَتّٰى
طَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْعُمُرُ ۭ أَفَلَا يَرَوْنَ
أَنَّا نَأْتِي الْأَرْضَ نَنْقُصُهَا مِنْ
أَطْرَافِهَا ۭ أَفَهُمُ الْغٰلِبُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 Say : I warn you only by revelation ; and the deaf hear not the call when they are warned.

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أُنْذِرُكُمْ بِالْوَحْيِ ۡ وَلَا
يَسْمَعُ الصُّمُّ الدُّعَاءَ إِذَا مَا
يُنْذَرُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 And if a blast of the chastisement of thy Lord were to touch them, they would say : O woe to us ! Surely we were unjust.

وَلَئِنْ مَّسَّتْهُمْ نَفْحَةٌ مِّنْ عَذَابِ
رَبِّكَ لَيَقُولُنَّ يٰوَيْلَنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا ظٰلِمِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And We will set up a just balance on the day of Resurrection, so no soul will be wronged in the least.

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ
فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا ۭ وَإِنْ كَانَ

1634 The rejectors of truth have always scoffed at the idea of being punished. This and the two preceding verses assert in the most forcible words that Truth will finally triumph.

1635 That is, were it not that Allāh were Beneficent to you and guarded you, there is none who could guard you. Or if He, notwithstanding His beneficence, were to punish you because of your persistence in evil to such a degree as to call for the wrath of even a Beneficent Master, there would be none to guard you against that punishment

And if there be the weight of a grain of mustard seed, We will bring it. And Sufficient are We to take account.

مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ اَتَيْنَا بِهَا ۭ وَكَفٰى بِنَا حٰسِبِيْنَ ﴿۴۷﴾

48 And certainly We gave Moses and Aaron the criterion and a light and a reminder for those who keep from evil,[1636]

وَلَقَدْ اٰتَيْنَا مُوْسٰى وَهٰرُوْنَ الْفُرْقَانَ وَضِيَاۗءً وَّذِكْرًا لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿۴۸﴾

49 Who fear their Lord in secret and they are fearful of the Hour.

الَّذِيْنَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَيْبِ وَهُمْ مِّنَ السَّاعَةِ مُشْفِقُوْنَ ﴿۴۹﴾

50 And this is a blessed Reminder, which We have revealed. Will you then deny it?

وَهٰذَا ذِكْرٌ مُّبٰرَكٌ اَنْزَلْنٰهُ ۭ اَفَاَنْتُمْ لَهٗ مُنْكِرُوْنَ ﴿۵۰﴾

SECTION 5: **Abraham is Delivered**

51 And certainly We gave Abraham his rectitude before, and We knew him well.[1637]

وَلَقَدْ اٰتَيْنَآ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ رُشْدَهٗ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَكُنَّا بِهٖ عٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿۵۱﴾

52 When he said to his sire and his people: What are these images to whose worship you cleave?

اِذْ قَالَ لِاَبِيْهِ وَقَوْمِهٖ مَا هٰذِهِ التَّمَاثِيْلُ الَّتِيْٓ اَنْتُمْ لَهَا عٰكِفُوْنَ ﴿۵۲﴾

53 They said: We found our fathers worshipping them.

قَالُوْا وَجَدْنَآ اٰبَاۗءَنَا لَهَا عٰبِدِيْنَ ﴿۵۳﴾

54 He said: Certainly you have been, you and your fathers, in manifest error.

قَالَ لَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ اَنْتُمْ وَاٰبَاۗؤُكُمْ فِيْ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿۵۴﴾

55 They said: Hast thou brought us the truth, or art thou of the jesters?

قَالُوْٓا اَجِئْتَنَا بِالْحَقِّ اَمْ اَنْتَ مِنَ اللّٰعِبِيْنَ ﴿۵۵﴾

56 He said: Nay, your Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, Who created them; and I am of those who bear witness to this.

قَالَ بَلْ رَّبُّكُمْ رَبُّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ الَّذِيْ فَطَرَهُنَّ ڮ وَاَنَا عَلٰي ذٰلِكُمْ مِّنَ الشّٰهِدِيْنَ ﴿۵۶﴾

1636 The criterion given to Moses was that he was delivered from the hands of a most powerful enemy. The last verse of the section predicts that a similar sign would be shown in the case of the Prophet.

1637 The history of Abraham is contained in various chapters of the Holy Qur'ān, the different portions supplementing each other, there being very little repetition. The following is a complete list of all references to him: 2:124-132, 133, 135, 136, 140, 258, 260; 3:64-67, 83; 4:125; 6:75-83; 9:114; 11:69-76; 12:6; 14:35-41; 15:51-60; 16:120-123; 19:41-49; 21:51-72; 22:26-29; 26:69-89; 29:16, 17, 24-27; 37:83-113; 38:45, 46; 43:26-28; 51:24-34; 57:26; 60:4.

57 And, by Allāh! I will certainly plan against your idols after you go away, turning your backs.

وَتَاللّٰهِ لَاَكِيْدَنَّ اَصْنَامَكُمْ بَعْدَ اَنْ تُوَلُّوْا مُدْبِرِيْنَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 So he broke them into pieces, except the chief of them, that haply they might return to it.[1638]

فَجَعَلَهُمْ جُذٰذًا اِلَّا كَبِيْرًا لَّهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ اِلَيْهِ يَرْجِعُوْنَ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 They said: Who has done this to our gods? Surely he is one of the unjust.

قَالُوْا مَنْ فَعَلَ هٰذَا بِاٰلِهَتِنَآ اِنَّهٗ لَمِنَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 They said: We heard a youth, who is called Abraham, speak of them.

قَالُوْا سَمِعْنَا فَتًى يَّذْكُرُهُمْ يُقَالُ لَهٗٓ اِبْرٰهِيْمُ ﴿٦٠﴾

61 They said: Then bring him before the people's eyes, perhaps they may bear witness.

قَالُوْا فَاْتُوْا بِهٖ عَلٰٓى اَعْيُنِ النَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْهَدُوْنَ ﴿٦١﴾

62 They said: Hast thou done this to our gods, O Abraham?

قَالُوْٓا ءَاَنْتَ فَعَلْتَ هٰذَا بِاٰلِهَتِنَا يٰٓاِبْرٰهِيْمُ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 He said: Surely (someone) has done it. The chief of them is this; so ask them, if they can speak.[1639]

قَالَ بَلْ فَعَلَهٗ ۖ كَبِيْرُهُمْ هٰذَا فَسْـَٔلُوْهُمْ اِنْ كَانُوْا يَنْطِقُوْنَ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 Then they turned to themselves and said: Surely you yourselves are wrongdoers;

فَرَجَعُوْٓا اِلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ فَقَالُوْٓا اِنَّكُمْ اَنْتُمُ الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿٦٤﴾

1638 The story of Abraham's breaking the idols is related in Jewish Rabbinical literature, Gen. R 38, and Tauna Debe Eliyahu 2:25 (*Jewish En.*).

1639 Note that there is a pause after the words *bal fa'ala-hū*, and the statement *kabīru-hum hādhā* is an independent statement. *Fa'ala-hū* thus means *some doer has done it* (Rz). The word *bal* is not necessarily a particle of digression, implying the negation of what precedes it, often denoting no more than *and* or *surely*. Thus LL says: "Sometimes it is used to denote the passing from one subject to another without cancelling what precedes it and is synonymous with *wāw*, as in the saying in the Qur'ān, 85:20, 21". The other passage, *kabīru-hum hādhā*, being an independent statement, means *the chief of them is this*, because it was left unbroken by Abraham. Then follows the statement, *so ask them, if they can speak*. Ask the idols, they were told. They were taken as gods who could benefit their worshippers, or harm others, yet they were not able to help themselves. They were shattered to pieces, yet they could do no harm to their shatterer. Nor could they even tell their votaries who was responsible for this. It should be further noted that Abraham never tried to conceal what he had done. In fact, before breaking the idols he had warned the people that he would plan against their idols; see v. 57. This he declared publicly when carrying on a controversy with them. The object of sparing the chief idol was, as made clear in v. 58, *that they may return to it*. The chief was yet safe, they should have argued within themselves, why not pray to him to find out who broke the others. This is hinted

65 Then they were made to hang down their heads :[1640] Thou knowest indeed that they speak not.

ثُمَّ نُكِسُوا عَلَىٰ رُءُوسِهِمْ ۚ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَا هَٰؤُلَاءِ يَنْطِقُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 He said : Serve you then besides Allāh what does you no good, nor harms you ?

قَالَ أَفَتَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُكُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَضُرُّكُمْ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 Fie on you and on what you serve besides Allāh ! Have you no sense ?

أُفٍّ لَكُمْ وَلِمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ ۖ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 They said : Burn him, and help your gods, if you are going to do (anything).

قَالُوا حَرِّقُوهُ وَانْصُرُوا آلِهَتَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 We said: O fire, be coolness and peace for Abraham :[1641]

قُلْنَا يَا نَارُ كُونِي بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 And they intended a plan against him, but We made them the greater losers.[1642]

وَأَرَادُوا بِهِ كَيْدًا فَجَعَلْنَاهُمُ الْأَخْسَرِينَ ﴿٧٠﴾

71 And We delivered him and Lot (directing them) to the land which We had blessed for the nations.

وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَلُوطًا إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

72 And We gave him Isaac ; and Jacob, a son's son. And We made (them) all good.

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ نَافِلَةً ۖ وَكُلًّا جَعَلْنَا صَالِحِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾

73 And We made them leaders who guided (people) by Our command, and We revealed to them the doing of

وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَهْدُونَ بِأَمْرِنَا

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at in v. 64, where they are made to confess their own wrongdoing in worshipping things which could do them no good or evil. See also the verses that follow.

1640 *They were made to hang down their heads* on account of shame, for their deities proved so helpless as to be unable to name even the person who did them injury.

1641 The fire was turned into *coolness* and *peace* for Abraham. There are many stories related in the commentaries as to the size of this fire and the time Abraham remained therein. Reliable commentators, however, do not accept them as they are baseless. "There are many versions of this story, but according to *Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ* many stories have been fabricated in relating what happened to Abraham, while the truth is only what Allāh has stated" (RM). The Holy Qur'ān does not state anywhere that Abraham was actually cast into a fire. His opponents had no doubt decided to *burn him,* as stated here, or *to kill him* or *burn him* (29 : 24). But here in v. 70, as well as in 37 : 98, we are told in clear words that *they intended a plan against him but We made them the greater losers* (v. 70), or We *brought them low* (37 : 98). This shows that their plan was ineffective. According to 29 : 24, Allāh delivered him from the fire, before being thrown into or after being thrown into it, it does not say. V. 71 states that the delivery was brought about by means of a journey to another land. It was thus a *flight* to another place like the Prophet's Flight to Madīnah, and in the history of Abraham there is a deeper reference to the history of the Prophet himself.

1642, see next page.

good and the keeping up of prayer and the giving of alms, and Us (alone) they served ;

وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ الْخَيْرٰتِ وَإِقَامَ الصَّلٰوةِ وَإِيتَآءَ الزَّكٰوةِ ۚ وَكَانُوا لَنَا عٰبِدِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 And to Lot We gave wisdom and knowledge, and We delivered him from the town which wrought abomination. Surely they were an evil people, transgressors ;

وَلُوطًا اٰتَيْنٰهُ حُكْمًا وَّعِلْمًا وَّنَجَّيْنٰهُ مِنَ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ تَّعْمَلُ الْخَبٰٓئِثَ ۗ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمَ سَوْءٍ فٰسِقِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 And We admitted him to Our mercy ; surely he was of the righteous.

وَأَدْخَلْنٰهُ فِي رَحْمَتِنَا ۖ إِنَّهُ مِنَ الصّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

SECTION 6 : **Allāh always delivers Prophets**

76 And Noah, when he cried aforetime, so We answered him, and delivered him and his people from the great calamity.

وَنُوحًا إِذْ نَادٰى مِنْ قَبْلُ فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ فَنَجَّيْنٰهُ وَأَهْلَهُ مِنَ الْكَرْبِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 And We helped him against the people who rejected Our messages. Surely they were an evil people, so We drowned them all.

وَنَصَرْنٰهُ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِاٰيٰتِنَا ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمَ سَوْءٍ فَأَغْرَقْنٰهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

78 And David and Solomon, when they gave judgment concerning the field, when the people's sheep strayed therein by night, and We were bearers of witness to their judgment.

وَدَاوٗدَ وَسُلَيْمٰنَ إِذْ يَحْكُمٰنِ فِي الْحَرْثِ إِذْ نَفَشَتْ فِيهِ غَنَمُ الْقَوْمِ ۚ وَكُنَّا لِحُكْمِهِمْ شٰهِدِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾

79 So We made Solomon to understand it. And to each (of them) We gave wisdom and knowledge. And We made the mountains, declaring (Our) glory, and the birds,[1644] subservient to David. And We were the Doers.

فَفَهَّمْنٰهَا سُلَيْمٰنَ ۚ وَكُلًّا اٰتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَّعِلْمًا ۚ وَّسَخَّرْنَا مَعَ دَاوٗدَ الْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ وَالطَّيْرَ ۚ وَكُنَّا فٰعِلِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾

1642 According to the Biblical account of Abraham, the patriarch undertook successful expeditions against Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, and his confederate kings. Rabbinical literature also gives the names of certain kings whom Abraham defeated.

1644 Elsewhere it is stated that everything that exists in the heavens or the earth is made subservient to man (45 : 13) ; and on various occasions it is mentioned that the rivers, the sea, the sun and the moon, night and day, etc., are made subservient to man (16 : 12, 14 ; 13 : 2, etc.). This explains the meaning of making mountains and birds subservient to David. A thing is said to be made subservient to a man when he can use it to his advantage. Note further that everything in the heavens and the earth declares the glory of Allāh (17 : 44). But see 2022, where a similar statement occurs and is shown to refer to the conquests

80 And We taught him the making of coats of mail for you, to protect you in your wars; will you then be grateful?[1645]

وَعَلَّمْنٰهُ صَنْعَةَ لَبُوْسٍ لَّكُمْ لِتُحْصِنَكُمْ مِّنْ بَأْسِكُمْ ۚ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ شٰكِرُوْنَ ﴿٨٠﴾

81 And to Solomon (We subdued) the wind blowing violent, pursuing its course by His command to the land which We had blessed, and We are ever Knower of all things.[1646]

وَلِسُلَيْمٰنَ الرِّيْحَ عَاصِفَةً تَجْرِيْ بِأَمْرِهٖٓ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الَّتِيْ بٰرَكْنَا فِيْهَا ۭ وَكُنَّا بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٨١﴾

82 And of the devils there were those who dived for him and did other work besides that; and We kept guard over them:[1647]

وَمِنَ الشَّيٰطِيْنِ مَنْ يَّغُوْصُوْنَ لَهٗ وَيَعْمَلُوْنَ عَمَلًا دُوْنَ ذٰلِكَ ۚ وَكُنَّا لَهُمْ حٰفِظِيْنَ ﴿٨٢﴾

83 And Job, when he cried to his Lord; Distress has afflicted me! and Thou art the most Merciful of those who show mercy.

وَأَيُّوْبَ إِذْ نَادٰى رَبَّهٗٓ أَنِّيْ مَسَّنِيَ الضُّرُّ وَأَنْتَ أَرْحَمُ الرّٰحِمِيْنَ ﴿٨٣﴾

84 So We responded to him and removed the distress he had, and We gave him his people and the like of them with them: a mercy from Us and a reminder to the worshippers.[1648]

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهٗ فَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهٖ مِنْ ضُرٍّ وَّاٰتَيْنٰهُ أَهْلَهٗ وَمِثْلَهُمْ مَّعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِّنْ عِنْدِنَا وَذِكْرٰى لِلْعٰبِدِيْنَ ﴿٨٤﴾

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of David. For other references to David see 2:251; 4:163; 5:78; 6:85; 27:15, 16; 34:10-13; 38:17-30.

1645 It is not here stated that the making of coats of mail was not known before David. He had to fight many battles and against very strong enemies, and there is no doubt that in these battles he had to equip the armies of Israel in the best possible manner. See further 2023, 2024.

1646 For other references to Solomon see 2:102; 4:163; 6:85; 27:15-44; 34:12-14; 38:30-40. Solomon's fleet did him an important service, and this is what is meant by the wind being made subservient to Solomon. According to Biblical history, "with the Phoenicians he united in maritime commerce, sending out a fleet once in three years from Ezion-geber, at the head of the Gulf of Aqaba, to Ophir, presumably on the eastern coast of the Arabian peninsula. From this distant port and others on the way he derived fabulous amounts of gold and tropical products. These revenues gave him almost unlimited means for increasing the glory of his capital city and palace, and for the perfection of his civil and military organization" (Jewish En.). Also compare 14:32: "And He made the ships subservient to you, that they might run their course in the sea by His command".

1647 Elsewhere we have: "And the devils, every builder and diver, and others fettered in chains" (38:37, 38). Solomon employed foreigners, whom he had subdued, to do the work of divers and builders. The word shaiṭān (or *devil*) signifies *one who is excessively proud, rebellious or audacious,* whether *a man* or a *jinn* or a *beast* (LL). See further 2143.

1648 Job is again mentioned after Solomon in greater detail in the 38th chapter, vv. 41-44. There also he is spoken of as being given *his people* (*ahl*) *and the like of them with them.* There, however, we have clear indications that the distress spoken of here relates to some journey which he undertook in

85 And Ishmael and Idrīs and Dhu-l-Kifl; all were of the patient ones;[1649]

وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِدْرِيسَ وَذَا الْكِفْلِ ۖ كُلٌّ مِّنَ الصَّابِرِينَ ﴿٨٥﴾

86 And We admitted them to Our mercy; surely they were of the good ones.

وَأَدْخَلْنَاهُمْ فِي رَحْمَتِنَا ۖ إِنَّهُم مِّنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٨٦﴾

87 And Dhu-l-Nūn,[1650] when he went away in wrath,[1651] and he thought that We would not straiten him,[1652] so he called out among afflictions:[1653] There is no God but Thou, glory be to Thee! Surely I am of the sufferers of loss.[1654]

وَذَا النُّونِ إِذ ذَّهَبَ مُغَاضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَن لَّن نَّقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَىٰ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَن لَّا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا أَنتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

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connection with the mission with which he was entrusted. As a result of this journey he lost, or was separated from, his people. It seems that he had to flee to some place of safety, and he ultimately found not only his own people but others like them, i.e., he had other believers in him in his place of refuge. The story of Job as given in the Holy Qur'ān has, in fact, nothing in common with the lengthy book of Job in the Bible. It is really a prophetical statement relating to the Prophet's own Flight from Makkah to Madīnah, where he met with not only his Makkan followers but also believers in Madīnah in about the same number. See further 2144, 2145 and 2146.

1649 Dhu-l-Kifl literally means *one having a portion that would suffice* (R). The commentators differ in identifying him with one of the Biblical prophets, Zacharias, Elias, or Joshua (Rz). Rodwell states, on the authority of *Travels* of Niebuhr, that the Arabs call Ezekiel by the name of *Kifl*. The suggestion, therefore, that by Dhu-l-Kifl is meant the prophet Ezekiel, is more sound. This prophet is mentioned only once again, as here without any reference to his history, in 38:48.

1650 *Dhu-l-Nūn* is another name for Jonah, the Arabic equivalent of the latter being *Yūnus*, by which name the prophet is mentioned in 6:87, 10:98, and 37:139. *Nūn* means *a big fish* (R), and *Dhu-l-Nūn* therefore means *lord of the fish*. In a very early revelation, Jonah is spoken of as the *companion of the fish* (68:48). Both these titles seem to be taken from the incident of the fish, for an explanation of which see 2123.

1651 Here we are told that Jonah went away in wrath, and evidently what is meant is that he was wroth with his people and left them for another place. A prophet's being angry with God is simply unimaginable. Moreover he is spoken of here as *going away*, while no man could think of going away from the presence of the Omnipresent. He was wroth with his people because of their stubbornness, says Rāzī. See also 2121.

1652 It is wrong to translate the words *lan naqdira 'alai-hi* as meaning *We had no power over him*. "It cannot be from *al-qudrah* (meaning *power* or *ability*); for he who thinks this is an unbeliever". The meaning is, *And he thought that We would not straiten him* or *We would not decree against him* (LL). In the Qur'ān itself, the same word is used in the sense of straitening. See 13:26, where *wa yaqdiru* means *He straitens* (provision), and also 65:7, where *qudira* means *straitened*. Finding his people stubborn, he went away from them and was wroth with them and *thought*, or rather *knew* (*ẓanna*), that some way would be opened for him to bring people to guidance somewhere.

1653 *Ẓulumāt al-baḥr* signifies *calamities* or *hardships of the sea* (LL); and difficulty is compared to *darkness* because of the inability of a man to find his way when in difficulty, as when in darkness.

1654 The word *ẓulm* primarily signifies *al naqṣ* (as meaning *the making to suffer loss or detriment*) (LL). In the Qur'ān (18:33), gardens are spoken of as

88 So We responded to him and delivered him from grief. And thus do We deliver the believers.

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ ۙ وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْغَمِّ ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُنْجِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨٨﴾

89 And Zacharias, when he cried to his Lord: My Lord, leave me not alone! and Thou art the Best of inheritors.[1655]

وَزَكَرِيَّا إِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبَّهُ رَبِّ لَا تَذَرْنِي فَرْدًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْوَارِثِينَ ﴿٨٩﴾

90 So We responded to him and gave him John and made his wife fit for him.[1656] Surely they used to vie, one with another, in good deeds and called upon Us, hoping and fearing; and they were humble before Us.

فَاسْتَجَبْنَا لَهُ وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ يَحْيَىٰ وَأَصْلَحْنَا لَهُ زَوْجَهُ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَرَهَبًا ۖ وَكَانُوا لَنَا خَاشِعِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾

91 And she who guarded her chastity,[1657] so We breathed into her of Our inspiration, and made her and her son a sign for the nations.

وَالَّتِي أَحْصَنَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ رُوحِنَا وَجَعَلْنَاهَا وَابْنَهَا آيَةً لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

92 Surely this your community is a single community, and I am your Lord, so serve Me.[1658]

إِنَّ هَٰذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُونِ ﴿٩٢﴾

93 And they cut off their affair among them: to Us will all return.

وَتَقَطَّعُوا أَمْرَهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ ۖ كُلٌّ إِلَيْنَا رَاجِعُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

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yielding their fruit and *they failed not* (*lam tazlim*) in aught thereof, where *ẓulm* means simply *failure*. Originally *ẓulm* is "*putting a thing in a place not its own, putting it in a wrong place, misplacing it*, and it is by *exceeding* or by *falling short*" (R, T, LL), *Ẓalama* also means *he imposed upon him a thing that was above his power or ability* (LL), and in this sense the word is used sometimes in a good sense when a man imposes upon himself a heavy duty to please God. It is in this sense that Jonah is here spoken of as being of the *ẓālimīn*, in the sense of making *himself suffer a loss* by going away from his original place, or of having failed in doing justice to the message with which he was entrusted, or in any of the other senses explained above. It should be borne in mind also that the word *ẓulm* may mean anything from the slightest falling off from one's duty to the greatest transgression.

1655 That is, One Who will remain after all have perished.

1656 By *fitness* is meant fitness to bear a child, because she was thought to be barren.

1657 Nothing is said about immaculate conception here. *The guarding of chastity* does not preclude the lawful union of husband and wife; for the meaning of *furūj*, see 1714.

1658 The basic principle of all religions taught by the prophets has been one and the same in all ages and all countries, that Allāh is the Lord of all and He alone must be served. Therefore all prophets are here declared to be one community; they all led people to virtue through service of God. But, as the next verse shows, their followers broke off this unity.

SECTION 7: **The Righteous will inherit the Land**

94 So whoever does good deeds and is a believer, there is no rejection of his effort, and We surely write (it) down for him.

فَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِنَ الصّٰلِحٰتِ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَا كُفْرَانَ لِسَعْيِهٖ ۚ وَاِنَّا لَهٗ كٰتِبُوْنَ ﴿۹۴﴾

95 And it is forbidden to a town which We destroy: they shall not return.[1659]

وَحَرٰمٌ عَلٰى قَرْيَةٍ اَهْلَكْنٰهَاۤ اَنَّهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُوْنَ ﴿۹۵﴾

96 Even[1660] when Gog and Magog are let loose and they sally forth from every elevated place.[1661]

حَتّٰۤى اِذَا فُتِحَتْ يَاْجُوْجُ وَمَاْجُوْجُ وَهُمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ حَدَبٍ يَّنْسِلُوْنَ ﴿۹۶﴾

97 And the True Promise draws nigh, then lo! the eyes of those who disbelieve will be fixedly open: O woe to us! Surely we were heedless of this; nay, we were unjust.[1661a]

وَاقْتَرَبَ الْوَعْدُ الْحَقُّ فَاِذَا هِيَ شَاخِصَةٌ اَبْصَارُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا ۭ يٰوَيْلَنَا قَدْ كُنَّا فِيْ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هٰذَا بَلْ كُنَّا ظٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿۹۷﴾

1659 By *qaryah*, i.e., *town*, here are meant *ahl qaryah*, i.e., the *people of a town*. The ordinary meaning of *ḥarām* is *forbidden*, and the significance of the first part of the verse is that their returning to life is forbidden, the words *they shall not return* being explanatory. But some commentators, including I'Ab, have explained *ḥarām* as meaning *wājib* or *binding*, and a verse of the pre-Islamic days is also quoted in support of this (Rz).

The verse reveals the great truth that those who are made to taste of death are not sent back into this world. A saying of the Holy Prophet is also reported according to which Jābir, son of 'Abd Allāh, was informed by the Prophet that his father, 'Abd Allāh, who was slain in a battle with the enemies of Islām, on being asked by the Almighty what he desired most, expressed a wish to go back into the world and be slain again in the cause of Truth, but received the reply that this could not be, for "the word has gone forth from Me that *they shall not return*" (IM, 24:15), where the concluding words are evidently the concluding words of this verse. Therefore both the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth settle conclusively that no one who is dead returns to life in this world.

1660 The previous verse contains a prohibition against the return to life of those who are dead, or the rise of nations that are once destroyed. This one points out that even Gog and Magog, notwithstanding their predominance in the whole world, will follow the same law. For *ḥattā,* meaning *even,* see LL, who quotes *Mgh.*

1661 For Gog and Magog, see 1523 and 1524, where this verse has also been explained in connection with the crumbling of the barrier which was made to withhold the depredations of Gog and Magog. The words *they sally forth from every elevated place* mean that they will take possession of every point of vantage and convenience, so as to dominate the whole world. The same idea is expressed in the Ḥadīth in different words, for which see 1524a.

1661a The *True Promise* that draws nigh with the domination of Gog and Magog is the promise of the ultimate triumph of Truth: "He it is Who sent His Messenger with the Guidance and the Religion of Truth that He may cause it to prevail over all religions" (9:33). This is also referred to in 18:99, after speaking of the great conflict of Gog and Magog, in the words *then We shall gather them all together;* see 1525. Thus the time when Gog and Magog over-

98 Surely you and what you worship besides Allāh are fuel of hell; to it you will come.[1661b]

إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللّٰهِ حَصَبُ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ أَنْتُمْ لَهَا وٰرِدُونَ ﴿٩٨﴾

99 Had these been gods, they would not have come to it. And all will abide therein.

لَوْ كَانَ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ اٰلِهَةً مَّا وَرَدُوهَا ۖ وَكُلٌّ فِيهَا خٰلِدُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

100 For them therein is groaning and therein they hear not.[1662]

لَهُمْ فِيهَا زَفِيرٌ وَّهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

101 Those for whom the good has already gone forth from Us, they will be kept far off from it—[1663]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِّنَّا الْحُسْنٰىٓ ۙ أُولٰٓئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾

102 They will not hear the faintest sound of it and they will abide in that which their souls desire.[1664]

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ حَسِيسَهَا ۚ وَهُمْ فِي مَا اشْتَهَتْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ خٰلِدُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

103 The great Terror will not grieve them, and the angels will meet them: This is your day which you were promised.

لَا يَحْزُنُهُمُ الْفَزَعُ الْأَكْبَرُ وَتَتَلَقّٰىهُمُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ ۖ هٰذَا يَوْمُكُمُ الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

104 The day when We roll up heaven like the rolling up of the scroll of writings. As We began the first creation, We shall reproduce it. A promise (binding) on Us. We shall bring it about.[1665]

يَوْمَ نَطْوِي السَّمَآءَ كَطَيِّ السِّجِلِّ لِلْكُتُبِ ۖ كَمَا بَدَأْنَآ أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ نُّعِيدُهُ ۖ وَعْدًا عَلَيْنَا ۖ إِنَّا كُنَّا فٰعِلِينَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

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come the whole world is also the time when Truth will gain ground and prevail over the whole earth. Materialism would first spread over the whole world, but would prove a failure. Then would spiritual Truth shine and people would feel that they had not only been heedless to it, but even unjust in trying to suppress it.

1661b Compare 18:100: "And We will bring forth hell, exposed to view, on that day before the disbelievers"; see 1525a.

1662 Those who turn a deaf ear to the Truth here shall be raised deaf in the life after death, and therefore they do not hear.

1663 This verse totally refutes the false idea that even the righteous will first go to hell. They will not even hear its faintest sound, as the next verse states.

1664 It is the bliss of communion with the Divine Being which the souls of the righteous long for, so it is that bliss in which they shall live in the Hereafter.

1665 Several statements are made in this verse. The first is the *rolling up of the heaven* like a written scroll. This means that the old order will be swept away altogether, just as when a writing is finished, it is rolled up. This no doubt happened in Arabia at the appearance of the Holy Prophet. The old order was entirely gone and a new civilization had taken its place. The thoroughness of the

105 And certainly We wrote in the Book after the reminder that My righteous servants will inherit the land.[1666]

وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا عِبَادِيَ الصَّالِحُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

106 Surely in this is a message for a people who serve (Us).

إِنَّ فِي هَٰذَا لَبَلَاغًا لِقَوْمٍ عَابِدِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

107 And We have not sent thee but as a mercy to the nations.[1667]

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

108 Say: It is only revealed to me that your God is one God: will you then submit?

قُلْ إِنَّمَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَاحِدٌ ۖ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

109 But if they turn back, say: I have warned you in fairness, and I know not whether that which you are promised is near or far.

فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُلْ آذَنْتُكُمْ عَلَىٰ سَوَاءٍ ۖ وَإِنْ أَدْرِي أَقَرِيبٌ أَمْ بَعِيدٌ مَا تُوعَدُونَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

110 Surely He knows what is spoken openly and He knows what you hide.

إِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْجَهْرَ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

111 And I know not if this may be a trial for you and a provision till a time.

وَإِنْ أَدْرِي لَعَلَّهُ فِتْنَةٌ لَكُمْ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿١١١﴾

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transformation, in all fields of human activity, as brought about by the Prophet, is a fact now universally admitted. But then follows the statement: *As We began the first creation, We shall reproduce it.* The sweeping away of the old order no doubt meant that a new order would be created. This is the *first creation* referred to here — the bringing about of a new order at the Prophet's appearance. And then we are told, that the new order will be reproduced again. This reproduction is in reference to what has been stated in the first part of the section — that Gog and Magog will dominate the whole world, and thus they would overcome even Islām. The spiritual resuscitation to which Islām gave rise would thus receive a set-back by the predominance of a material outlook of the world through the prevalence of Gog and Magog, but this set-back, we are here told, would be only temporary, and a spiritual awakening like the first spiritual awakening would then be brought about in the whole world. This statement is followed by the words: *A Promise binding on Us.* The promise of the ultimate triumph of Truth in the whole world is of frequent occurrence in the Holy Qur'ān in earlier as well as in later revelation, and the temporary set-back indicated here is also frequently mentioned, and on one occasion at least it is made fully clear that it will be a set-back extending over a thousand years (32:5); see 1959.

1666 The Qur'an had repeatedly warned the disbelievers that Islam would be made triumphant in the land, and the righteous servants who were made to suffer persecution would one day be masters of the land. The words also contain a prophecy of the possession of the Holy Land by the Muslims, which was fulfilled in the caliphate of 'Umar. Compare Ps. 37:29. But as already noted, it is of the whole world that the Qur'ān is speaking and we are here told that Truth will ultimately triumph in the whole world, which would thus be inherited by the righteous. This is made clear in v. 107.

1667 While the words no doubt contain a reference to the merciful dealing with the Prophet's opponents, the real significance is that the Prophet's advent will prove a mercy not only to the Arabs by making them a foremost nation in

112 He said: My Lord, judge Thou with truth. And our Lord is the Beneficent, Whose help is sought against what you ascribe (to Him).

قٰلَ رَبِّ احْكُمْ بِالْحَقِّ ۗ وَرَبُّنَا الرَّحْمٰنُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلٰى مَا تَصِفُوْنَ ﴿١١٢﴾

the world, but to the whole of humanity. The Prophet's being a mercy to the *'ālamīn*, or *all nations* of the world, is to show that ultimately all nations will be received into the Divine mercy which was manifested through him. Already the teachings of the Qur'ān have not only benefited its followers, but even those who still reject its message, for, notwithstanding their rejection of it, they have accepted many of its principles.

CHAPTER 22

Al-Ḥajj : THE PILGRIMAGE

(Revealed at Makkah: 10 *sections*; 78 *verses*)

While the last chapter deals generally with the ultimate triumph of Truth in the world, this deals particularly with the triumph of the Truth at Makkah, whence the Prophet was now being expelled. The chapter is called *The Pilgrimage* because the proclamation of pilgrimage, originally made by Abraham, was now repeated by the Holy Prophet and addressed to the whole world, being no longer confined to the borders of Arabia.

The chapter opens with the mention of a terrible calamity which is, as it were, a preliminary to the triumph of Truth in the world. The second section asserts the certainty of Divine help to the Holy Prophet. The next section asserts the triumph of the believers, who were now fleeing by twos and threes to escape persecution by their cruel oppressors. Their triumph, however, involved the conquest of Makkah, for without that spiritual centre in their possession their triumph could not be complete. The fourth section speaks of the Sacred House and the pilgrimage to it. The connected subject of sacrifices is dealt with in the fifth; and the sacrifices which the Muslims themselves were now required to make, viz., the laying down of their lives in the cause of Truth, are spoken of in the sixth section, which introduces the subject of fighting. The opposition to the Holy Prophet is mentioned in the seventh, and the eighth states that the faithful will be established in the land. Allāh's dealing, however, with even the opponents of the truth is merciful, and therefore the punishment is withheld for a while. This we are told in the ninth section, which also shows that mere differences of belief are not punished in this world. The tenth sums up the whole by showing that polytheism will ultimately be uprooted.

Rodwell is certainly wrong in placing this chapter among the latest Madīnah revelations. Muir places it at the close of the Makkan sūrahs of the fifth period, and external as well as internal evidence tends to show the correctness of his view. Regarding vv. 39-41, however, it may be added that, though they speak of permission to fight, it does not follow that they were revealed at Madīnah. For a full discussion of this point, see 1697. It is noteworthy that the oath of allegiance taken by the Madīnah converts at 'Aqabah, before the Holy Prophet's flight, contained a promise that they would fight in defence of the Holy Prophet. Such an oath would not have been taken if a revelation permitting fighting in self-defence had not been received by the Prophet.

SECTION 1 **The Judgment**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 O people, keep your duty to your Lord; surely the shock[1668] of the Hour is a grievous thing.[1669]

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوْا رَبَّكُمْ ۚ اِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيْمٌ ①

2 The day you see it, every woman giving suck will forget her suckling and every pregnant one will lay down her burden, and thou wilt see men as drunken, yet they will not be drunken, but the chastisement of Allāh will be severe.

يَوْمَ تَرَوْنَهَا تَذْهَلُ كُلُّ مُرْضِعَةٍ عَمَّآ اَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمْلٍ حَمْلَهَا وَتَرَى النَّاسَ سُكٰرٰى وَمَا هُمْ بِسُكٰرٰى وَلٰكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللّٰهِ شَدِيْدٌ ②

3 And among men is he who disputes about Allāh without knowledge, and follows every rebellious devil—[1670]

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُّجَادِلُ فِي اللّٰهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَّيَتَّبِعُ كُلَّ شَيْطٰنٍ مَّرِيْدٍ ③

4 For him it is written that whoever takes him for a friend, he will lead him astray and conduct him to the chastisement of the burning Fire.

كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِ اَنَّهٗ مَنْ تَوَلَّاهُ فَاَنَّهٗ يُضِلُّهٗ وَيَهْدِيْهِ اِلٰى عَذَابِ السَّعِيْرِ ④

5 O people, if you are in doubt about the Resurrection,[1671] then surely

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِيْ رَيْبٍ مِّنَ

1668 *Zalzala* means originally *he put* him *into a state of commotion or agitation* (LL). It is noteworthy that the word is specially used in connection with wars implying a casting of terror into the heart. Thus in 33:11 and also in a prayer of the Prophet the word is used in connection with the terror or affliction of war. And *zalāzil*, which is plural of *zalzalah*, means *difficulties, trials, afflictions* (LL).

1669 In the Holy Qur'ān, *al-sā'ah* or the *Hour* does not necessarily imply the day of Judgment. It often implies the time of judgment in this life, the time when the threatened doom overtakes a people, and this seems to be the significance here. Some consider that a severe shaking of the earth is meant as a sign of the approach of the great judgment, but even in that case it might imply any terrible calamity, such as a great war.

1670 The devil here is, as very frequently in the Holy Qur'ān, the devil in human form.

1671 The word *ba'th* (raising) is used in three senses in the Holy Qur'ān, viz., (1) the raising of the dead to life according to their good or evil deeds on the Judgment day; (2) the raising of the spiritually dead to life by the prophets; and (3) the raising up of prophets by Allāh for the guidance of mankind. The word as used here may include all three cases, whether it is the denial of the Resurrection or the denial of Allāh's raising the Prophet, or the

We created you from dust,[1672] then from a small life-germ, then from a clot, then from a lump of flesh, complete in make and incomplete, that We may make clear to you.[1673] And We cause what We please to remain in the wombs till an appointed time, then We bring you forth as babies, then that you may attain your maturity. And of you is he who is caused to die, and of you is he who is brought back to the worst part of life,[1674] so that after knowledge he knows nothing. And thou seest the earth barren, but when We send down thereon water, it stirs and swells and brings forth a beautiful (growth) of every kind.[1675]

الْبَعْثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنٰكُمْ مِّنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ
مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ
مُّضْغَةٍ مُّخَلَّقَةٍ وَّغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقَةٍ
لِّنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ ۗ وَنُقِرُّ فِي الْاَرْحَامِ مَا
نَشَآءُ اِلٰٓى اَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ثُمَّ نُخْرِجُكُمْ
طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوْٓا اَشُدَّكُمْ ۚ وَمِنْكُمْ
مَّنْ يُّتَوَفّٰى وَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُّرَدُّ اِلٰٓى اَرْذَلِ
الْعُمُرِ لِكَيْلَا يَعْلَمَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ عِلْمٍ شَيْــًٔا ۭ
وَتَرَى الْاَرْضَ هَامِدَةً فَاِذَآ اَنْزَلْنَا
عَلَيْهَا الْمَآءَ اهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَتْ وَاَنْۢبَتَتْ
مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍۢ بَهِيْجٍ ⑤

6 That is because Allāh, He is the Truth, and He gives life to the dead, and He is Possessor of power over all things,

ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَاَنَّهٗ يُحْيِ
الْمَوْتٰى وَاَنَّهٗ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ⑥

7 And the Hour is coming, there is no doubt about it; and Allāh will raise up those who are in the graves.[1676]

وَّاَنَّ السَّاعَةَ اٰتِيَةٌ لَّا رَيْبَ فِيْهَا ۙ
وَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَبْعَثُ مَنْ فِي الْقُبُوْرِ ⑦

denial of the Prophet's raising them to spiritual life. The argument contained in this and the following verses is equally applicable to all, but it most prominently refers to the spiritual resurrection of the dead.

1672 These words explain the meaning of Adam's or man's creation from dust, which is frequently referred to in the Holy Qur'ān, for all people are here spoken of as being created from dust. Man's creation from dust implies the ultimate springing of all life from earth.

1673 The various stages through which every human child passes are spoken of here, the object being to show how humble is his origin. Or, the reference may be to the various stages through which man has passed in his evolution to the present stage of perfection. Attention is thus drawn to the fact that, just as the physical evolution of man is gradual, so is his spiritual growth and development.

1674 By *the worst part of life* is meant *dotage* and *decrepitude* (Rz).

1675 The stirring and swelling of the earth means its stirring and swelling with the growth of herbage. Compare 41 : 39, and see 2210. The illustration draws attention to the fact that revelation quickens dead hearts as rain quickens dead earth. The next verse makes it plain: *He gives life to the dead and He is Possessor of power over all things.*

1676 To understand what is meant by *those who are in the graves* compare 35 : 22: "Surely Allāh makes whom He pleases hear, and thou canst not make

8 And among men is he who disputes about Allāh without knowledge, and without guidance, and without an illuminating Book.

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُّجَادِلُ فِي اللّٰهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَّلَا هُدًى وَّلَا كِتٰبٍ مُّنِيْرٍ ﴿٨﴾

9 Turning away haughtily[1677] to lead men astray from the way of Allāh. For him is disgrace in this world, and on the day of Resurrection We shall make him taste the punishment of burning.

ثَانِيَ عِطْفِهٖ لِيُضِلَّ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۭ لَهٗ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَّنُذِيْقُهٗ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ عَذَابَ الْحَرِيْقِ ﴿٩﴾

10 This is for that which thy two hands have sent before, and Allāh is not in the least unjust to the servants.

ذٰلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدٰكَ وَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيْدِ ﴿١٠﴾

SECTION 2 : **Certainty of Divine Help**

11 And among men is he who serves Allāh, (standing) on the verge,[1678] so that if good befalls him he is satisfied therewith, but if a trial afflicts him he turns back headlong. He loses this world and the Hereafter. That is a manifest loss.

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَّعْبُدُ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى حَرْفٍ ۚ فَاِنْ اَصَابَهٗ خَيْرُ ۨ اطْمَاَنَّ بِهٖ ۚ وَاِنْ اَصَابَتْهُ فِتْنَةُ ۨ انْقَلَبَ عَلٰى وَجْهِهٖ ۚ خَسِرَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةَ ۭ ذٰلِكَ هُوَ الْخُسْرَانُ الْمُبِيْنُ ﴿١١﴾

12 He calls besides Allāh on that which harms him not, nor benefits him ; that is straying far.

يَدْعُوْا مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ مَا لَا يَضُرُّهٗ وَمَا لَا يَنْفَعُهٗ ۭ ذٰلِكَ هُوَ الضَّلٰلُ الْبَعِيْدُ ﴿١٢﴾

13 He calls on him whose harm is nearer than his benefit. Certainly an evil guardian and an evil associate !

يَدْعُوْا لَمَنْ ضَرُّهٗٓ اَقْرَبُ مِنْ نَّفْعِهٖ ۭ لَبِئْسَ الْمَوْلٰى وَلَبِئْسَ الْعَشِيْرُ ﴿١٣﴾

14 Surely Allāh causes those who believe and do good deeds to enter Gardens wherein flow rivers. Allāh indeed does what He pleases.

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُدْخِلُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيْدُ ﴿١٤﴾

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those hear who are in the graves". The significance is that even the incorrigible will be raised to a spiritual life.

1677 Thāniya 'itfi-hī signifies literally *folding up, twisting,* or *turning his side, 'itf* meaning *the side of a man from the head to the hip,* but the expression is used metaphorically to signify *behaving proudly* (LL) or *turning away* (R).

1678, see next page.

15 Whoever thinks that Allāh will not assist him in this life and the Hereafter, let him raise (himself) by some means to the heaven, then let him cut (it) off, then let him see if his plan will take away that at which he is enraged.[1679]

مَنْ كَانَ يَظُنُّ اَنْ لَّنْ يَّنْصُرَهُ اللّٰهُ فِى الدُّنْيَا وَ الْاٰخِرَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ بِسَبَبٍ اِلَى السَّمَآءِ ثُمَّ لْيَقْطَعْ فَلْيَنْظُرْ هَلْ يُذْهِبَنَّ كَيْدُهٗ مَا يَغِيْظُ ﴿۱۵﴾

16 And thus have We revealed it, clear arguments, and Allāh guides whom He will.

وَ كَذٰلِكَ اَنْزَلْنٰهُ اٰيٰتٍۢ بَيِّنٰتٍ ۙ وَّ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَهْدِىْ مَنْ يُّرِيْدُ ﴿۱۶﴾

17 Those who believe and those who are Jews and the Sabeans and the Christians and the Magians and the polytheists — surely Allah will decide between them on the day of Resurrection. Surely Allāh is Witness over all things.[1680]

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَ الَّذِيْنَ هَادُوْا وَ الصّٰبِـِٕيْنَ وَ النَّصٰرٰى وَ الْمَجُوْسَ وَ الَّذِيْنَ اَشْرَكُوْا ۖ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيْدٌ ﴿۱۷﴾

18 Seest thou not that to Allāh makes submission whoever is in the heavens and whoever is in the earth, and the sun and the moon and the

اَلَمْ تَرَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَسْجُدُ لَهٗ مَنْ فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ مَنْ فِى الْاَرْضِ وَ الشَّمْسُ

1678 *'Alā ḥarf* (lit., *on the verge*) is variously explained, the ultimate significance being in all cases the same. LL quotes many of these explanations. It either means *standing aloof with respect to religion in a fluctuating state, like him who is on the outskirts of the army, who, if sure of victory and spoil, stands firm but otherwise flees*; or, the meaning is, *who serves Allāh in doubt or suspense, being unsteady like him who stands on the edge of a mountain*, or *who serves Allāh in one mode of circumstances, i.e., when in ample circumstances*. All these explanations indicate the attitude of a man who wavers, being ready to quit the faith on any pretence.

1679 This passage is misconstrued on account of a misconception in connection with the personal pronoun *hu* in *yanṣura-hu*, which refers really to the Holy Prophet. The second difficulty is in connection with the object of *yaqṭa'*, i.e., *cut (it) off*, which is understood as being really the Divine assistance, which the opponents are told must come to the Holy Prophet, however hard their struggle against that Divine assistance, and this is clearly indicated by the concluding words of the verse. The prophecies of the final triumph of Truth and of the coming of Divine assistance to the Holy Prophet were repeatedly declared in the Holy Qur'ān, and the disbelievers were enraged at this. They are told that the Divine assistance must come, and that they should leave no stone unturned in their struggle against it, insomuch that, if they could, they should rise to heaven and cut off all heavenly or Divine assistance from the Prophet. Or, the meaning may be that they may carry their anger to the greatest possible extremity and be driven to the utmost desperation, yet they will be unable to stop the coming of Divine help. The meaning is in either case that Divine assistance, which is promised to the Prophet, will come to him most surely, however hard the struggle carried on against him, or however great the disappointment of the opponents.

1680 It is implied that differences in religious beliefs do not call for punishment in this life; these will be decided on the day of Judgment. Punishment in

stars, and the mountains and the trees, and the animals and many of the people? And many there are to whom chastisement is due. And he whom Allāh abases, none can give him honour. Surely Allāh does what He pleases.[1681]

Prostration

وَالْقَمَرُ وَالنُّجُومُ وَالْجِبَالُ وَالشَّجَرُ وَالدَّوَآبُّ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنَ النَّاسِ ۗ وَكَثِيرٌ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِ الْعَذَابُ ۗ وَمَنْ يُّهِنِ اللّٰهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ مُّكْرِمٍ ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَآءُ ﴿۱۸﴾

19 These are two adversaries[1682] who dispute about their Lord. So those who disbelieve, for them are cut out garments of fire. Boiling water will be poured out over their heads.

هٰذٰنِ خَصْمٰنِ اخْتَصَمُوْا فِيْ رَبِّهِمْ ۡ فَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا قُطِّعَتْ لَهُمْ ثِيَابٌ مِّنْ نَّارٍ ۗ يُصَبُّ مِنْ فَوْقِ رُءُوْسِهِمُ الْحَمِيْمُ ﴿۱۹﴾

20 With it will be melted what is in their bellies and (their) skins as well.

يُصْهَرُ بِهٖ مَا فِيْ بُطُوْنِهِمْ وَالْجُلُوْدُ ﴿۲۰﴾

21 And for them are whips of iron.[1683]

وَلَهُمْ مَّقَامِعُ مِنْ حَدِيْدٍ ﴿۲۱﴾

22 Whenever they desire to go forth from it, from grief,[1684] they are turned back into it, and (it is said): Taste the chastisement of burning.

كُلَّمَآ اَرَادُوْٓا اَنْ يَّخْرُجُوْا مِنْهَا مِنْ غَمٍّ اُعِيْدُوْا فِيْهَا ۗ وَذُوْقُوْا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيْقِ ﴿۲۲﴾

SECTION 3: **Believers are Triumphant**

23 Surely Allāh will make those who believe and do good deeds enter Gardens wherein flow rivers — they

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُدْخِلُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيْهَا مِنْ

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this life is brought upon those who work mischief and transgress all limits in doing evil.

1681 The recital of this verse is followed by an actual prostration; see 978.

1682 The two adversaries are the believers and the disbelievers. It should be noted that the enmity of the two parties, whose original difference is only a *dispute about their Lord*, is now assuming a graver aspect, and the fate of the two in the coming conflicts is clearly foretold — of the disbelievers in vv. 19-22, and of the believers in vv. 23, 24.

1683 The *iron whips* indicate *holding in subjection*. *Qama'a-hū*, the root from which *maqma'*, meaning *whip*, is derived, signifies *he held him in subjection and brought him to submission* (T).

1684 *Min ghamm-in* (*from grief*) explains *min-hā* (*from it*), and thus explains the nature of the chastisement in this and the previous verse. It is a grief which will constantly burn their souls so as to melt them.

are adorned therein with bracelets of gold and (with) pearls. And their garments therein are of silk.[1685]

أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَّلُؤْلُؤًا ۖ وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 And they are guided to pure words, and they are guided to the path of the Praised One.

وَهُدُوْٓا اِلَى الطَّيِّبِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ ۖ وَهُدُوْٓا اِلٰى صِرَاطِ الْحَمِيْدِ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 Those who disbelieve and hinder (men) from Allāh's way and from the Sacred Mosque, which We have made equally for all men, (for) the dweller therein and the visitor.[1686] And whoever inclines therein to wrong, unjustly, We shall make him taste of painful chastisement.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَيَصُدُّوْنَ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ الَّذِيْ جَعَلْنٰهُ لِلنَّاسِ سَوَآءَ ۨالْعَاكِفُ فِيْهِ وَالْبَادِ ۭ وَمَنْ يُّرِدْ فِيْهِ بِاِلْحَادٍ بِظُلْمٍ نُّذِقْهُ مِنْ عَذَابٍ اَلِيْمٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

SECTION 4: **Pilgrimage**

26 And when We pointed to Abraham the place of the House, saying: Associate naught with Me, and purify My House for those who make circuits and stand to pray and bow and prostrate themselves.

وَاِذْ بَوَّاْنَا لِاِبْرٰهِيْمَ مَكَانَ الْبَيْتِ اَنْ لَّا تُشْرِكْ بِيْ شَيْـًٔا وَّطَهِّرْ بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّآئِفِيْنَ وَالْقَآئِمِيْنَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُوْدِ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And proclaim to men the Pilgrimage:[1687] they will come to thee on foot and on every lean camel, coming from every remote path:[1688]

وَاَذِّنْ فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ يَاْتُوْكَ رِجَالًا وَّعَلٰى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَّاْتِيْنَ مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَمِيْقٍ ﴿٢٧﴾

1685 The following incident, mentioned by Baihaqī, shows that the companions of the Prophet understood these prophecies in another sense too: "The bracelets of Kisrā, the Persian monarch, were brought to 'Umar, and he caused Surāqah, son of Mālik, to wear them, on which he praised the Almighty". The reason for 'Umar causing the bracelets to be worn by Surāqah is also given by the same authority in another report, according to which the Holy Prophet had said to Surāqah: "How wilt thou feel when thou wearest the bracelets of Kisrā?" (*Khaṣā'iṣ al-Kubrā*, vol. ii, p. 113).

1686 Or, *'ākif* may signify *the dweller in Makkah,* and *bād, the dweller in the desert,* or the two may respectively signify *one who dwells in it constantly and one who comes to it occasionally.* The disbelievers, being then in possession of the Sacred Mosque, prevented the Muslims from using it. They are told that this state of things will be brought to an end, for it must be open to all visitors, and that could only be brought about by the Muslims being made masters of it.

1687 The words are addressed to the Holy Prophet, and contain a mighty prophecy that Makkah will become the centre to which men will come for pilgrimage. It was announced just at the time when the Holy Prophet was being driven away from Makkah by his enemies, who were the sole masters of the

1688, see next page.

28 That they may witness benefits (provided) for them, and mention the name of Allāh on appointed days over what He has given them of the cattle quadrupeds; then eat of them and feed the distressed one, the needy.[1689]

لِّيَشْهَدُوْا مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ وَيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللّٰهِ فِيْٓ اَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُوْمٰتٍ عَلٰى مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِّنْۢ بَهِيْمَةِ الْاَنْعَامِ ۚ فَكُلُوْا مِنْهَا وَاَطْعِمُوا الْبَآئِسَ الْفَقِيْرَ ۝٢٨

29 Then let them accomplish their needful acts of cleansing, and let them fulfil their vows and go round the Ancient House.[1690]

ثُمَّ لْيَقْضُوْا تَفَثَهُمْ وَلْيُوْفُوْا نُذُوْرَهُمْ وَلْيَطَّوَّفُوْا بِالْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيْقِ ۝٢٩

30 That (shall be so). And whoever respects the sacred ordinances of Allāh, it is good for him with his Lord. And the cattle are made lawful for you, except that which is recited to you, so shun the filth of the idols and shun false words,

ذٰلِكَ ۚ وَمَنْ يُّعَظِّمْ حُرُمٰتِ اللّٰهِ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّهٗ عِنْدَ رَبِّهٖ ۗ وَاُحِلَّتْ لَكُمُ الْاَنْعَامُ اِلَّا مَا يُتْلٰى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِّجْسَ مِنَ الْاَوْثَانِ وَاجْتَنِبُوْا قَوْلَ الزُّوْرِ ۝٣٠

31 Being upright for Allāh, not associating aught with Him. And whoever associates (aught) with Allāh, it is as if he had fallen from on high, then the birds had snatched him away, or the wind had carried him off to a distant place.

حُنَفَآءَ لِلّٰهِ غَيْرَ مُشْرِكِيْنَ بِهٖ ۗ وَمَنْ يُّشْرِكْ بِاللّٰهِ فَكَاَنَّمَا خَرَّ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ فَتَخْطَفُهُ الطَّيْرُ اَوْ تَهْوِيْ بِهِ الرِّيْحُ فِيْ مَكَانٍ سَحِيْقٍ ۝٣١

32 That (shall be so). And whoever respects the ordinances of Allāh, this is surely from the piety of hearts.

ذٰلِكَ ۚ وَمَنْ يُّعَظِّمْ شَعَآئِرَ اللّٰهِ فَاِنَّهَا مِنْ تَقْوَى الْقُلُوْبِ ۝٣٢

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place. Just when Makkah seemed to have lost every chance of becoming a Muslim centre, and when the Muslims themselves were in danger of being entirely destroyed, a mighty prophecy is announced in the most forcible words that Islām will spread to all countries of the world, and Makkah will become the universal centre to which pilgrims from all nations will resort.

1688 The *lean camel* is particularly mentioned here to indicate the great distances from which the pilgrims would come. The addition of the words *from every remote path* shows that people will come from the remotest parts of the earth.

1689 The subject of sacrifice is one that is specially related to the pilgrimage, because every pilgrim must sacrifice an animal. Thus it is the lesson of *sacrifice* that is taught in pilgrimage. It may be added that the act of the pilgrim finds an echo throughout the Muslim world, for every Muslim who can afford is required to sacrifice an animal on this occasion, and this subject is discussed in the next section.

1690 The mention of the Ka'bah as the Ancient House, here and in v. 33, shows that it is so old that it came to be known throughout Arabia by that name, thus pointing to its very remote antiquity; see 168a.

33 Therein are benefits for you for a term appointed, then their place of sacrifice is the Ancient House.

لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَنَافِعُ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُسَمًّى ثُمَّ
مَحِلُّهَا إِلَى الْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ ﴿٣٣﴾

SECTION 5 : **Sacrifices**

34 And for every nation We appointed acts of devotion that they might mention the name of Allāh on what He has given them of the cattle quadrupeds. So your God is One God, therefore to Him should you submit. And give good news to the humble,[1691]

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا لِيَذْكُرُوا
اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِنْ بَهِيمَةِ
الْأَنْعَامِ ۗ فَإِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَلَهُ
أَسْلِمُوا ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُخْبِتِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 Whose hearts tremble when Allāh is mentioned, and who are patient in their afflictions, and who keep up prayer, and spend of what We have given them.[1692]

الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ
وَالصَّابِرِينَ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَهُمْ وَالْمُقِيمِي
الصَّلَاةِ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 And the camels, We have made them of the signs appointed by Allāh for you[1693] — for you therein is much good. So mention the name of Allāh

وَالْبُدْنَ جَعَلْنَاهَا لَكُمْ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ
لَكُمْ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ ۖ فَاذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ

1691 The principle of sacrifice is one which is accepted in one form or another by all nations of the world ; but it has a deeper meaning in Islām. The outward act is still there, as of old, but it no more conveys the meaning attached to it in ancient religions, viz., that of appeasing an offended Deity, or that of serving as an atonement for sins. It signifies the sacrifice of the sacrificer himself, and becomes thus an outward symbol of his readiness to lay down his life, if required, and to sacrifice all his interests and desires in the cause of Truth. Hence it is that words introducing the subject of sacrifice are immediately followed by an injunction to submit oneself entirely to Allāh, Who is the *one God,* i.e., the only Being Who deserves to be made the true object of one's love.

1692 It is by the mention of Allāh's name that an animal is sacrificed, and the meaning underlying it is that their own hearts should *tremble* at the mention of that name. Thus they should bear in mind, when sacrificing an animal over which they hold control, how much more necessary it is that they should lay down their lives in the way of Allāh, Who holds control over all. Hence a verse speaking of sacrifices is immediately followed by one which requires the exercise of great patience and endurance under hard trials by the faithful. The sacrifice of an animal is thus a reminder to man that he must be ready to sacrifice his own life in the cause of Truth.

1693 The meaning conveyed here is the same as that in the previous verse. The camels which are brought for sacrifice to Makkah by the pilgrims are here stated to be only outward signs of the true religion of Allāh, that religion being no other than the religion of entire submission and of laying down all one has, even one's life, in the way of Allāh.

on them standing in a row. Then when they fall down on their sides, eat of them and feed the contented one and the beggar.[1694] Thus have We made them subservient to you that you may be grateful.

عَلَيْهَا صَوَآفَّ ۚ فَإِذَا وَجَبَتْ جُنُوبُهَا فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطْعِمُوا الْقَانِعَ وَالْمُعْتَرَّ ۚ كَذٰلِكَ سَخَّرْنٰهَا لَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 Not their flesh, nor their blood, reaches Allāh, but to Him is acceptable observance of duty on your part.[1695] Thus has He made them subservient to you, that you may magnify Allāh for guiding you aright. And give good news to those who do good (to others).

لَنْ يَّنَالَ اللّٰهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَآؤُهَا وَلٰكِنْ يَّنَالُهُ التَّقْوٰى مِنْكُمْ ۚ كَذٰلِكَ سَخَّرَهَا لَكُمْ لِتُكَبِّرُوا اللّٰهَ عَلٰى مَا هَدٰىكُمْ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 Surely Allāh defends those who believe. Surely Allāh loves not anyone who is unfaithful, ungrateful.[1696]

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُدٰفِعُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوا ۗ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ خَوَّانٍ كَفُورٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

SECTION 6 : **Believers permitted to Fight**

39 Permission (to fight) is given to those on whom war is made, because they are oppressed. And surely Allāh is Able to assist them—[1697]

أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقٰتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظُلِمُوا ۚ وَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

1694 The flesh of the animals sacrificed is not to be wasted, but it should serve as food for the poor and the needy. The burying of the flesh of the numerous sacrifices at Makkah on the occasion of the pilgrimage is not in accordance with any injunction of the Holy Qur'ān or any saying of the Holy Prophet. It can be turned to good use.

1695 This verse settles conclusively that it is not the outward act of sacrifice, which is acceptable, but the deep meaning of *sacrifice* which underlies it. It should also be borne in mind that the idea of atonement is quite foreign to Islamic sacrifice. It is the righteous whom Islām requires to sacrifice, and this is hinted at in the words, *to Him is acceptable observance of duty on your part.*

1696 With this verse, which brings this section to a close, is introduced a new subject, the subject of fighting in the way of Allāh, which is dealt with at length in the following section. This sheds light upon the connection which exists between the two subjects. After dealing with the subject of sacrifice theoretically, the Muslim has in fact been prepared to bring into practice the theory of the sacrifice. Hence he is told that the time is near when he will be required to lay down his very life in the defence of Truth, which the opponents were

1697, see next page.

40 Those who are driven from their homes without a just cause except that they say: Our Lord is Allāh. And if Allāh did not repel some people by others, cloisters, and churches, and synagogues, and mosques in which Allāh's name is much remembered, would have been pulled down. And surely Allāh will help him who helps Him. Surely Allāh is Strong, Mighty.[1698]

الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِن دِيَارِهِم بِغَيْرِ
حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَن يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ۗ وَلَوْ
لَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُم بِبَعْضٍ
لَّهُدِّمَتْ صَوَامِعُ وَبِيَعٌ وَصَلَوَاتٌ وَ
مَسَاجِدُ يُذْكَرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا ۗ
وَلَيَنصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَن يَنصُرُهُ ۗ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 Those who, if We establish them in the land, will keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and enjoin good and forbid evil. And Allāh's is the end of affairs.

الَّذِينَ إِن مَّكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا
بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ ۗ
وَلِلَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ ﴿٤١﴾

42 And if they reject thee, already before them did the people of Noah and 'Ād and Thamūd reject (prophets),

وَإِن يُكَذِّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ
قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَعَادٌ وَثَمُودُ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 And the people of Abraham and the people of Lot,

وَقَوْمُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَقَوْمُ لُوطٍ ﴿٤٣﴾

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striving to exterminate. Therefore, the subject of fighting in the cause of Truth is a fitting sequel to the subject of sacrifice, as casting further light upon the inner meaning of sacrifice, and also requiring that doctrine to be carried into practice.

1697 According to authentic reports, this is the earliest permission given to the Muslims to fight. There is nothing to show that this verse was not revealed at Makkah. On the other hand, it was owing to this revelation that in the well-known oath of allegiance taken at 'Aqabah, the Holy Prophet required a promise from the Madīnah deputation that they would defend him against his enemies even as they would defend their own children. The words in which the permission is granted show clearly that war was first made on the Muslims by their opponents; and secondly, that the Muslims had already suffered great oppression at the hands of their persecutors. The words of the next verse, *those who have been expelled from their homes,* may refer to the emigration to Abyssinia, or to the exodus to Madīnah, which commenced soon after the 'Aqabah allegiance was sworn.

1698 The religious freedom which was established by Islām thirteen hundred years ago has not yet been surpassed by the most civilized and tolerant of nations. It deserves to be noted that the lives of Muslims are to be sacrificed not only to stop their own persecution by their opponents and to save their own mosques, but to save churches, synagogues and cloisters as well — in fact, to establish perfect religious freedom. The mosques, though they are the places where the name of Allāh is remembered most of all, come in for their share of protection even after the churches and the synagogues. Early Muslims closely followed these directions, and every commander of an army had express orders to respect all houses of worship, and even the cloisters of monks, along with their inmates.

44 And the dwellers of Midian. And Moses (too) was rejected. But I gave respite to the disbelievers, then I seized them; so how (severe) was My disapproval!

وَّ اَصْحٰبُ مَدْيَنَ ۚ وَكُذِّبَ مُوْسٰى
فَاَمْلَيْتُ لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ ثُمَّ اَخَذْتُهُمْ ۚ
فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيْرِ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 How many a town We destroyed while it was iniquitous, so it is fallen down upon its roofs; and (how many) a deserted well and palace raised high!

فَكَاَيِّنْ مِّنْ قَرْيَةٍ اَهْلَكْنٰهَا وَهِيَ
ظَالِمَةٌ فَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلٰى عُرُوْشِهَا
وَبِئْرٍ مُّعَطَّلَةٍ وَّقَصْرٍ مَّشِيْدٍ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 Have they not travelled in the land so that they should have hearts with which to understand, or ears with which to hear? For surely it is not the eyes that are blind, but blind are the hearts which are in the breasts.[1699]

اَفَلَمْ يَسِيْرُوْا فِى الْاَرْضِ فَتَكُوْنَ
لَهُمْ قُلُوْبٌ يَّعْقِلُوْنَ بِهَآ اَوْ اٰذَانٌ
يَّسْمَعُوْنَ بِهَا ۚ فَاِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْاَبْصَارُ
وَلٰكِنْ تَعْمَى الْقُلُوْبُ الَّتِيْ فِي الصُّدُوْرِ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And they ask thee to hasten on the chastisement, and Allāh by no means fails in His promise. And surely a day with thy Lord is as a thousand years of what you reckon.[1700]

وَيَسْتَعْجِلُوْنَكَ بِالْعَذَابِ وَلَنْ يُّخْلِفَ
اللّٰهُ وَعْدَهٗ ۗ وَاِنَّ يَوْمًا عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ
كَاَلْفِ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّوْنَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And how many a town to which I gave respite while it was unjust, then I seized it! And to Me is the return.

وَكَاَيِّنْ مِّنْ قَرْيَةٍ اَمْلَيْتُ لَهَا وَهِيَ
ظَالِمَةٌ ثُمَّ اَخَذْتُهَا ۚ وَاِلَيَّ الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿٤٨﴾

SECTION 7: **Opposition to the Prophet**

49 Say: O people, I am only a plain warner to you.

قُلْ يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اِنَّمَآ اَنَا لَكُمْ
نَذِيْرٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 So those who believe and do good, for them is forgiveness and an honourable sustenance.

فَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ
لَهُمْ مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَّرِزْقٌ كَرِيْمٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 And those who strive to oppose Our messages, they are the inmates of the flaming Fire.

وَالَّذِيْنَ سَعَوْا فِيْٓ اٰيٰتِنَا مُعٰجِزِيْنَ
اُولٰٓئِكَ اَصْحٰبُ الْجَحِيْمِ ﴿٥١﴾

1699 It should be noted that the Holy Qur'ān very often speaks of the blind, the deaf and the dead, meaning thereby the spiritually blind, deaf and dead, as it has plainly stated here.

1700 Those spoken of here are undoubtedly the opponents of Truth who

52 And We never sent a messenger or a prophet before thee but when he desired, the devil made a suggestion respecting his desire; but Allāh annuls that which the devil casts, then does Allāh establish His messages. And Allāh is Knowing, Wise—[1701]

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ مِن رَّسُولٍ
وَلَا نَبِيٍّ إِلَّآ إِذَا تَمَنَّىٰٓ أَلْقَى الشَّيْطٰنُ
فِيٓ أُمْنِيَّتِهِۦ فَيَنسَخُ اللّٰهُ مَا يُلْقِي
الشَّيْطٰنُ ثُمَّ يُحْكِمُ اللّٰهُ اٰيٰتِهِۦ ۗ وَ
اللّٰهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 That He may make what the devil casts a trial for those in whose hearts is a disease and the hard-hearted.[1702] And surely the wrong-doers are in severe opposition,

لِّيَجْعَلَ مَا يُلْقِي الشَّيْطٰنُ فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِينَ
فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ وَّالْقَاسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ ۗ
وَإِنَّ الظّٰلِمِينَ لَفِي شِقَاقٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٥٣﴾

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were to come later, and who have been allowed to oppose the advance of Islām for a thousand years. Compare 1602, 1603. The set-back which Islām was to receive for a thousand years is again spoken of in 32:5; see 1959.

1701 Some careless commentators mention here the false story relating to what the Christian critics call "the Lapse" of the Prophet. The Prophet, they say, on this occasion recognized that the idols worshipped by the Arabs could intercede with God on their behalf. That such a thing never happened is shown in 2382. This story has been rejected by all sound and reliable commentators. Thus Ibn Kathīr says: "Many commentators relate here the story of the *Gharānīq* . . . but it is from sources not traceable to any companion". According to Rz, *commentators who aim at accuracy and truth say that this story is false and a forgery.* Bd makes similar remarks.

The words do not, and cannot, mean that when a prophet recites a revelation, the devil introduces his own words into his recitation. It is absurd on the face of it, and the Holy Qur'ān belies it when it says: "He reveals not His secrets to any, except to him whom He chooses as a messenger; for surely He makes a guard to march before him and after him, so that He may know that they have truly delivered the messages of their Lord" (72:26-28). Moreover, it is absolutely inconceivable that such an important incident as the Prophet's having accepted the intercession of idols should have been mentioned in the Qur'ān eight years after it happened. The 53rd chapter, in which the change is said to have taken place, was revealed before the fifth year of the Prophet's call, while this chapter was revealed on the eve of the Prophet's departure from Makkah. That more than half the Qur'ān should have been revealed during this long period without a single reference to the alleged story, and that it should then have been quite unnecessarily referred to in a sūrah where it is quite out of place, is alone sufficient to give the lie to this story.

Now take the words. *Tamannā,* according to all lexicologists, signifies *he desired,* and according to T, *tamannī* signifies *the desire to attain to that which is liked by one.* Now, what every prophet desires is the establishing of the Truth that is revealed to him, and it is with this desire of every prophet that the devil interferes, instigating men, *making suggestions to them,* as stated here, to oppose the Truth. That this is the true meaning is also shown by the context, which deals with the establishing of the Truth and the desire of the opponents of Truth to annihilate it. See the previous verse, which condemns those who fight and contest

1702, see next page.

54 And that those who have been given knowledge may know that it is the Truth from thy Lord, so they should believe in it that their hearts may be lowly before Him. And surely Allāh is the Guide of those who believe, into a right path.

وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَيُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ فَتُخْبِتَ لَهُ قُلُوبُهُمْ ۗ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهَادِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 And those who disbelieve will not cease to be in doubt concerning it, until the Hour overtakes them suddenly, or there comes to them the chastisement of a destructive day.[1704]

وَلَا يَزَالُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي مِرْيَةٍ مِنْهُ حَتَّىٰ تَأْتِيَهُمُ السَّاعَةُ بَغْتَةً أَوْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ عَذَابُ يَوْمٍ عَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٥﴾

56 The kingdom on that day is Allāh's. He will judge between them. So those who believe and do good will be in Gardens of bliss.

الْمُلْكُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلَّهِ ۖ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فِي جَنَّاتِ النَّعِيمِ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 And those who disbelieve and reject Our messages, for them is an abasing chastisement.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ ﴿٥٧﴾

SECTION 8: **The Faithful shall be Established**

58 And those who flee in Allāh's way[1705] and are then slain or die, Allāh will certainly grant them a goodly sustenance. And surely Allāh is the Best of providers.

وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ قُتِلُوا أَوْ مَاتُوا لَيَرْزُقَنَّهُمُ اللَّهُ رِزْقًا حَسَنًا ۚ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

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with the Prophet to render him unable to establish the Truth in the world. And here we are told that the plans of the enemies will be frustrated and Truth will be established in the world.

1702 The devil's strivings against the Prophet become a trial for the weak, who are unable to endure the severe persecutions of their enemies.

1704 *'Aqīm,* applied to a womb, means *barren;* applied to wind, it signifies *such as does not fructify* (LL); hence *al-rīḥ al-'aqīm* in 51:41 means a *destructive wind,* and *yaum 'aqīm* here *a destructive day,* i.e., *a day bringing no good.* This verse, as well as the two following, prophesy the establishment of Truth — for that is the kingdom of Allāh — and the discomfiture of the power of evil.

1705 The mere occurrence of the word *hājarū* (they fled) in this verse does not show that it was not revealed at Makkah, for a flight of the faithful to

59 He will certainly cause them to enter a place which they are pleased with. And surely Allāh is Knowing, Forbearing.

لَيُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ مُّدْخَلًا يَّرْضَوْنَهٗ ۭ وَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَعَلِيْمٌ حَلِيْمٌ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 That (is so). And whoever retaliates with the like of that with which he is afflicted and he is oppressed, Allāh will certainly help him. Surely Allāh is Pardoning, Forgiving.[1706]

ذٰلِكَ ۚ وَمَنْ عَاقَبَ بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوْقِبَ بِهٖ ثُمَّ بُغِيَ عَلَيْهِ لَيَنْصُرَنَّهُ اللّٰهُ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَعَفُوٌّ غَفُوْرٌ ﴿٦٠﴾

61 That is because Allāh causes the night to enter into the day and causes the day to enter into the night, and because Allāh is Hearing, Seeing.[1707]

ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّ اللّٰهَ يُوْلِجُ الَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُوْلِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي الَّيْلِ وَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيْعٌ بَصِيْرٌ ﴿٦١﴾

62 That is because Allāh is the Truth, and that which they call upon besides Him — that is the falsehood, and because Allāh—He is the High, the Great.

ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَاَنَّ مَا يَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِهٖ هُوَ الْبَاطِلُ وَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيْرُ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 Seest thou not that Allāh sends down water from the cloud, then the earth becomes green? Surely Allāh is Knower of subtilities, Aware.

اَلَمْ تَرَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ اَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاۗءِ مَاۗءً ۡ فَتُصْبِحُ الْاَرْضُ مُخْضَرَّةً ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَطِيْفٌ خَبِيْرٌ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. And surely Allāh—He is the Self-Sufficient, the Praised.

لَهٗ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۭ وَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَهُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيْدُ ﴿٦٤﴾

Abyssinia had taken place as early as the fifth year of the Call. Moreover, it should be noted that the Holy Prophet, with Abū Bakr and 'Alī, were the last men to depart from Makkah on the occasion of the second flight. A true and generous leader of men, he waited to see his faithful followers depart before he left, so that their safety might be ensured. There is no doubt that if he had left his followers behind him, they would have encountered a very hard fate at the hands of an exasperated enemy. The reference to some being slain after their flight is clearly prophetical.

1706 This verse permits the Muslims, who were long persecuted and oppressed, to punish their persecutors, but at the same time recommends pardon and forgiveness by referring to those two attributes of the Divine Being in the concluding words of the verse.

1707 Apparently the succession of the day and the night refers here to the turn of fortune hinted at in the previous verse, because an oppressed community could not punish its persecutors unless it gained the mastery over them. The same is indicated in the two attributes of the Divine Being with which the verse is closed. The verses that follow contain hints to the same effect.

SECTION 9 : **Divine Mercy in dealing with Men**

65 Seest thou not that Allāh has made subservient to you all that is in the earth, and the ships gliding in the sea by His command ? And He withholds the heaven from falling on the earth except with His permission. Surely Allāh is Compassionate, Merciful to men.[1708]

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللّٰهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَالْفُلْكَ تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ وَيُمْسِكُ السَّمَاءَ أَنْ تَقَعَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 And He it is Who brings you to life, then He causes you to die, then He will bring you to life. Surely man is ungrateful.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَكَفُورٌ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 To every nation We appointed acts of devotion, which they observe,[1709] so let them not dispute with thee in the matter, and call to thy Lord. Surely thou art on a right guidance.

لِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا هُمْ نَاسِكُوهُ فَلَا يُنَازِعُنَّكَ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَادْعُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ ۖ إِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ هُدًى مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 And if they contend with thee, say : Allāh best knows what you do.

وَإِنْ جَادَلُوكَ فَقُلِ اللّٰهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 Allāh will judge between you on the day of Resurrection respecting that in which you differ.

اَللّٰهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 Knowest thou not that Allāh knows what is in the heaven and the earth ? Surely this is in a book. That is surely easy to Allāh.

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ إِنَّ ذٰلِكَ فِي كِتَابٍ ۗ إِنَّ ذٰلِكَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٧٠﴾

71 And they serve besides Allāh that for which He has not sent any authority, and of which they have no knowledge. And for the unjust there is no helper.

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللّٰهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزِّلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا وَّمَا لَيْسَ لَهُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ ۗ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ نَّصِيرٍ ﴿٧١﴾

72 And when Our clear messages are recited to them, thou wilt notice

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ تَعْرِفُ

1708 The first part of the verse gives a promise of victory to the Muslims, while the latter part warns the opponents that Allāh withholds the punishment from them for a time, for He is Compassionate and Merciful to men. The withholding of the heaven means the withholding of the punishment, which the opponents were told would come down upon them from heaven.

1709 The principle that all people were given spiritual light is reiterated throughout the Holy Qur'ān.

a denial on the faces of those who disbelieve—they almost attack those who recite to them Our messages. Say: Shall I inform you of what is worse than this? The Fire. Allāh has promised it to those who disbelieve. And evil is the resort.

فِيْ وُجُوْهِ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوا الْمُنْكَرَ ۭ يَكَادُوْنَ
يَسْطُوْنَ بِالَّذِيْنَ يَتْلُوْنَ عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتِنَا ۭ
قُلْ اَفَاُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِشَرٍّ مِّنْ ذٰلِكُمْ ۭ
اَلنَّارُ ۭ وَعَدَهَا اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا ۭ
وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿٧٢﴾

SECTION 10 : **Polytheism will be uprooted**

73 O people, a parable is set forth, so listen to it. Surely those whom you call upon besides Allāh cannot create a fly, though they should all gather for it. And if the fly carry off aught from them, they cannot take it back from it. Weak are (both) the invoker and the invoked.[1710]

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ضُرِبَ مَثَلٌ فَاسْتَمِعُوْا
لَهٗ ۭ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ تَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ
دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ لَنْ يَّخْلُقُوْا ذُبَابًا وَّلَوِ
اجْتَمَعُوْا لَهٗ ۭ وَاِنْ يَّسْلُبْهُمُ الذُّبَابُ
شَيْـًٔا لَّا يَسْتَنْقِذُوْهُ مِنْهُ ۭ ضَعُفَ
الطَّالِبُ وَالْمَطْلُوْبُ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 They estimate not Allāh with His due estimation. Surely Allāh is Strong, Mighty.

مَا قَدَرُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهٖ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ
لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيْزٌ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 Allāh chooses messengers from angels and from men. Surely Allāh is Hearing, Seeing.

اَللّٰهُ يَصْطَفِيْ مِنَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ رُسُلًا
وَّمِنَ النَّاسِ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيْعٌۢ بَصِيْرٌ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 He knows what is before them and what is behind them. And to Allāh are all affairs returned.

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۭ
وَاِلَى اللّٰهِ تُرْجَعُ الْاُمُوْرُ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 O you who believe, bow down and prostrate yourselves and serve your Lord, and do good that you may succeed.[1710a]

Prostration

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا ارْكَعُوْا وَاسْجُدُوْا
وَاعْبُدُوْا رَبَّكُمْ وَافْعَلُوا الْخَيْرَ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿٧٧﴾ السجدة

78 And strive hard for Allāh with due striving. He has chosen you and has not laid upon you any hardship in

وَجَاهِدُوْا فِي اللّٰهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهٖ ۭ هُوَ
اجْتَبٰىكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّيْنِ

1710 The verse, while truly describing the inability of false gods to create the lowest form of life or to exercise the least control over creation, contains a clear prophecy that the false deities will be removed from the Sacred House, and that both the worshippers and the worshipped will be helpless.

1710a The recitation of this verse is followed by an actual prostration; see 978.

religion — the faith of your father Abraham. He named you Muslims before and in this,[1711] that the Messenger may be a bearer of witness to you, and you may be bearers of witness to the people ;[1711a] so keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and hold fast to Allāh. He is your Protector ; excellent the Protector and excellent the Helper !

مِنْ حَرَجٍ ۚ مِلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرٰهِيمَ ۚ
هُوَ سَمّٰىكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ۙ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَفِي
هٰذَا لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ
وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَآءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ ۚ
فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتُوا الزَّكٰوةَ
وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللّٰهِ ۚ هُوَ مَوْلٰىكُمْ ۚ فَنِعْمَ
الْمَوْلٰى وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ ﴿٧٨﴾

1711 The reference in *before* is to the revelation of Abraham, who prayed that from among his descendants there should arise a nation of Muslims (2:128), and in *this* to the Holy Qur'ān. For the meaning of *Islām* and *Muslim,* see 156 and 400. The root-word is *salm* or *silm,* both signifying peace (R), and a Muslim is therefore one who leads a life of peace, ***peace with God,*** which means complete submission to His will, and ***peace with man,*** which means that he causes no injury to any man, as a saying of the Holy Prophet has it (B. 2:3).

1711a Compare 2:143, where similar words are used. The significance is that the Muslim community is destined to play the role of leader to the whole of humanity ; see 183.

PART XVIII

CHAPTER 23

Al-Mu'minūn : THE BELIEVERS

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 6 *sections*; 118 *verses*)

This chapter, which brings the third group of Makkan chapters to a close, is known under the name of *The Believers,* because it deals with the success of the believers. It is rightly regarded as one of the latest Makkan revelations, and this is amply attested by internal evidence.

As the final word of kind advice and as a firm expression of the success of the believers, the chapter no doubt forms an appropriate sequel to a group of chapters dealing with the great and triumphant future of Islām. It seems to continue, in fact, the subject-matter of the last chapter, and therefore asserts the success of the believers in clear and forcible words in the first section, which is followed by two others referring to similar success in the case of former prophets. The fourth section tells us that the history of the Prophet is, in fact, a repetition of the history of previous prophets. The last great Divine revelation was a final blow at polytheism, which really stands condemned out of the mouths of its own votaries, as the fifth section shows. The sixth brings the subject to a close by showing how the wicked will finally regret their evil deeds.

SECTION 1 **Success of the Faithful**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Successful indeed are the believers,[1712]

قَدْ اَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ①

2 Who are humble in their prayers,

الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ فِيْ صَلَاتِهِمْ خٰشِعُوْنَ ②

3 And who shun what is vain,

وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُوْنَ ③

4 And who act for the sake of purity,[1713]

وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ لِلزَّكٰوةِ فٰعِلُوْنَ ④

5 And who restrain their sexual passions—[1714]

وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ لِفُرُوْجِهِمْ حٰفِظُوْنَ ⑤

6 Except in the presence of their mates or those whom their right hands possess, for such surely are not blameable,[1715]

اِلَّا عَلٰٓى اَزْوَاجِهِمْ اَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُهُمْ فَاِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُوْمِيْنَ ⑥

7 But whoever seeks to go beyond that, such are transgressors—

فَمَنِ ابْتَغٰى وَرَآءَ ذٰلِكَ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْعٰدُوْنَ ⑦

1712 The last two chapters opened with a warning of the approach of judgment. This, as a fitting sequel, opens with a declaration of the triumph of the believers, for it was possible that the wicked should have tasted punishment without resultant good to the faithful. To dispel all such doubts it is stated that the believers shall be successful even in this life.

1713 *Fā'ilūn* (from *fi'l, doing*) means *doers of deeds,* and *li-l-zakāt* means *for the sake of purity* or *to attain purity.* The word zakāt means originally *purity,* as in 19:13, while zakāt in the sense of poor-rate is spoken of as being *paid, yu'tūn al-zakāt* — they pay zakāt, being always the form adopted. Hence the significance adopted here — they do what they do for the sake of, or to attain to, purity.

1714 *Furūj,* plural of *farj,* indicates *the part of a person which it is indecent to expose* (LL), particularly the pudenda. In this sense *ḥifẓ al-farj* means generally *the observing of continence,* or *the restraining of sexual passions.*

1715 The words *au mā malakat aimānu-hum,* of which a literal rendering is given in the translation, usually indicate *slaves.* It should be noted that this chapter is a Makkan revelation, and the conditions under which slave-girls could be taken as wives were given later at Madīnah; see 561. If the reference here is to sexual relations, the permission regarding those *whom their right hands possess* must be read subject to the conditions of 4:25. It may be added that slave-girls, when taken as wives, did not acquire the full status of a free wife, and hence they are spoken of distinctly. It may, however, be added that *ḥifẓ al-farj* in a wider sense means the *covering of parts of the body which it is indecent to expose,* and in this connection it must be borne in mind that according to Islamic rules of decency, the exposure of such parts of the body, as are generally exposed in ballrooms and theatres, is disallowed, but a certain degree of freedom is allowed to women in the presence of their husbands and female servants and to men in the presence of their wives and male servants.

8 And those who are keepers of their trusts and their covenant,

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمٰنٰتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رٰعُونَ ۝٨

9 And those who keep a guard on their prayers.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلٰى صَلَوٰتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ۝٩

10 These are the heirs,

أُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْوٰرِثُونَ ۝١٠

11 Who inherit Paradise. Therein they will abide.

الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خٰلِدُونَ ۝١١

12 And certainly We create man of an extract of clay,[1716]

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلٰلَةٍ مِّنْ طِينٍ ۝١٢

13 Then We make him a small life-germ in a firm resting-place,

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنٰهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ ۝١٣

14 Then We make the life-germ a clot, then We make the clot a lump of flesh, then We make (in) the lump of flesh bones, then We clothe the bones with flesh, then We cause it to grow into another creation. So blessed be Allāh, the Best of creators![1717]

ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظٰمًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظٰمَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنٰهُ خَلْقًا اٰخَرَ فَتَبٰرَكَ اللّٰهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخٰلِقِينَ ۝١٤

15 Then after that you certainly die.

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ لَمَيِّتُونَ ۝١٥

16 Then on the day of Resurrection you will surely be raised up.

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ تُبْعَثُونَ ۝١٦

17 And indeed We have made above you seven ways — and never are We heedless of creation.[1718]

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعَ طَرَآئِقَ وَمَا كُنَّا عَنِ الْخَلْقِ غٰفِلِينَ ۝١٧

1716 The creation of man is here traced back to earth, for the life-germ in sperma is an extract of food, which is drawn from earth in whatever form it may be. It should be noted that while the first ten verses speak of the spiritual growth of man, his physical growth is here spoken of, and thus a comparison may be established between the physical and the spiritual growth. Though described in the past tense, it is a general law of the creation of man that is spoken of here. The addition of the words, *then We cause it to grow into another creation* (v. 14) is to show that man's creation does not end with the completion of the different stages of physical growth, as in the case of other animals, but he is endowed with certain other faculties — the reference being to the moral and spiritual side of man's growth.

1717 The several stages in the growth of the human child, as given here, and unknown then, are quite in accordance with scientific investigation. It should be borne in mind that the word *fa,* meaning *then,* as used in *then We clothe the bones* . . . does not always imply order. This is clear from the context, which states that there is first a lump of flesh, and the nucleus of the bones is generated in this flesh.

1718 Instead of the *seven heavens,* here we have the *seven ways,* which are no doubt the orbits of the seven members of the solar system, excluding the earth, as shown by the words *above you.*

18 And We send down water from the cloud according to a measure, then We cause it to settle in the earth, and We are indeed able to carry it away.

وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً بِقَدَرٍ فَأَسْكَنَّاهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۖ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ ذَهَابٍ بِهِ لَقَادِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

19 Then We cause to grow thereby gardens of palm-trees and grapes for you. You have therein many fruits and of them you eat;

فَأَنشَأْنَا لَكُم بِهِ جَنَّاتٍ مِّن نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ لَّكُمْ فِيهَا فَوَاكِهُ كَثِيرَةٌ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 And a tree that grows out of Mount Sinai, which produces oil and relish for the eaters.[1719]

وَشَجَرَةً تَخْرُجُ مِن طُورِ سَيْنَاءَ تَنبُتُ بِالدُّهْنِ وَصِبْغٍ لِّلْآكِلِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 And surely there is a lesson for you in the cattle. We make you to drink of what is in their bellies, and you have in them many advantages and of them you eat,

وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَنْعَامِ لَعِبْرَةً ۖ نُّسْقِيكُم مِّمَّا فِي بُطُونِهَا وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَنَافِعُ كَثِيرَةٌ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 And on them and on the ships you are borne.

وَعَلَيْهَا وَعَلَى الْفُلْكِ تُحْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

SECTION 2 : **Noah**

23 And certainly We sent Noah to his people, so he said: O my people, serve Allāh, you have no God other than Him. Will you not guard against evil?

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ فَقَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ ۖ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 But the chiefs of those who disbelieved from among his people said: He is nothing but a mortal like yourselves, who desires to have superiority over you. And if Allāh had pleased, He could have sent down angels. We have not heard of this among our fathers of yore.

فَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن قَوْمِهِ مَا هَٰذَا إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُرِيدُ أَن يَتَفَضَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَنزَلَ مَلَائِكَةً مَّا سَمِعْنَا بِهَٰذَا فِي آبَائِنَا الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 He is only a madman, so bear with him for a time.

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ بِهِ جِنَّةٌ فَتَرَبَّصُوا بِهِ حَتَّىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

1719 In the tree that grows out of Mount Sinai, and which produces oil, there seems to be reference to the *blessed olive-tree* of 24:35, as representing the Muslim nation; see 1757

26 He said: My Lord, help me against their calling me a liar.

قَالَ رَبِّ انْصُرْنِي بِمَا كَذَّبُونِ ۝٢٦

27 So We revealed to him: Make the ark under Our eyes and according to Our revelation; then when Our command comes, and water gushes forth from the valley, take into it of every kind a pair, two,[1719a] and thy people, except those among them against whom the word has gone forth, and speak not to Me in respect of those who are unjust; surely they will be drowned.

فَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْهِ أَنِ اصْنَعِ الْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيِنَا فَإِذَا جَآءَ أَمْرُنَا وَفَارَ التَّنُّورُ ۙ فَاسْلُكْ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلٍّ زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ وَأَهْلَكَ إِلَّا مَنْ سَبَقَ عَلَيْهِ الْقَوْلُ مِنْهُمْ ۚ وَلَا تُخَاطِبْنِي فِي الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ۚ إِنَّهُمْ مُغْرَقُونَ ۝٢٧

28 Then when thou art firmly seated, thou and those with thee, in the ark, say: Praise be to Allāh, Who delivered us from the unjust people!

فَإِذَا اسْتَوَيْتَ أَنْتَ وَمَنْ مَعَكَ عَلَى الْفُلْكِ فَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي نَجَّانَا مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ ۝٢٨

29 And say: My Lord, cause me to land a blessed landing and Thou art the Best of those who bring to land.

وَقُلْ رَبِّ أَنْزِلْنِي مُنْزَلًا مُبَارَكًا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْمُنْزِلِينَ ۝٢٩

30 Surely there are signs in this, and surely We are ever trying (men).

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ وَإِنْ كُنَّا لَمُبْتَلِينَ ۝٣٠

31 Then We raised after them another generation.

ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا آخَرِينَ ۝٣١

32 So We sent among them a messenger from among them, saying: Serve Allāh — you have no God other than Him. Will you not guard against evil?

فَأَرْسَلْنَا فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ ۖ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ۝٣٢

SECTION 3: **Prophets after Noah**

33 And the chiefs of His people who disbelieved and called the meeting of the Hereafter a lie, and whom We had given plenty to enjoy in this world's life, said: This is only a mortal like you, eating of that whereof you eat and drinking of what you drink.[1720]

وَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِنْ قَوْمِهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِلِقَاءِ الْآخِرَةِ وَأَتْرَفْنَاهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا مَا هَٰذَا إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ يَأْكُلُ مِمَّا تَأْكُلُونَ مِنْهُ وَيَشْرَبُ مِمَّا تَشْرَبُونَ ۝٣٣

1719a See 1178, 1179, 1180.

1720 The prophets are rejected because they are subject to the same laws of nature in their human requirements as other men. And no one can be a

34 And if you obey a mortal like yourselves, then surely you are losers.

وَلَئِنْ أَطَعْتُمْ بَشَرًا مِّثْلَكُمْ إِنَّكُمْ إِذًا لَّخٰسِرُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 Does he promise you that, when you are dead and become dust and bones, you will then be brought forth?

أَيَعِدُكُمْ أَنَّكُمْ إِذَا مِتُّمْ وَكُنْتُمْ تُرَابًا وَّعِظَامًا أَنَّكُمْ مُّخْرَجُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 Far, very far, is that which you are promised:

هَيْهَاتَ هَيْهَاتَ لِمَا تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 There is naught but our life in this world: we die and we live and we shall not be raised again:

إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَبْعُوثِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 He is naught but a man who has forged a lie against Allāh, and we are not going to believe in him.

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ افْتَرٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا وَّمَا نَحْنُ لَهُ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 He said: My Lord, help me against their calling me a liar.

قَالَ رَبِّ انْصُرْنِي بِمَا كَذَّبُونِ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 He said: In a little while they will certainly be repenting.

قَالَ عَمَّا قَلِيلٍ لَّيُصْبِحُنَّ نٰدِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 So the punishment overtook them in justice, and We made them as rubbish; so away with the unjust people![1721]

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّيْحَةُ بِالْحَقِّ فَجَعَلْنٰهُمْ غُثَاءً فَبُعْدًا لِّلْقَوْمِ الظّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٤١﴾

42 Then We raised after them other generations.

ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ قُرُونًا اٰخَرِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 No people can hasten on their doom, nor can they postpone (it).

مَا تَسْبِقُ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلَهَا وَمَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 Then We sent Our messengers one after another. Whenever its messenger came to a people, they called him a liar, so We made them follow one another and We made them stories. So away with a people who believe not![1722]

ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا تَتْرَا كُلَّمَا جَاءَ أُمَّةً رَّسُولُهَا كَذَّبُوهُ فَأَتْبَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ بَعْضًا وَّجَعَلْنٰهُمْ أَحَادِيثَ فَبُعْدًا لِّقَوْمٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

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model for men, who is not himself a human being, and who is not subject to the same laws of nature as other men, for only a man can show men how they can avoid falling a prey to the frailties of human nature. Hence, a Divine incarnation, or God in a human body, cannot serve as a model to men. We want a mortal to show us how to avoid the pitfalls with which we, as mortals, are surrounded; if God Himself comes into the world, He cannot serve this purpose.

1721 It is the occurrence of the word *ṣaiḥah* in this verse which has led many to think that vv. 33-41 of this section refer to Hūd or Ṣāliḥ. But it should

1722, see next page.

45 Then We sent Moses and his brother Aaron with Our messages and a clear authority

ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسٰى وَ أَخَاهُ هٰرُونَ ۙ بِاٰيٰتِنَا وَ سُلْطٰنٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿۴۵﴾

46 To Pharaoh and his chiefs, but they behaved haughtily and they were an insolent people.

إِلٰى فِرْعَوْنَ وَ مَلَا۠ئِهٖ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوْا وَ كَانُوْا قَوْمًا عَالِيْنَ ﴿۴۶﴾

47 So they said: Shall We believe in two mortals like ourselves while their people serve us?

فَقَالُوْٓا أَنُؤْمِنُ لِبَشَرَيْنِ مِثْلِنَا وَ قَوْمُهُمَا لَنَا عٰبِدُوْنَ ﴿۴۷﴾

48 So they rejected them and became of those who were destroyed.

فَكَذَّبُوْهُمَا فَكَانُوْا مِنَ الْمُهْلَكِيْنَ ﴿۴۸﴾

49 And certainly We gave Moses the Book that they might go aright.

وَ لَقَدْ اٰتَيْنَا مُوْسَى الْكِتٰبَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿۴۹﴾

50 And We made the son of Mary and his mother a sign, and We gave them refuge on a lofty ground having meadows and springs.[1723]

وَ جَعَلْنَا ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَ أُمَّهٗٓ اٰيَةً وَّ اٰوَيْنٰهُمَآ إِلٰى رَبْوَةٍ ذَاتِ قَرَارٍ وَّ مَعِيْنٍ ﴿۵۰﴾

SECTION 4: **Higher Values of Life**

51 O ye messengers, eat of the good things and do good. Surely I am Knower of what you do.

يٰٓأَيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُوْا مِنَ الطَّيِّبٰتِ وَ اعْمَلُوْا صَالِحًا ؕ إِنِّيْ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۵۱﴾

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be borne in mind that *ṣaiḥah* means punishment (LL), and is equally applicable to punishment by earthquake or by any other means. In the chronological order of prophets given in the 7th chapter it is Hūd who follows Noah, and his people 'Ād were destroyed by a sandstorm.

1722 The significance of making them stories is that the stories of their evil fate were the only remembrance of them left when they perished.

1723 There has been much discussion as to the land spoken of in this verse. *Rabwah* is *lofty ground*, and *qarār* means *cultivated land* and *a place where water rests in a meadow* (LL). Jerusalem, Egypt, Palestine or Damascus, which are the names suggested, do not answer the description, which applies exactly to the valley of Kashmir. Part of the lost ten tribes of Israel is also traced to Kashmir, where a large number of towns and villages bear the names of the towns and villages of Palestine. The presence of a tomb known as the tomb of Nabī (i.e., the prophet), or 'Īsā (i.e., Jesus), or Yūz Āsaf, in the Khān Yār street in the capital of Kashmir, lends additional support to this theory. The fact that the chapter deals with the final triumph of prophets and their followers and their deliverance from the hands of their enemies also gives us a clue to the mystery attending the circumstances of the disappearance of Jesus Christ after the event of the Cross; for, as shown in 645, Jesus did not die on the cross. According to a saying of the Holy Prophet, Jesus lived 120 years (IK, vol. ii, p. 246). This verse tells us that, being delivered from the hands of his enemies, he was given shelter at some other place, and the description of that place as indicated in this verse, along with the fact that Kashmir has a tomb, which every available evidence

52 And surely this your community is one community, and I am your Lord, so keep your duty to Me.

وَإِنَّ هٰذِهٖٓ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَّاحِدَةً وَّأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاتَّقُوْنِ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 But they became divided into sects, each party rejoicing in that which was with them.

فَتَقَطَّعُوْٓا أَمْرَهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ زُبُرًا ۭ كُلُّ حِزْبٍۢ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُوْنَ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 So leave them in their ignorance till a time.

فَذَرْهُمْ فِيْ غَمْرَتِهِمْ حَتّٰى حِيْنٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 Think they that by the wealth and children wherewith We aid them,

أَيَحْسَبُوْنَ أَنَّمَا نُمِدُّهُمْ بِهٖ مِنْ مَّالٍ وَّبَنِيْنَ ﴿٥٥﴾

56 We are hastening to them of good things? Nay, they perceive not.

نُسَارِعُ لَهُمْ فِي الْخَيْرٰتِ ۭ بَلْ لَّا يَشْعُرُوْنَ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 Surely they who live in awe for fear of their Lord,

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ رَبِّهِمْ مُّشْفِقُوْنَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 And those who believe in the messages of their Lord,

وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ بِاٰيٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 And those who associate naught with their Lord,

وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ بِرَبِّهِمْ لَا يُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 And those who give what they give while their hearts are full of fear that to their Lord they must return—

وَالَّذِيْنَ يُؤْتُوْنَ مَآ اٰتَوْا وَّقُلُوْبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلٰى رَبِّهِمْ رٰجِعُوْنَ ﴿٦٠﴾

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shows to be the tomb of Jesus himself, leads us to the conclusion that Kashmir is the land referred to in this verse.

As regards the tomb, the following evidence shows that the sacred body of no less a personage than Jesus Christ rests there: (a) oral testimony, based on tradition, of the people of Kashmir tells us that the tomb belongs to one who bore the name of Yūz Āsaf, who was known as a *nabī* (i.e., *a prophet*), and who came to Kashmir from the West about 2,000 years ago; (b) the *Tārīkh A'ẓamī*, an historical work written some two hundred years ago, says, referring to this tomb, on p. 82: "The tomb is generally known as that of a prophet. He was a prince, who came to Kashmir from a foreign land. . . . His name was Yūz Āsaf"; (c) the *Ikmāl al-Dīn*, an Arabic work, which is a thousand years old, also mentions Yūz Āsaf as having travelled in *some lands*; (d) Joseph Jacobs states, on the authority of a very old version of the story of Yūz Āsaf, that he (Joasaph) at last reached Kashmir, and there died (*Barlaam and Josaphat*, p. cv).

This evidence shows that the tomb in Khān Yār (Srinagar) is the tomb of Yūz Āsaf. But who is this *Yūz Āsaf*? That he is called a nabī (*prophet*) both in oral tradition and in history settles the time in which he lived, for no prophet is recognized by the Muslims to have appeared after their Holy Prophet. Again, there is a striking resemblance between the names Yūz and Yasū', the latter being the Hebrew form of Jesus. There is also a remarkable similarity in the teachings of Yūz Āsaf and Jesus; for instance, the parable of the seed-sower occurring in Matt. 13:3, Mark 4:3 and Luke 8:5 occurs also in "Barlaam and Josaphat" (p. cxi). Another very striking circumstance is that Yūz Āsaf gave the name *Bushrā* (Arabic for *Gospel*) to his teachings, as the following passage from the *Ikmāl al-Dīn* shows: "Then he began to compare the tree to the *Bushrā*, which he preached to the people". All these circumstances lead us to the conclusion

61 These hasten to good things and they are foremost in attaining them.

أُولٰٓئِكَ يُسٰرِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرٰتِ وَهُمْ لَهَا سٰبِقُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

62 And We lay not on any soul a burden except to the extent of its ability, and with Us is a book which speaks the truth, and they are not wronged.

وَلَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا وَلَدَيْنَا كِتٰبٌ يَنْطِقُ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 Nay, their hearts are in ignorance about it, and they have besides this other deeds which they do.

بَلْ قُلُوبُهُمْ فِي غَمْرَةٍ مِّنْ هٰذَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْمَالٌ مِّنْ دُونِ ذٰلِكَ هُمْ لَهَا عٰمِلُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 Until, when We seize those who lead easy lives among them with chastisement, lo! they cry for succour.

حَتّٰىٓ إِذَآ أَخَذْنَا مُتْرَفِيهِمْ بِالْعَذَابِ إِذَا هُمْ يَجْـَٔرُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

65 Cry not for succour this day. Surely you will not be helped by Us.

لَا تَجْـَٔرُوا الْيَوْمَ إِنَّكُمْ مِّنَّا لَا تُنْصَرُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 My messages were indeed recited to you, but you used to turn back on your heels

قَدْ كَانَتْ اٰيٰتِي تُتْلٰى عَلَيْكُمْ فَكُنْتُمْ عَلٰٓى أَعْقَابِكُمْ تَنْكِصُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 Haughtily, passing nights in talking nonsense about it.

مُسْتَكْبِرِينَ بِهٖ سٰمِرًا تَهْجُرُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 Do they not then ponder the Word? Or has there come to them that which did not come to their fathers of old?

أَفَلَمْ يَدَّبَّرُوا الْقَوْلَ أَمْ جَآءَهُمْ مَّا لَمْ يَأْتِ اٰبَآءَهُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 Or do they not recognize their Messenger, that they deny him?

أَمْ لَمْ يَعْرِفُوا رَسُولَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَهٗ مُنْكِرُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 Or say they: There is madness in him? Nay, he has brought them the Truth, and most of them hate the Truth.

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ بِهٖ جِنَّةٌ بَلْ جَآءَهُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كٰرِهُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

71 And if the Truth follow their desires, the heavens and the earth and all those who are therein would perish. Nay, We have brought them their reminder, but they turn away from their reminder.

وَلَوِ اتَّبَعَ الْحَقُّ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ لَفَسَدَتِ السَّمٰوٰتُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ بَلْ أَتَيْنٰهُمْ بِذِكْرِهِمْ فَهُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِهِمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

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that Jesus Christ went to Kashmir after the event of the crucifixion, and that he preached, lived, died and was buried there.

72 Or dost thou ask them a recompense? But the recompense of thy Lord is best, and He is the Best of providers.

أَمْ تَسْـَٔلُهُمْ خَرْجًا فَخَرَاجُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَّهُوَ خَيْرُ الرّٰزِقِيْنَ ﴿٧٢﴾

73 And surely thou callest them to a right way.

وَإِنَّكَ لَتَدْعُوْهُمْ إِلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 And surely those who believe not in the Hereafter are deviating from the way.

وَإِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ عَنِ الصِّرَاطِ لَنٰكِبُوْنَ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 And if We show mercy to them and remove the distress they have, they would persist in their inordinacy, blindly wandering on.

وَلَوْ رَحِمْنٰهُمْ وَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِمْ مِّنْ ضُرٍّ لَّلَجُّوْا فِيْ طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُوْنَ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 And already We seized them with chastisement, but they were not submissive to their Lord, nor did they humble themselves.[1724]

وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنٰهُمْ بِالْعَذَابِ فَمَا اسْتَكَانُوْا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَمَا يَتَضَرَّعُوْنَ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 Until, when We open for them a door of severe chastisement, lo! they are in despair at it.[1725]

حَتّٰى إِذَا فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ بَابًا ذَا عَذَابٍ شَدِيْدٍ إِذَا هُمْ فِيْهِ مُبْلِسُوْنَ ﴿٧٧﴾

SECTION 5 : **Polytheism is self-condemned**

78 And He it is Who made for you the ears and the eyes and the hearts. Little it is that you give thanks!

وَهُوَ الَّذِيْ أَنْشَأَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْـِٕدَةَ قَلِيْلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿٧٨﴾

79 And He it is Who multiplied you in the earth, and to Him you will be gathered.

وَهُوَ الَّذِيْ ذَرَأَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُوْنَ ﴿٧٩﴾

80 And He it is Who gives life and causes death, and His is the alternation of the night and the day. Do you not then understand?

وَهُوَ الَّذِيْ يُحْيٖ وَيُمِيْتُ وَلَهُ اخْتِلَافُ الَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿٨٠﴾

81 Nay, they say the like of what the ancients said.

بَلْ قَالُوْا مِثْلَ مَا قَالَ الْأَوَّلُوْنَ ﴿٨١﴾

1724 The punishment referred to in this verse, and the distress, the removal of which is mentioned in the previous verse, probably refer to the famine which overtook the Makkans.

1725 They do not take a warning from the milder punishment, so a severer punishment must follow. This overtook them in the form of battles, leading to their ultimate vanquishment. But the promise relates to the future as well.

قَالُوٓا ءَاِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَّعِظَامًا ءَاِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُوْنَ ﴿٨٢﴾

82 They say: When we die and become dust and bones, shall we then be raised up?

لَقَدْ وُعِدْنَا نَحْنُ وَاٰبَآؤُنَا هٰذَا مِنْ قَبْلُ اِنْ هٰذَآ اِلَّآ اَسَاطِيْرُ الْاَوَّلِيْنَ ﴿٨٣﴾

83 We are indeed promised this, and (so were) our fathers before. This is naught but stories of those of old!

قُلْ لِّمَنِ الْاَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيْهَآ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٨٤﴾

84 Say: Whose is the earth, and whoever is therein, if you know?

سَيَقُوْلُوْنَ لِلّٰهِ ۗ قُلْ اَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٨٥﴾

85 They will say: Allāh's. Say: Will you not then mind?

قُلْ مَنْ رَّبُّ السَّمٰوٰتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيْمِ ﴿٨٦﴾

86 Say: Who is the Lord of the seven heavens and the Lord of the mighty Throne of power?

سَيَقُوْلُوْنَ لِلّٰهِ ۗ قُلْ اَفَلَا تَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿٨٧﴾

87 They will say: (This is) Allāh's. Say: Will you not then guard against evil?

قُلْ مَنْ بِيَدِهٖ مَلَكُوْتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَّهُوَ يُجِيْرُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٨٨﴾

88 Say: Who is it in Whose hand is the kingdom of all things and He protects, and none is protected against Him, if you know?

سَيَقُوْلُوْنَ لِلّٰهِ ۗ قُلْ فَاَنّٰى تُسْحَرُوْنَ ﴿٨٩﴾

89 They will say: (This is) Allāh's. Say: Whence are you then deceived?

بَلْ اَتَيْنٰهُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَاِنَّهُمْ لَكٰذِبُوْنَ ﴿٩٠﴾

90 Nay, We have brought them the Truth and surely they are liars.

مَا اتَّخَذَ اللّٰهُ مِنْ وَّلَدٍ وَّمَا كَانَ مَعَهٗ مِنْ اِلٰهٍ اِذًا لَّذَهَبَ كُلُّ اِلٰهٍۭ بِمَا خَلَقَ وَلَعَلَا بَعْضُهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ ۗ سُبْحٰنَ اللّٰهِ عَمَّا يَصِفُوْنَ ﴿٩١﴾

91 Allāh has not taken to Himself a son, nor is there with Him any (other) god — in that case would each god have taken away what he created, and some of them would have overpowered others. Glory be to Allāh above what they describe —

عٰلِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَتَعٰلٰى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿٩٢﴾

92 The Knower of the unseen and the seen; so may He be exalted above what they associate (with Him)!

SECTION 6: **Regrets of the Wicked**

قُلْ رَّبِّ اِمَّا تُرِيَنِّيْ مَا يُوْعَدُوْنَ ﴿٩٣﴾

93 Say: My Lord, if Thou show me that which they are promised —

رَبِّ فَلَا تَجْعَلْنِيْ فِي الْقَوْمِ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٩٤﴾

94 My Lord, then place me not with the unjust people.

95 And surely We are well Able to show thee what We promise them.[1726]

وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ أَنْ نُرِيَكَ مَا نَعِدُهُمْ لَقَادِرُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

96 Repel evil with that which is best.[1727] We know best what they describe.

ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ السَّيِّئَةَ ۚ نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

97 And say: My Lord, I seek refuge in Thee from the evil suggestions of the devils,[1728]

وَقُلْ رَبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيَاطِينِ ﴿٩٧﴾

98 And I seek refuge in Thee, my Lord, lest they come to me.

وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَنْ يَحْضُرُونِ ﴿٩٨﴾

99 Until when death overtakes one of them,[1729] he says: My Lord, send me back,[1730]

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ ﴿٩٩﴾

100 That I may do good in that which I have left. By no means! It is but a word that he speaks. And before them is a barrier, until the day they are raised.[1731]

لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ ۚ كَلَّا ۚ إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَائِلُهَا ۖ وَمِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ بَرْزَخٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

1726 The promise given to the Holy Prophet in these verses is that the power of his persecutors will be broken in his lifetime.

1727 The doing of good in return for evil is the common teaching of all prophets. But nowhere is the principle put in such a beautiful and practical form as in the Qur'ān. To return good for evil is only possible under certain circumstances, and the Gospel doctrine — that ye resist not evil — has not been found practicable. The Qur'ān, however, says, *repel evil with that which is best.* In repelling evil the rule to be observed is that it must be repelled by what is best. If you can repel an evil by doing good for it, it is the course recommended; but if punishment is necessary, that would be the better course. It is the only workable principle of life.

1728 The evil suggestion of the devils were really suggestions of the wicked, who were opposed to the progress of Islām, and the Prophet is here told to look upon Allāh as his only support. *To seek refuge in the Lord* is the height of goodness. Nowhere has a man a better refuge than in the Source of all strength, and no mortal can aspire to a higher honour than having his refuge in the Lord. The command to the Prophet to say this is really an image of the aspiration of his soul, the inmost desire which furnished the guiding rule of his life. His soul rested in that highest degree of security from all evil suggestions, which is termed *refuge in the Lord.*

1729 These words make it quite certain that the devils of the two previous verses are no other than the wicked opponents of the Holy Prophet.

1730 The original has *irji'ūni,* in which *irji'ū* is in the plural, whereas it should have been *irji'* in the singular in accosting the Divine Being. In Arabic the plural is sometimes used to denote a repetition of the singular verb, and thus *irji'ūni* is here regarded as equivalent to a repetition of *irji'nī* (Bd). Or, the plural is used out of respect for the Divine Being.

1731 That the dead do not return to life is a principle which is reaffirmed here; see also 1659. According to the Holy Qur'ān there are three states of a

101 So when the trumpet is blown, there will be no ties of relationship among them that day, nor will they ask of one another.

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَآ أَنْسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَّلَا يَتَسَآءَلُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾

102 Then those whose good deeds are heavy, those are the successful.[1732]

فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

103 And those whose good deeds are light, those are they who have lost their souls, abiding in hell.

وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَٰٓئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوٓا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فِي جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

104 The Fire will scorch their faces, and they therein will be in severe affliction.

تَلْفَحُ وُجُوهَهُمُ النَّارُ وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَالِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

105 Were not My messages recited to you, but you used to reject them?

أَلَمْ تَكُنْ آيَاتِي تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَكُنْتُمْ بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

106 They will say: Our Lord, our adversity overcame us, and we were an erring people.

قَالُوا رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا وَكُنَّا قَوْمًا ضَالِّينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

107 Our Lord, take us out of it; then if we return (to evil), we shall be unjust.

رَبَّنَآ أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

108 He will say: Begone therein, and speak not to Me.

قَالَ اخْسَئُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ ﴿١٠٨﴾

109 Surely there was a party of My servants who said: Our Lord, we believe, so forgive us and have mercy on us, and Thou are the Best of those who show mercy.

إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِي يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَآ آمَنَّا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّاحِمِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

110 But you ridiculed them, until they made you forget remembrance of Me, and you used to laugh at them.[1734]

فَاتَّخَذْتُمُوهُمْ سِخْرِيًّا حَتَّىٰٓ أَنْسَوْكُمْ ذِكْرِي وَكُنْتُمْ مِّنْهُمْ تَضْحَكُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾

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man's life, viz., his life in this world, his life in *barzakh*, and the great manifestation of all spiritual realities that will take place on the day of Resurrection. *Barzakh* is the intermediate state in which the soul lives after death till the Resurrection. Here it is stated that no one who has passed into the state of *barzakh* is allowed to go back into the previous state. See further 2165.

1732 *Mawāzīn* is the plural of *mīzān*, a balance, and of *mauzūn*, meaning, *a thing that is weighed*. In both cases the significance is the same, the *balance* meaning the *balance of good deeds*.

1734 Really it was not the believers who caused them to forget the remembrance of their Lord but, on account of their mocking the believers, the disbelievers forgot their Lord; hence the believers are here spoken of as though they caused the disbelievers to forget their Lord.

111 Surely I have rewarded them this day because they were patient, that they are the achievers.

إِنِّي جَزَيْتُهُمُ الْيَوْمَ بِمَا صَبَرُوٓا ۙ أَنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْفَآئِزُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

112 He will say: How many years did you tarry in the earth?

قٰلَ كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾

113 They will say: We tarried a day or part of a day, but ask those who keep account.

قَالُوا لَبِثْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ فَسْئَلِ الْعَآدِّينَ ﴿١١٣﴾

114 He will say: You tarried but a little — if you only knew!

قٰلَ إِنْ لَّبِثْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا لَّوْ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾

115 Do you then think that We have created you in vain, and that you will not be returned to Us?[1735]

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنٰكُمْ عَبَثًا وَّأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١١٥﴾

116 So exalted be Allāh, the True King! No God is there but He, the Lord of the Throne of Grace.

فَتَعٰلَى اللّٰهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ ۚ لَآ إِلٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ ﴿١١٦﴾

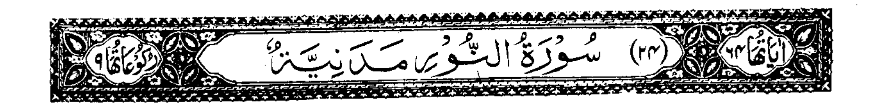
117 And whoever invokes, besides Allāh, another god — he has no proof of this — his reckoning is only with his Lord. Surely the disbelievers will not be successful.

وَمَنْ يَّدْعُ مَعَ اللّٰهِ إِلٰهًا اٰخَرَ ۙ لَا بُرْهَانَ لَهُ بِهِ ۙ فَإِنَّمَا حِسَابُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ ۭ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْكٰفِرُونَ ﴿١١٧﴾

118 And say: My Lord, forgive and have mercy, and Thou art the Best of those who show mercy.

وَقُلْ رَّبِّ اغْفِرْ وَارْحَمْ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرّٰحِمِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾

1735 This verse establishes the doctrine of the responsibility of human actions. Man is not created *in vain,* but he will be returned to his Lord to meet the consequences of what he does in this life.



CHAPTER 24

Al-Nūr: THE LIGHT

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 9 *sections; 64 verses*)

The title of this chapter, *The Light,* is taken from the statement made in sec. 5, where Islām is shown to be the most perfect manifestation of Divine light, which will illumine the East as well as the West. As already pointed out in the last introductory note, the group of the Makkan chapters beginning with the 17th and ending with the 23rd chapter deals with the great and triumphant future of Islām, and hence it is fittingly followed by a Madīnah chapter which promises in the clearest words the establishment of the kingdom of Islām (v. 55).

While showing Islām to be a perfect manifestation of Divine Light, it is added that this light will first illumine the houses in which the Muslims live (v. 36). The home being thus the unit for spreading light throughout the world, this chapter deals specially with the purity of home life and therefore opens with a condemnation of adultery, the canker of the purity of home life. There is another reason, too. This chapter promises the establishment of a Muslim kingdom, and kingdom brings ease and luxury in its train, leading to such social evils as adultery and slander. While the first section deals with adultery in general, the second speaks of a particular case of slander, the slander made against 'Ā'ishah, the Prophet's wife. The third section, while pardoning 'Ā'ishah's slanderers, deals with the slanderers of women in general. The fourth section deals with the preventive measures which serve as a check upon adulterous intercourse. Then follow three sections dealing with the kindling of Divine light in Muslim hearts and the manifestation of Divine power in establishing the kingdom of Islām. The eighth section again refers to the subject matter of the opening sections by enjoining respect for each other's privacy, which is calculated to put restraint upon the tongue of slander, and the last section teaches respect for the Prophet's orders, because his orders related to the welfare of the community.

The whole of this chapter is universally held to be a Madīnah revelation, and it is almost certain that the major portion was revealed about the fifth year of the Hijrah.

SECTION 1 **Law relating to Adultery**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 (This is) a chapter which We have revealed and made obligatory and wherein We have revealed clear messages that you may be mindful.

سُوْرَةٌ اَنْزَلْنٰهَا وَ فَرَضْنٰهَا وَ اَنْزَلْنَا فِيْهَآ اٰيٰتٍ بَيِّنٰتٍ لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ①

2 The adulteress and the adulterer, flog each of them (with) a hundred stripes,[1736] and let not pity for them detain you from obedience to Allāh, if you believe in Allāh and the Last Day, and let a party of believers witness their chastisement.

اَلزَّانِيَةُ وَ الزَّانِيْ فَاجْلِدُوْا كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا مِائَةَ جَلْدَةٍ ۪ وَّ لَا تَاْخُذْكُمْ بِهِمَا رَاْفَةٌ فِيْ دِيْنِ اللّٰهِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَ الْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ ۚ وَ لْيَشْهَدْ عَذَابَهُمَا طَآئِفَةٌ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ②

3 The adulterer cannot have sexual relations with any but an adulteress or an idolatress, and the adulteress, none can have sexual relations with her but an adulterer or an idolater; and it is forbidden to believers.[1737]

اَلزَّانِيْ لَا يَنْكِحُ اِلَّا زَانِيَةً اَوْ مُشْرِكَةً ۫ وَّ الزَّانِيَةُ لَا يَنْكِحُهَآ اِلَّا زَانٍ اَوْ مُشْرِكٌ ۚ وَ حُرِّمَ ذٰلِكَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ③

1736 Chastity, as a virtue, is not given the first place in modern civilized society, and hence adultery is not considered a sufficiently serious offence to subject the guilty party to any punishment except the payment of damages to the injured husband. The breach of the greatest trust which can be imposed in a man or a woman, the breach which ruins families, destroys household peace, and deprives innocent children of their loving mothers, is not looked upon even as seriously as the breach of trust of a few pounds. Hence the Islamic law seems to be too severe to a Westerner.

The punishment for adultery is here stated to be flogging, *not stoning to death,* which was really prescribed by the Jewish law. The cases of *stoning to death* for adultery by the Prophet's orders relate actually to a Jew and a Jewess in one case (B. 23:61), and others apparently occurred before the revelation of this chapter. That stoning to death was never contemplated by Islām as a punishment for adultery is made clear by 4:25, where it is stated expressly that the punishment for adultery in the case of slave-girls, when they are married, is *half the punishment which is inflicted on free married women,* and stoning to death could not be halved. Besides, the Qur'ān nowhere speaks of stoning as a punishment for adultery, and the report of what 'Umar said is self-contradictory. For a full discussion, see *The Religion of Islām,* ch. Penal Laws of Islam. A few words may be added as to the method of flogging. It aimed more at disgracing the culprit than at torturing him. In the time of the Prophet, and even for some time after him, there was no whip, and flogging was carried out by beating with a

1737, see next page.

4 And those who accuse free women and bring not four witnesses, flog them (with) eighty stripes and never accept their evidence, and these are the transgressors—[1738]

وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ الْمُحْصَنٰتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَآءَ فَاجْلِدُوهُمْ ثَمٰنِينَ جَلْدَةً وَّلَا تَقْبَلُوا لَهُمْ شَهَادَةً أَبَدًا ۚ وَأُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْفٰسِقُونَ ④

5 Except those who afterwards repent and act aright; surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذٰلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا ۚ فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ⑤

6 And those who accuse their wives and have no witnesses except themselves,[1739] let one of them testify four times, bearing Allāh to witness, that he is of those who speak the truth.

وَالَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ أَزْوَاجَهُمْ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَّهُمْ شُهَدَآءُ إِلَّآ أَنْفُسُهُمْ فَشَهَادَةُ أَحَدِهِمْ أَرْبَعُ شَهٰدٰتٍ بِاللّٰهِ ۙ إِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الصّٰدِقِينَ ⑥

7 And the fifth (time) that the curse of Allāh be on him, if he is of those who lie.

وَالْخَامِسَةُ أَنَّ لَعْنَتَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْكٰذِبِينَ ⑦

8 And it shall avert the chastisement from her, if she testify four times, bearing Allāh to witness, that he is of those who lie.

وَيَدْرَؤُا عَنْهَا الْعَذَابَ أَنْ تَشْهَدَ أَرْبَعَ شَهٰدٰتٍ بِاللّٰهِ ۙ إِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الْكٰذِبِينَ ⑧

9 And the fifth (time) that the wrath of Allāh to be on her, if he is of those who speak the truth.

وَالْخَامِسَةَ أَنَّ غَضَبَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْهَآ إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الصّٰدِقِينَ ⑨

10 And were it not for Allāh's grace upon you and His mercy—and that Allāh is Oft-returning (to mercy) Wise!

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ وَأَنَّ اللّٰهَ تَوَّابٌ حَكِيمٌ ⑩

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stick or with the hand or with shoes. The culprit was not stripped naked, but he was required to take off thick clothes.

1737 The word *nakaha* signifies sometimes *coitus* or *coitus without marriage,* as also *marriage without coitus* (LL). I adopt the first significance here and the meaning in this case is clear, the idolater or the idolatress being mentioned along with the adulterer or the adulteress, on account of the low standard of morality among the idolaters. Taking the second significance, the verse places one guilty of adultery under a kind of interdict in Muslim society.

1738 This is an effectual restraint against slander and gossip, which so often bring disaster upon the heads of innocent women. Unless there is the clearest evidence of adultery against a woman, the slanderer is himself to be punished.

1739 The ordinance relates to the case of husbands who accuse their wives of adultery and have no evidence; see a case reported in B. 68:30. In such a case divorce is effected, the husband not being punishable for the accusation, though he cannot produce witnesses, and the wife not being punishable for adultery, if she denies the charge in the manner stated. Compare Num. 5:11-31. The same procedure would be adopted in a reverse case.

SECTION 2 : 'Ā'ishah's Slanderers

11 Surely they who concocted the lie are a party from among you.[1740] Deem it not an evil to you. Nay, it is good for you. For every man of them is what he has earned of sin; and as for him among them who took upon himself the main part thereof, he shall have a grievous punishment.[1741]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ جَآءُو بِالْإِفْكِ عُصْبَةٌ
مِّنكُمْ ۚ لَا تَحْسَبُوهُ شَرًّا لَّكُم ۖ بَلْ
هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۚ لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِّنْهُم
مَّا اكْتَسَبَ مِنَ الْإِثْمِ ۚ وَالَّذِي تَوَلَّىٰ
كِبْرَهُ مِنْهُمْ لَهُ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١١﴾

12 Why did not the believing men and the believing women, when you heard it, think well of their own people, and say: This is an evident falsehood?[1742]

لَّوْلَا إِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوهُ ظَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ
وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بِأَنفُسِهِمْ خَيْرًا وَقَالُوا
هَٰذَا إِفْكٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٢﴾

13 Why did they not bring four witnesses of it? So, as they have not brought witnesses, they are liars in the sight of Allāh.[1743]

لَّوْلَا جَآءُو عَلَيْهِ بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَآءَ ۚ
فَإِذْ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِالشُّهَدَآءِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ
عِندَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

1740 The incident referred to in this section took place when the Prophet, accompanied by his wife 'Ā'ishah, was returning from the expedition against the Banī Muṣṭaliq in the fifth year of the Hijrah. 'Ā'ishah had gone out on a private occasion, but, when she returned, she perceived that she had lost her necklace, and went back to search for it. In her absence the attendants, supposing her to be in her *howdah,* started while it was yet dark. When she returned, finding the camel and the men gone, she sat down there and was brought to Madīnah by Ṣafwān, who was coming in the rear. Some mischievous persons from among the hypocrites spread false reports, slandering her, and some of the Muslims also associated themselves with the slander. 'Ā'ishah's innocence was at length established by this revelation (B. 52:15). Those who had taken part in the accusation were punished, according to one ḥadīth (IM. 20:13). This is the grievous punishment referred to in the concluding words of the verse.

It may be added here that the tongue of gossip has never spared even the most virtuous women. Another case of a virtuous woman being thus defamed is that of Mary, the mother of Jesus, about whom the Jews talked similar slander. The addition of the words — *deem it not an evil to you: nay, it is good for you* — aims at bringing solace to such aggrieved people, seeing that even the most virtuous of women could not escape the tongue of slander.

1741 He who took the main part thereof upon himself is said to be 'Abd Allāh ibn Ubayy, the chief of the hypocrites (B. 64:36), because he concocted the lie and circulated the false report.

1742 There was not a *single witness,* nor any circumstance that could lend colour to the false story.

1743 Severe as the punishment for adultery is in Islām, the evidence of four witnesses is required to establish the guilt; see v. 4. The allegation of a Christian annotator that this requirement of the law was simply to shield 'Ā'ishah is a baseless conjecture in view of the fact that in her case there was not a single witness. Why should the Prophet then have required four witnesses? The fact is that while the Qur'ān takes a very serious view of the crimes against chastity, it also makes criminal the circulation of false reports affecting a woman's chastity. Thus

14 And were it not for Allāh's grace upon you and His mercy in this world and the Hereafter, a grievous chastisement would certainly have touched you on account of the talk you indulged in.

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ لَمَسَّكُمْ فِيْ مَآ اَفَضْتُمْ فِيْهِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيْمٌ ﴿١٤﴾

15 When you received it on your tongues and spoke with your mouths that of which you had no knowledge, and you deemed it a trifle, while with Allāh it was serious.

اِذْ تَلَقَّوْنَهُ بِاَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَتَقُوْلُوْنَ بِاَفْوَاهِكُمْ مَّا لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَّتَحْسَبُوْنَهُ هَيِّنًا ۖ وَّهُوَ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ عَظِيْمٌ ﴿١٥﴾

16 And why did you not, when you heard it, say: It beseems us not to talk of it. Glory be to Thee! This is a great calumny.

وَلَوْلَآ اِذْ سَمِعْتُمُوْهُ قُلْتُمْ مَّا يَكُوْنُ لَنَآ اَنْ نَّتَكَلَّمَ بِهٰذَا ۖ سُبْحٰنَكَ هٰذَا بُهْتَانٌ عَظِيْمٌ ﴿١٦﴾

17 Allāh admonishes you that you return not to the like of it ever again, if you are believers.

يَعِظُكُمُ اللّٰهُ اَنْ تَعُوْدُوْا لِمِثْلِهِ اَبَدًا اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 And Allāh makes clear to you the messages; and Allāh is Knowing, Wise.

وَيُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ لَكُمُ الْاٰيٰتِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿١٨﴾

19 Those who love that scandal should circulate respecting those who believe, for them is a grievous chastisement in this world and the Hereafter. And Allāh knows, while you know not.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يُحِبُّوْنَ اَنْ تَشِيْعَ الْفَاحِشَةُ فِي الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ۙ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ وَاَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 And were it not for Allāh's grace on you and His mercy—[1743a] and that Allāh is Compassionate, Merciful.

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ وَاَنَّ اللّٰهَ رَءُوْفٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

SECTION 3: **Slanderers of Women**

21 O you who believe, follow not the footsteps of the devil. And whoever follows the footsteps of the devil, surely he commands indecency and evil. And were it not for Allāh's grace

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَتَّبِعُوْا خُطُوٰتِ الشَّيْطٰنِ ۗ وَمَنْ يَّتَّبِعْ خُطُوٰتِ الشَّيْطٰنِ فَاِنَّهُ يَاْمُرُ بِالْفَحْشَآءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ۗ

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even a lighter accusation in connection with the misconduct of women required the evidence of four witnesses; see 4:15, which was admittedly revealed earlier.

1743a The same words in the next verse are followed by the statement, *not one of you would ever have been pure.*

on you and His mercy, not one of you would ever have been pure, but Allāh purifies whom He pleases. And Allāh is Hearing, Knowing.[1744]

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهٗ
مَا زَكٰى مِنْكُمْ مِّنْ اَحَدٍ اَبَدًا ۙ وَّلٰكِنَّ
اللّٰهَ يُزَكِّيْ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۲۱﴾

22 And let not possessors of grace and abundance among you swear against giving to the near of kin and the poor and those who have fled in Allāh's way; and pardon and overlook. Do you not love that Allāh should forgive you? And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.[1745]

وَلَا يَاْتَلِ اُولُوا الْفَضْلِ مِنْكُمْ وَالسَّعَةِ
اَنْ يُّؤْتُوْۤا اُولِي الْقُرْبٰى وَالْمَسٰكِيْنَ
وَالْمُهٰجِرِيْنَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۖ وَلْيَعْفُوْا
وَلْيَصْفَحُوْا ؕ اَلَا تُحِبُّوْنَ اَنْ يَّغْفِرَ
اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۲۲﴾

23 Surely those who accuse chaste believing women, unaware (of the evil), are cursed in this world and the Hereafter, and for them is a grievous chastisement,[1746]

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَرْمُوْنَ الْمُحْصَنٰتِ الْغٰفِلٰتِ
الْمُؤْمِنٰتِ لُعِنُوْا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ ۪
وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيْمٌ ۙ﴿۲۳﴾

24 On the day when their tongues and their hands and their feet bear witness against them as to what they did,[1747]

يَّوْمَ تَشْهَدُ عَلَيْهِمْ اَلْسِنَتُهُمْ وَ
اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَاَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿۲۴﴾

25 On that day Allāh will pay back to them in full their just reward, and they will know that Allāh, He is the Evident Truth.

يَوْمَئِذٍ يُّوَفِّيْهِمُ اللّٰهُ دِيْنَهُمُ الْحَقَّ
وَيَعْلَمُوْنَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ الْمُبِيْنُ ﴿۲۵﴾

1744 This passage shows that the companions of the Holy Prophet were purified from sins by Allāh's grace.

1745 It is agreed on the basis of most trustworthy reports that this verse was revealed in connection with the action of Abū Bakr, who had sworn not to allow maintenance to one of his relatives named Misṭaḥ, who had taken part in spreading the false reports against 'Ā'ishah. After inflicting the legal punishment on the culprits the Prophet was required to bear them no ill-will, and to hide no rancour in his breast even towards the slanderers of his wife. Revelation even required his companions to be kind and forgiving to them. Abū Bakr is spoken of here as *one possessing grace and abundance* (B. 65 : xxiv, 13), the former of these words referring to his moral and spiritual superiority and the latter to abundance in wealth.

1746 This refers to those who continue to spread evil reports concerning chaste women, the gossipmongers in every society.

1747 The evidence of the members of the body is sometimes witnessed in this very life against the doers of evil, in the consequences of the evil done. On the day of Resurrection the consequences of the evil deeds will assume a palpable form, as is also indicated in the paying back in full of the just rewards in the next verse, and thus bear witness to the evil done. This highly developed idea of the Resurrection did not exist before the Holy Qur'ān.

26 Unclean things are for unclean ones and unclean ones are for unclean things, and good things are for good ones and good ones are for good things; these are free from what they say. For them is forgiveness and an honourable sustenance[1748]

اَلْخَبِيْثٰتُ لِلْخَبِيْثِيْنَ وَالْخَبِيْثُوْنَ
لِلْخَبِيْثٰتِ ۚ وَالطَّيِّبٰتُ لِلطَّيِّبِيْنَ وَ
الطَّيِّبُوْنَ لِلطَّيِّبٰتِ ۚ اُولٰٓئِكَ مُبَرَّءُوْنَ
مِمَّا يَقُوْلُوْنَ ؕ لَهُمْ مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَّرِزْقٌ
كَرِيْمٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

SECTION 4: **Preventive Measures**

27 O you who believe, enter not houses other than your own houses, until you have asked permission and saluted their inmates. This is better for you that you may be mindful.[1749]

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَدْخُلُوْا بُيُوْتًا
غَيْرَ بُيُوْتِكُمْ حَتّٰى تَسْتَاْنِسُوْا وَتُسَلِّمُوْا
عَلٰٓى اَهْلِهَا ؕ ذٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 But if you find no one therein, enter them not, until permission is given to you; and if it is said to you, Go back, then go back; this is purer for you. And Allāh is Knower of what you do.

فَاِنْ لَّمْ تَجِدُوْا فِيْهَآ اَحَدًا فَلَا تَدْخُلُوْهَا
حَتّٰى يُؤْذَنَ لَكُمْ ۚ وَاِنْ قِيْلَ لَكُمُ
ارْجِعُوْا فَارْجِعُوْا هُوَ اَزْكٰى لَكُمْ ؕ
وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 It is no sin for you to enter uninhabited houses wherein you have your necessaries. And Allāh knows what you do openly and what you hide.

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ اَنْ تَدْخُلُوْا بُيُوْتًا
غَيْرَ مَسْكُوْنَةٍ فِيْهَا مَتَاعٌ لَّكُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ
يَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُوْنَ وَمَا تَكْتُمُوْنَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 Say to the believing men that they lower their gaze and restrain their sexual passions. That is purer for them. Surely Allāh is Aware of what they do.[1750]

قُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ يَغُضُّوْا مِنْ اَبْصَارِهِمْ
وَيَحْفَظُوْا فُرُوْجَهُمْ ؕ ذٰلِكَ اَزْكٰى لَهُمْ ؕ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ خَبِيْرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُوْنَ ﴿٣٠﴾

1748 The meaning of this whole passage is made clear by the concluding words, i.e., nothing impure can be attributed to the pure ones, and they are free from what the impure ones say.

1749 The Arabs entered houses without permission. The law revealed in this verse lays down the basis of domestic peace and security needed for an advanced society. The law is a clear testimony of the great trust which Muslims have in their womenfolk. It is also a preventive measure against slander.

1750 Men are enjoined to lower their gaze, just as women are enjoined to do in the next verse. This injunction is given as a preventive against an evil

31 And say to the believing women that they lower their gaze and restrain their sexual passions and do not display their adornment except what appears thereof.[1751] And let them wear their head-coverings over their bosoms.[1751a] And they should not display their adornment except to their

وَقُل لِّلْمُؤْمِنٰتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ
وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ
زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ
بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلٰى جُيُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ
زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ اٰبَآئِهِنَّ أَوْ اٰبَآءِ

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which deals a death-blow to all pure social relations, viz., the evil of fornication. The Qur'ān does not only forbid an evil, but also points out the way, by walking in which man may be able to eschew it. Both men and women are required to keep their eyes cast down, so that when they meet each other, neither should men stare at women nor women at men. In a society in which women never appeared in public, the injunction to men to lower their gaze would be meaningless; and the similar injunction to women given in the next verse, if they never left the compounds of their houses, would be absurd.

1751 To guard the relations between males and females and to check a too free intermingling of men and women, the Qur'ān now lays down another injunction in addition to that which requires both sexes to lower their gaze when they meet each other. It requires women in particular not to display their adornment. There is a difference of opinion as to what *zīnat* means. According to some it includes the beauty of the body, while according to others it is exclusively applied to external adornments. The use of the same word in the concluding portion of the verse, *let them not strike their feet so that the zīnat that they hide may be known,* clearly supports the latter view, as the only adornment that can be known by the striking of the feet consists of external ornaments. But even taking the first view, there is a clear exception here, *illā mā ẓahara min-hā* — *except what appears thereof* or *except that which it is customary and natural to uncover.* Now in the first place it must be remembered that what is prohibited is the *display* of beauty, as elsewhere expressly indicated by the word *taburruj*: "And display not (your beauty) like the displaying of the ignorance of yore" (33:33). As to what parts of the body the woman is required to cover and what she may uncover the following summary of the earlier views relating to this exception given by IJ should suffice: (1) it means the adornment of dress or the clothes that a woman wears; in other words, she is not required to cover the clothes she wears; (2) it means the adornment which the woman is not required to cover, such as collyrium, rings, bracelets and her face; (3) the exception relates to a woman's clothing and her face. After relating these opinions, IJ adds: *The most correct opinion is that the exception relates to the face and hands.* As an argument corroborating this opinion he says that, when praying, the woman is not required to keep her face and hands covered — hands up to the elbow — while she is required to cover the rest of the body. According to Ḥadīth, the Prophet himself is reported to have told Asmā', his wife 'Ā'ishah's sister, when she appeared before him in thin clothes, through which parts of her body could be seen: "O Asmā', when woman attains her puberty it is not proper that any part of her body should be seen except this, and he pointed to his face and hands" (AD. 31:30). This settles conclusively that Islām never enjoined the veil or covering of the face.

1751a Before Islām women used to appear in public with their breasts partly uncovered. The *khimār* (pl., *khumr*) means a *head-covering,* and women were thus required to cover their breasts with a part of their head-covering. The head-covering as worn in the East conceals the arms, the neck and the bosom, as also the ornaments worn in the ears or on the neck or over the bosom, and the covering over of these parts is what is required here by the addition of the words *over their bosoms.*

husbands or their fathers, or the fathers of their husbands, or their sons, or the sons of their husbands, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or those whom their right hands possess, or guileless[1752] male servants, or the children who know not women's nakedness. And let them not strike their feet so that the adornment that they hide may be known. And turn to Allāh all, O believers, so that you may be successful.

بُعُوْلَتِهِنَّ اَوْ اَبْنَآئِهِنَّ اَوْ اَبْنَآءِ بُعُوْلَتِهِنَّ اَوْ اِخْوَانِهِنَّ اَوْ بَنِیْۤ اِخْوَانِهِنَّ اَوْ بَنِیْۤ اَخَوٰتِهِنَّ اَوْ نِسَآئِهِنَّ اَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ اَیْمَانُهُنَّ اَوِ التّٰبِعِیْنَ غَیْرِ اُولِی الْاِرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ اَوِ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِیْنَ لَمْ یَظْهَرُوْا عَلٰی عَوْرٰتِ النِّسَآءِ ۪ وَ لَا یَضْرِبْنَ بِاَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِیُعْلَمَ مَا یُخْفِیْنَ مِنْ زِیْنَتِهِنَّ ؕ وَ تُوْبُوْۤا اِلَی اللّٰهِ جَمِیْعًا اَیُّهَ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿۳۱﴾

32 And marry those among you who are single, and those who are fit among your male slaves and your female slaves. If they are needy, Allāh will make them free from want out of His grace. And Allāh is Ample-giving, Knowing.[1753]

وَ اَنْكِحُوا الْاَیَامٰی مِنْكُمْ وَ الصّٰلِحِیْنَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ وَ اِمَآئِكُمْ ؕ اِنْ یَّكُوْنُوْا فُقَرَآءَ یُغْنِهِمُ اللّٰهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِیْمٌ ﴿۳۲﴾

33 And let those who cannot find a match keep chaste, until Allāh makes them free from want out of His

وَ لْیَسْتَعْفِفِ الَّذِیْنَ لَا یَجِدُوْنَ نِكَاحًا حَتّٰی یُغْنِیَهُمُ اللّٰهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ ؕ وَ الَّذِیْنَ

1752 By *their women*, some commentators understand *Muslim women*, but it is a fact that women of other faiths mingled with believing women in the time of the Prophet, and therefore *all women* are meant. I think the word *their* has been added only to indicate all such women who come in contact with them, or women who are on the same social level with them. *Those whom their right hands possess* include male and female slaves. Next to slaves are mentioned *tābi'īn*, or *those who follow*, from *tabi'a, he followed*. Servants are here called followers because they follow the master. To this is added the qualifying phrase *ghairi uli-l-irbati*, which is ordinarily translated as meaning *not having need* (*of women*). But *irb* really means *cunning* or *guile* or *deceit* or *wickedness* or *mischievousness* (LL), *need* being only its secondary significance when the *need* leads to *cunning*, the proper word for *need* being *arab*. Therefore some take these words as meaning *idiots* or persons deficient in intellect (LL). But while an idiot is not necessarily free from sexual impulse, he is certainly unfit for service. According to Mujāhid these words mean *people for whom their belly is their sole concern and about whom it is not feared that they will mislead women* — *lā yuhimmu-hū illā baṭnu-hū wa lā yukhāfu 'ala-l-nisā'i* (B. 65:24). This is really what is meant. In these words *ghari uli-l-irbati* are spoken of male servants, who take up service only as a means of living and not with the mischievous intention of getting intimacy in the house. It should be noted that women are nowhere forbidden to employ male servants or to appear before them. What this verse prevents is only display of female beauty except to those most nearly related to women, and this is a preventive measure against the spread of loose ideas of morality, and a step to help restraint of sexual passions, which is all that the Holy Qur'ān aims at.

1753 The Holy Qur'ān looks upon the married state as the normal state, and hence it enjoins that, so far as is possible, those who are single should be marrie

grace.[1754] And those of your slaves who ask for a writing (of freedom), give them the writing, if you know any good in them, and give them of the wealth of Allāh which He has given you.[1755] And compel not your slave-girls to prostitution when they desire to keep chaste, in order to seek the frail goods of this world's life. And whoever compels them, then surely after their compulsion Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.[1756]

يَبْتَغُوْنَ الْكِتٰبَ مِمَّا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُكُمْ
فَكَاتِبُوْهُمْ اِنْ عَلِمْتُمْ فِيْهِمْ خَيْرًا ۖ
وَّ اٰتُوْهُمْ مِّنْ مَّالِ اللّٰهِ الَّذِيْۤ اٰتٰىكُمْ ؕ
وَلَا تُكْرِهُوْا فَتَيٰتِكُمْ عَلَى الْبِغَآءِ اِنْ
اَرَدْنَ تَحَصُّنًا لِّتَبْتَغُوْا عَرَضَ الْحَيٰوةِ
الدُّنْيَا ؕ وَ مَنْ يُّكْرِهْهُّنَّ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ مِنْۢ
بَعْدِ اِكْرَاهِهِنَّ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۳۳﴾

34 And certainly We have sent to you clear messages and a description of those who passed away before you, and an admonition to those who guard against evil.

وَلَقَدْ اَنْزَلْنَاۤ اِلَيْكُمْ اٰيٰتٍ مُّبَيِّنٰتٍ وَّ
مَثَلًا مِّنَ الَّذِيْنَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ
وَ مَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿۳۴﴾

It also requires both male and female slaves to be kept in a state of marriage. The keeping of concubines or unmarried slave-girls is clearly inconsistent with this. As a religion Islām is against celibacy, and considers parenthood to be the duty of every human being. In the civilized society of to-day most persons refuse to accept the responsibilities of parenthood, offering as an excuse the insufficiency of means to support a family. The Qur'ān disposes of this false excuse in the simple words, *if they are needy, Allāh will make them free from want out of His grace.*

The Holy Prophet, too, laid stress on Muslim men and women living in a married state. Thus he is reported to have said: "He who is able to marry should marry. For it keeps the gaze low and guards chastity; and he who cannot should take to fasting (occasionally), for it will have a castrating effect on him" (B. 30:10). On another occasion he said, addressing some young men who talked of fasting in the day-time and keeping awake during the night, and keeping away from marriage: "I keep fast and I break it, and I pray and I sleep, and I am married, so whoever inclines to any other way than my sunnah, he is not of me" (B. 67:1). According to one ḥadīth, the man who marries perfects half his religion (Msh. 13:1, iii). Celibacy is expressly forbidden (B. 67:8).

1754 The words translated as *those who cannot find a match* may also mean *those who cannot find the means to marry.* Marriage thus becomes an obligatory institution in Islām, only those being excused who cannot find a match or who lack the means to marry. Marriage, in fact, affords the surest guarantee for the betterment of the moral tone of society.

1755 The word *kitāb,* translated *writing,* as used here, stands for *mukātabah,* which is an infinitive noun of *kātaba,* signifying *he* (a slave) *made a written* (or other) *contract with him* (his master), *that he* (the former) *should pay a certain sum as the price of himself, and on the payment thereof be free* (LL), also *he* (a master) *made such a contract with him* (his slave). It was called a *kitāb* (or writing), because of the obligation which the master imposed on himself. The money was paid in two or more instalments. Thus every possible facility

1756, see next page.

SECTION 5: **Manifestation of Divine Light**

35 Allāh is the light of the heavens and the earth. A likeness of His light is as a pillar on which is a lamp—the lamp is in a glass, the glass is as it were a brightly shining star—lit from a blessed olive-tree, neither eastern nor western, the oil whereof gives light, though fire touch it not — light upon light. Allāh guides to His light whom He pleases. And Allāh sets forth parables for men, and Allāh is Knower of all things—[1757]

اَللّٰهُ نُوۡرُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الۡاَرۡضِ ؕ مَثَلُ نُوۡرِهٖ كَمِشۡكٰوةٍ فِيۡهَا مِصۡبَاحٌ ؕ اَلۡمِصۡبَاحُ فِىۡ زُجَاجَةٍ ؕ اَلزُّجَاجَةُ كَاَنَّهَا كَوۡكَبٌ دُرِّىٌّ يُّوۡقَدُ مِنۡ شَجَرَةٍ مُّبٰرَكَةٍ زَيۡتُوۡنَةٍ لَّا شَرۡقِيَّةٍ وَّلَا غَرۡبِيَّةٍ ۙ يَّكَادُ زَيۡتُهَا يُضِىۡٓءُ وَلَوۡ لَمۡ تَمۡسَسۡهُ نَارٌ ؕ نُوۡرٌ عَلٰى نُوۡرٍ ؕ يَهۡدِى اللّٰهُ لِنُوۡرِهٖ مَنۡ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَ يَضۡرِبُ اللّٰهُ الۡاَمۡثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَىۡءٍ عَلِيۡمٌ ﴿۳۵﴾

36 (It is) in houses which Allāh has permitted to be exalted and His name to be remembered therein.[1758] Therein do glorify Him, in the mornings and the evenings,

فِىۡ بُيُوۡتٍ اَذِنَ اللّٰهُ اَنۡ تُرۡفَعَ وَيُذۡكَرَ فِيۡهَا اسۡمُهٗ ۙ يُسَبِّحُ لَهٗ فِيۡهَا بِالۡغُدُوِّ وَ الۡاٰصَالِ ﴿۳۶﴾

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was afforded to the slave to earn his freedom. Though the practice of the master making such a contract with the slave prevailed before the advent of Islām, the important reform introduced by Islām was that, when a slave desired such a contract to be made, the master could not refuse it. Twelve centuries before any attempt was made by any individual or community to legislate for the liberty of slaves, a dweller in the Arabian desert had laid down this noble institution, that, if a slave asked for a writing of freedom, he was not only to be given that writing by the master, but he was also to be provided with money to purchase his freedom, the only condition being *if you know any good in them*, i.e., if he is fit for work and able to earn his livelihood. And, in addition, the duty was imposed upon the State of spending a part of the collection of the poor-rate for this object, as stated in 9:60.

1756 It is related that 'Abd Allāh ibn Ubayy, the leader of the hypocrites, kept slave-girls for prostitution (Rz). Prostitution, which seems to have prevailed before the advent of Islām in Arabia, is condemned here. But this curse has obtained an incredible prevalence in the whole of Christendom, and is legalized in many countries of Europe as a *necessary evil*, while in others it is openly connived at.

1757 *Nūr* (*light*) is *that which manifests hidden things*, and Allāh is called here the *light of the heavens and the earth*, because He has manifested them and brought them into existence. *Mishkāt* means a *niche*, but Mjd explains it as meaning *'amūd* or *pillar* (LL).

In the parable that follows, Islām is represented as a likeness of the Divine light, a light placed high on a pillar so as to illuminate the whole world; a light guarded by being placed in a glass, so that no puff of wind can put it out; a light so resplendent that the glass itself in which it is placed is as a brilliant star. It should be noted that the religion of Islām is repeatedly spoken of as *Divine light* in the Holy Qur'ān: "They desire to put out *the light of Allāh* with their mouths, but Allāh will allow nothing save the perfection of *His light*, though the disbelievers are averse" (9:32; 61:8). Hence it is of Islām that the parable of Divine light speaks. The *blessed olive*, from which that light is lit, and

1758, see next page.

37 Men whom neither merchandise nor selling diverts from the remembrance of Allāh and the keeping up of prayer and the paying of the poor-rate — they fear a day in which the hearts and the eyes will turn about,[1759]

رِجَالٌ لَّا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَّلَا بَيْعٌ
عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلٰوةِ وَإِيْتَآءِ
الزَّكٰوةِ يَخَافُوْنَ يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيْهِ
الْقُلُوْبُ وَالْأَبْصَارُ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 That Allāh may give them the best reward for what they did, and give them more out of His grace. And Allāh provides without measure for whom He pleases.

لِيَجْزِيَهُمُ اللّٰهُ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوْا وَيَزِيْدَهُمْ
مِّنْ فَضْلِهِ وَاللّٰهُ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ
بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 And those who disbelieve, their deeds are as a mirage in a desert, which the thirsty man deems to be water, until, when he comes to it, he finds it naught, and he finds Allāh with him, so He pays him his due. And Allāh is Swift at reckoning—

وَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا أَعْمَالُهُمْ كَسَرَابٍ
بِقِيْعَةٍ يَّحْسَبُهُ الظَّمْاٰنُ مَآءً حَتّٰى
إِذَا جَآءَهُ لَمْ يَجِدْهُ شَيْئًا وَّوَجَدَ اللّٰهَ
عِنْدَهُ فَوَفّٰىهُ حِسَابَهُ وَاللّٰهُ
سَرِيْعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 Or like darkness in the deep sea — there covers him a wave, above which is a wave, above which is a

أَوْ كَظُلُمٰتٍ فِيْ بَحْرٍ لُّجِّيٍّ يَّغْشٰىهُ مَوْجٌ
مِّنْ فَوْقِهِ مَوْجٌ مِّنْ فَوْقِهِ سَحَابٌ

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which stands here for a symbol of Islām, as the fig stands for a symbol of Judaism (see 2766), belongs neither to the East nor to the West. Even so is Islām, which must give light to both the East and the West, and which, therefore, does not specially belong to either of them. The reference seems to be to the welding together of the East and the West in Islām, a prophecy which is now approaching its fulfilment in the awakening of the West to the truth of the principles of Islām.

The parable becomes clearer if the word ***nūr*** (***light***) be taken to refer to the Holy Prophet. The Prophet was by nature gifted with the highest qualifications. Even before he received Divine revelation, his life was a life of purity and devoted to the service of humanity. Light emanated from him even before the light from on High came to him in the form of Divine revelation, so that when revelation came to him it was *light upon light.*

1758 The Divine light spoken of in the last verse is here stated as being met with in certain houses, the distinctive mark of those houses being that the name of Allāh is remembered in them, thus showing that these houses are the houses of Muslims, and the light is therefore the light of Islām. These houses, we are further told, though humble now, will be *exalted.* And the exaltation of the humble huts of the Arab dwellers of the desert to royal palaces is a fact of history.

1759 A further description of these houses makes the reference still more clear. In these houses Allāh is glorified in the morning and the evening, and therefore these can be the houses of no other than Muslims, because the keeping up of prayer and the paying of the poor-rate is the distinguishing characteristic of Islām. The opposition to this light, and the end of that opposition, are described in the two concluding verses of the section. The turning about of the hearts and the eyes means either that they will be transformed in the new life or that they

cloud — (layers of) darkness one above another — when he holds out his hand, he is almost unable to see it. And to whom Allāh gives not light, he has no light.[1760]

ظُلُمٰتٌ بَعْضُهَا فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ ؕ اِذَآ اَخْرَجَ يَدَهٗ لَمْ يَكَدْ يَرٰىهَا ؕ وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَجْعَلِ اللّٰهُ لَهٗ نُوْرًا فَمَا لَهٗ مِنْ نُّوْرٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

SECTION 6: **Manifestation of Divine Power**

41 Seest thou not that Allāh is He, Whom do glorify all those who are in the heavens and the earth, and the birds with wings outspread? Each one knows its prayer and its glorification. And Allāh is Knower of what they do.

اَلَمْ تَرَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ يُسَبِّحُ لَهٗ مَنْ فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَالطَّيْرُ صٰٓفّٰتٍ ؕ كُلٌّ قَدْ عَلِمَ صَلَاتَهٗ وَتَسْبِيْحَهٗ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِمَا يَفْعَلُوْنَ ﴿٤١﴾

42 And Allāh's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and to Allāh is the eventual coming.

وَلِلّٰهِ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۚ وَاِلَى اللّٰهِ الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 Seest thou not that Allāh drives along the clouds, then gathers them together, then piles them up, so that thou seest the rain coming forth from their midst? And He sends down from the heaven (clouds like) mountains, wherein is hail, afflicting therewith whom He pleases and turning it away from whom He pleases. The flash of His lightning almost takes away the sight.

اَلَمْ تَرَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ يُزْجِىْ سَحَابًا ثُمَّ يُؤَلِّفُ بَيْنَهٗ ثُمَّ يَجْعَلُهٗ رُكَامًا فَتَرَى الْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خِلٰلِهٖ ۚ وَيُنَزِّلُ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مِنْ جِبَالٍ فِيْهَا مِنْۢ بَرَدٍ فَيُصِيْبُ بِهٖ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَيَصْرِفُهٗ عَنْ مَّنْ يَّشَآءُ ؕ يَكَادُ سَنَا بَرْقِهٖ يَذْهَبُ بِالْاَبْصَارِ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 Allāh causes the night and the day to succeed one another. Surely there is a lesson in this for those who have sight.

يُقَلِّبُ اللّٰهُ الَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ ؕ اِنَّ فِىْ ذٰلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّاُولِى الْاَبْصَارِ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 And Allāh has created every animal of water.[1761] So of them is that

وَاللّٰهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ دَآبَّةٍ مِّنْ مَّآءٍ ۚ

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will be in a state of commotion by reason of fear. The verse that follows lends support to the first significance.

1760 As the first part of the section gives a picture of the brilliant and dazzling Divine light which is given to the believers, the last part describes the utter darkness of doubt and ignorance in which the disbelievers are. Their apparent hopes of success are compared with a mirage, and, when they are undeceived of these, they will find themselves in the presence of God and will have their dues paid to them.

1761 Here only animals are spoken of as having been created from water, but elsewhere we are told that all life, whether animal or plant, has been created from water (21 : 30); see 1626.

which crawls upon its belly, and of them is that which walks upon two feet, and of them is that which walks upon four.[1762] Allāh creates what He pleases. Surely Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.

فَمِنْهُم مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَىٰ بَطْنِهِ ۚ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَىٰ رِجْلَيْنِ ۚ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَىٰ أَرْبَعٍ ۚ يَخْلُقُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 We have indeed revealed clear messages. And Allāh guides whom He pleases to the right way.

لَّقَدْ أَنزَلْنَا آيَاتٍ مُّبَيِّنَاتٍ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَهْدِي مَن يَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And they say: We believe in Allāh and in the Messenger and we obey; then a party of them turn away after this, and they are not believers.

وَيَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَبِالرَّسُولِ وَأَطَعْنَا ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّىٰ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُم مِّن بَعْدِ ذَٰلِكَ ۚ وَمَا أُولَٰئِكَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And when they are invited to Allāh and His Messenger that he may judge between them, lo! a party of them turn aside.

وَإِذَا دُعُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 And if the right is on their side, they hasten to him in submission.

وَإِن يَكُن لَّهُمُ الْحَقُّ يَأْتُوا إِلَيْهِ مُذْعِنِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 Is there in their hearts a disease, or are they in doubt, or fear they that Allāh and His Messenger will deal with them unjustly? Nay! they themselves are the wrongdoers.

أَفِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ أَمِ ارْتَابُوا أَمْ يَخَافُونَ أَن يَحِيفَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَرَسُولُهُ ۚ بَلْ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

SECTION 7: **Establishment of the Kingdom of Islām**

51 The response of the believers, when they are invited to Allāh and His Messenger that he may judge between them, is only that they say: We hear and we obey. And these it is that are successful.

إِنَّمَا كَانَ قَوْلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا دُعُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَن يَقُولُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

1762 The various kinds of animal life are here divided into three classes: (1) The creeping things, the lowest and the first form in the development of animal life. (2) Those walking upon two legs, such as birds, the second form of the development of animal life. Man, though walking on two legs, is not included in them, because human life is the highest form of the development of animal life, and it is generally mentioned as quite distinct from all animal life. (3) Those which walk on four legs, and to this class belong most of the mammals.

52 And he who obeys Allāh and His Messenger, and fears Allāh and keeps duty to Him, these it is that are the achievers.

وَمَنْ يُّطِعِ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ وَيَخْشَ
اللّٰهَ وَيَتَّقْهِ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْفَآئِزُوْنَ ﴿۵۲﴾

53 And they swear by Allāh with their strongest oaths that, if thou command them, they would certainly go forth. Say: Swear not; reasonable obedience (is desired). Surely Allāh is Aware of what you do.

وَاَقْسَمُوْا بِاللّٰهِ جَهْدَ اَيْمَانِهِمْ لَئِنْ
اَمَرْتَهُمْ لَيَخْرُجُنَّ ؕ قُلْ لَّا تُقْسِمُوْا ۚ طَاعَةٌ
مَّعْرُوْفَةٌ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ خَبِيْرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿۵۳﴾

54 Say: Obey Allāh and obey the Messenger. But if you turn away, he is responsible for the duty imposed on him, and you are responsible for the duty imposed on you. And if you obey him, you go aright. And the Messenger's duty is only to deliver (the message) plainly.

قُلْ اَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَاَطِيْعُوا الرَّسُوْلَ ۚ فَاِنْ
تَوَلَّوْا فَاِنَّمَا عَلَيْهِ مَا حُمِّلَ وَعَلَيْكُمْ
مَّا حُمِّلْتُمْ ؕ وَاِنْ تُطِيْعُوْهُ تَهْتَدُوْا ؕ وَمَا
عَلَى الرَّسُوْلِ اِلَّا الْبَلٰغُ الْمُبِيْنُ ﴿۵۴﴾

55 Allāh has promised to those of you who believe and do good that He will surely make them rulers in the earth as He made those before them rulers, and that He will surely establish for them their religion, which He has chosen for them, and that He will surely give them security in exchange after their fear. They will serve Me, not associating aught with Me. And whoever is ungrateful after this, they are the transgressors.[1763]

وَعَدَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا
الصّٰلِحٰتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْاَرْضِ
كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ
وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِيْنَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضٰى
لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ
اَمْنًا ؕ يَعْبُدُوْنَنِيْ لَا يُشْرِكُوْنَ بِيْ
شَيْئًا ؕ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ
فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْفٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿۵۵﴾

1763 This verse not only prophesies the establishment of the kingdom of, Islām, but also its permanence, so that successors will be raised to the Holy Prophet and the Muslims made a ruling nation on earth. *By those before them* are meant in particular *the followers of Moses* (Bd). Islām at the time of the revelation of these verses was still surrounded by enemies on all sides; there was still fear for the believers, as the verse clearly shows, and idol-worship still had the upper hand in Arabia. The triumph of Islām, which is prophesied in the parable of the *Divine Light* first, and the gradual advent of which is referred to afterwards, is here predicted in the clearest and most emphatic terms: the believers will be made rulers in the earth; their religion will be firmly established; security will be given to them in place of fear; Divine Unity will rule supreme. All these favours will be bestowed upon the Muslims, for which they should be thankful; but, if they are ungrateful after that, they shall be dealt with as transgressors. *Kafara* means *he disbelieved* as well as *he was ungrateful,* and the latter

56 And keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and obey the Messenger, so that mercy may be shown to you.

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكٰوةَ
وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 Think not that those who disbelieve will weaken (the Truth) in the earth; and their abode is the Fire. And it is indeed an evil resort!

لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مُعْجِزِينَ
فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ وَمَأْوٰىهُمُ النَّارُ ۖ وَ
لَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٥٧﴾

SECTION 8: **Respect for Privacy**

58 O you who believe, let those whom your right hands possess and those of you who have not attained to puberty ask permission of you three times: Before the morning prayer, and when you put off your clothes for the heat of noon, and after the prayer of night. These are three times of privacy for you; besides these it is no sin for you nor for them — some of you go round about (waiting) upon others. Thus does Allāh make clear to you the messages. And Allāh is Knowing, Wise.[1764]

يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِيَسْتَأْذِنْكُمُ
الَّذِينَ مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ
يَبْلُغُوا الْحُلُمَ مِنْكُمْ ثَلٰثَ مَرّٰتٍ ۚ مِنْ
قَبْلِ صَلٰوةِ الْفَجْرِ وَحِينَ تَضَعُونَ
ثِيَابَكُمْ مِنَ الظَّهِيرَةِ وَمِنْ بَعْدِ صَلٰوةِ
الْعِشَاءِ ۚ ثَلٰثُ عَوْرٰتٍ لَكُمْ ۚ لَيْسَ
عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا عَلَيْهِمْ جُنَاحٌ بَعْدَهُنَّ ۚ
طَوّٰفُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ ۚ
كَذٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللّٰهُ لَكُمُ الْآيٰتِ ۚ
وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥٨﴾

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significance suits the context here. Even if *kufr* is taken as meaning *disbelief* here, it would mean a denial in practice, or disobedience to Divine commandments.

Though the promise contained in this verse refers clearly to the establishment of the kingdom of Islām and to the Muslims being made successors to the Israelites as regards the promised Holy Land, there is also a reference here to the Divine promise to raise reformers among the Muslims as prophets were raised among the Israelites. Such is the clear promise contained in a saying of the Holy Prophet: "Surely Allāh will raise up for this people (i.e., the Muslims) in the beginning of every century one who will revive for it its religion" (A.D. 36:1). The promise given in the verse may therefore refer not only to the temporal successors of the Holy Prophet, but also to his spiritual successors or reformers. The analogy of the Israelites, to which the verse refers, points to the appearance of a Messiah among the Muslims as a Messiah was raised among the Israelites, and it was on this verse that the claim of the late Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad of Qadiān, the founder of the Aḥmadiyyah movement, was based. He claimed to be a reformer for the fourteenth century of the Hijrah and the Messiah whose advent among the Muslims was foretold.

1764 Rules relating to personal and family privacy are of the utmost importance in the betterment of social relations, and their non-observance leads

59 And when the children among you attain to puberty, let them seek permission as those before them sought permission. Thus does Allāh make clear to you His messages. And Allāh is Knowing, Wise.

وَإِذَا بَلَغَ الْأَطْفَالُ مِنكُمُ الْحُلُمَ
فَلْيَسْتَأْذِنُوا كَمَا اسْتَأْذَنَ الَّذِينَ مِن
قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ ۗ
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 And (as for) women past child-bearing,[1765] who hope not for marriage, it is no sin for them if they put off their clothes without displaying their adornment. And if they are modest, it is better for them. And Allāh is Hearing, Knowing.

وَالْقَوَاعِدُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ اللَّاتِي لَا يَرْجُونَ
نِكَاحًا فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْهِنَّ جُنَاحٌ أَن يَضَعْنَ
ثِيَابَهُنَّ غَيْرَ مُتَبَرِّجَاتٍ بِزِينَةٍ ۖ وَأَن
يَسْتَعْفِفْنَ خَيْرٌ لَّهُنَّ ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٠﴾

61 There is no blame on the blind man, nor any blame on the lame, nor blame on the sick,[1766] nor on yourselves that you eat in your own houses, or your fathers' houses, or your mothers' houses, or your brothers' houses, or your sisters' houses, or your paternal uncles' houses, or your paternal aunts' houses, or your maternal uncles' houses, or your maternal aunts' houses, or (houses) whereof you possess the keys, or your friends' (houses). It is no sin in you that you eat together or separately. So when you enter houses, greet your people with a salutation from Allāh, blessed (and) goodly. Thus does Allāh make clear to you the messages that you may understand.

لَّيْسَ عَلَى الْأَعْمَىٰ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى الْأَعْرَجِ
حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرِيضِ حَرَجٌ وَلَا عَلَىٰ
أَنفُسِكُمْ أَن تَأْكُلُوا مِن بُيُوتِكُمْ أَوْ
بُيُوتِ آبَائِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ أَوْ
بُيُوتِ إِخْوَانِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ أَخَوَاتِكُمْ أَوْ
بُيُوتِ أَعْمَامِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ عَمَّاتِكُمْ أَوْ
بُيُوتِ أَخْوَالِكُمْ أَوْ بُيُوتِ خَالَاتِكُمْ أَوْ
مَا مَلَكْتُم مَّفَاتِحَهُ أَوْ صَدِيقِكُمْ ۚ
لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَن تَأْكُلُوا جَمِيعًا
أَوْ أَشْتَاتًا ۚ فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُم بُيُوتًا فَسَلِّمُوا
عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ تَحِيَّةً مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ
مُبَارَكَةً طَيِّبَةً ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ
الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

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to all kinds of false reports, which scandalmongers are always ready to lay hold upon, thereby creating dissensions in society.

1765 *Qā'id* (plural *qawā'id*) signifies *a woman who has ceased to bear children and to have the menstrual discharge* (LL). The reference in putting off *clothes* is to the over-garment spoken of in 33:59.

1766 The Arabs had their scruples in eating with the blind, etc., in which respect they were like the Jews and some other people. The Hindus to this day eat separately. Islām lays down a middle rule, and allows the individual a great latitude in this respect. A man may eat alone or with others, he may eat with the maimed, etc., or he may eat in the houses of near relations and friends. The latter part of the verse shows that a certain degree of familiarity in the case of near relatives is recommended, so that one can take food with them, even though he may not have been invited specially.

SECTION 9 : **Matters of State to take Precedence**

62 Only those are believers who believe in Allāh and His Messenger, and when they are with him on a momentous affair, they go not away until they have asked leave of him. Surely they who ask leave of thee, are they who believe in Allāh and His Messenger ; so when they ask leave of thee for some affair of theirs, give leave to whom thou wilt of them, and ask forgiveness for them from Allāh. Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَإِذَا كَانُوا مَعَهُ عَلَىٰ أَمْرٍ جَامِعٍ لَّمْ يَذْهَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَسْتَأْذِنُوهُ ۚ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَأْذِنُونَكَ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ۚ فَإِذَا اسْتَأْذَنُوكَ لِبَعْضِ شَأْنِهِمْ فَأْذَن لِّمَن شِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمُ اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 Make not the calling among you of the Messenger as your calling one of another.[1767] Allāh indeed knows those who steal away from among you, concealing themselves. So let those who go against his order beware, lest a trial afflict them or there befall them a painful chastisement.

لَّا تَجْعَلُوا دُعَاءَ الرَّسُولِ بَيْنَكُمْ كَدُعَاءِ بَعْضِكُم بَعْضًا ۚ قَدْ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ يَتَسَلَّلُونَ مِنكُمْ لِوَاذًا ۚ فَلْيَحْذَرِ الَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِ أَن تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 Now surely Allāh's is whatever is in the heavens and the earth. He knows indeed your condition. And on the day when they are returned to Him, He will inform them of what they did. And Allāh is Knower of all things.

أَلَا إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ قَدْ يَعْلَمُ مَا أَنتُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَيَوْمَ يُرْجَعُونَ إِلَيْهِ فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٤﴾

1767 It does not mean how the Prophet is to be addressed, but in what manner his call is to be responded to. The context makes it clear. The previous verse states that none is to leave without the Prophet's permission, when they are gathered together for some important affair requiring their presence, and the words that follow this passage are to the same effect. What is stated here is that the Prophet's call to the believers is to be respected, and not to be treated as their calling one of another ; because the Prophet's call relates to some important affair affecting the welfare of the community, while their mutual calling one of another relates to their own private affairs.



CHAPTER 25

Al-Furqān : THE DISCRIMINATION

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH : 6 *sections ;* 77 *verses*)

This chapter, which is entitled *The Discrimination*, is in its entirety a Makkan revelation. It belongs in all likelihood to the last Makkan period, as it shows that the signs of the great transformation, which was to be brought about by the Qur'ān, could now be seen in the lives of the companions of the Prophet. The last chapter, a Madīnah revelation, speaks of the Divine Light which was manifested through the Prophet, and is therefore followed by a chapter which shows that that light was now being manifested in the lives of the Prophet's companions.

The chapter opens with the statement that the Holy Prophet's message was for all nations of the world, and, as the last exposition of the doctrine of Divine Unity, it must unite all the nations and uproot all sorts of polytheism. The disbelievers objected to the Prophet being a mortal, and to this an answer is given in the concluding words of the second section, which asserts the truth of the warning. The third section points out that a discrimination will be finally made between good and evil, and refers to the day of Discrimination or the battle of Badr. These general statements are followed by concrete instances of the fate of previous peoples, some of which are very briefly referred to in the fourth section. The fifth section draws attention to some natural phenomena, which bear evidence to the law of gradual growth in nature, showing that Truth was gradually gaining ground. The chapter is brought to a close by a description of the righteous servants of the Beneficent God, being, in fact, an indication of the mighty transformation which had already begun to work.

SECTION 1 **A Warner for all Nations**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 Blessed is He Who sent down the Discrimination upon His servant that he might be a warner to the nations—[1769]

تَبٰرَكَ الَّذِيْ نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلٰى عَبْدِهٖ لِيَكُوْنَ لِلْعٰلَمِيْنَ نَذِيْرًا ۙ۝١

2 He, Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and Who did not take to Himself a son, and Who has no associate in the kingdom, and Who created everything, then ordained for it a measure.[1770]

الَّذِيْ لَهٗ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَلَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا وَّلَمْ يَكُنْ لَّهٗ شَرِيْكٌ فِي الْمُلْكِ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَّرَهٗ تَقْدِيْرًا ۝٢

3 And they take besides Him gods who create naught, while they are themselves created, and they control for themselves no harm nor profit, and they control not death, nor life, nor raising to life.

وَاتَّخَذُوْا مِنْ دُوْنِهٖٓ اٰلِهَةً لَّا يَخْلُقُوْنَ شَيْـًٔا وَّهُمْ يُخْلَقُوْنَ وَلَا يَمْلِكُوْنَ لِاَنْفُسِهِمْ ضَرًّا وَّلَا نَفْعًا وَّلَا يَمْلِكُوْنَ مَوْتًا وَّلَا حَيٰوةً وَّلَا نُشُوْرًا ۝٣

4 And those who disbelieve say: This is nothing but a lie, which he has forged, and other people have helped him at it. So indeed they have brought an iniquity and a falsehood.

وَقَالَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اِنْ هٰذَآ اِلَّآ اِفْكُ ۨافْتَرٰىهُ وَاَعَانَهٗ عَلَيْهِ قَوْمٌ اٰخَرُوْنَ ۚ فَقَدْ جَآءُوْ ظُلْمًا وَّزُوْرًا ۚ۝٤

5 And they say: Stories of the ancients, which he has got written, so they are read out to him morning and evening![1771]

وَقَالُوْٓا اَسَاطِيْرُ الْاَوَّلِيْنَ اكْتَتَبَهَا فَهِيَ تُمْلٰى عَلَيْهِ بُكْرَةً وَّاَصِيْلًا ۝٥

1769 *Furqān* is one of the names of the Holy Qur'ān because of the distinction which it brings about between truth and falsehood; see 228. As this chapter deals with the mighty transformation which the Holy Qur'ān had brought about in the lives of the people, as shown in the last section, it is mentioned here by the name *Furqān*. The addition of the words that the Prophet may be a warner to the nations is to show that the transformation which was being brought about in Arabia would ultimately extend over the whole world and all nations would benefit.

1770 Vv. 2 and 3 speak of the different kinds of the polytheistic beliefs prevailing in the world, which were all destined to be swept away by the doctrine of Divine Unity as preached by Islām.

1771 In the previous verse, their allegation is that the Qur'ān is a forgery; here they allege that the Prophet had caused some stories of the ancients to be written down by some people who helped him and it was these stories which were recited to him and which he gave out as a revelation from on High. How

6 Say: He has revealed it, Who knows the secret of the heavens and **the earth.[1771a] Surely he is ever For**giving, Merciful.

قُلْ أَنْزَلَهُ الَّذِي يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ⑥

7 And they say: What a Messenger is this? He eats food and goes about in the markets. Why has not an angel been sent down to him to be a warner with him?[1772]

وَقَالُوا مَالِ هٰذَا الرَّسُولِ يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِي فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ ۙ لَوْلَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ فَيَكُونَ مَعَهُ نَذِيرًا ⑦

8 Or a treasure given to him, or a garden from which to eat?[1773] And the evildoers say: You follow but a man bewitched!

أَوْ يُلْقٰى إِلَيْهِ كَنْزٌ أَوْ تَكُونُ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ يَأْكُلُ مِنْهَا ۚ وَقَالَ الظّٰلِمُونَ إِنْ تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَّسْحُورًا ⑧

9 See what parables they set forth for thee—they have gone astray, so they cannot find a way.[1774]

انْظُرْ كَيْفَ ضَرَبُوا لَكَ الْأَمْثَالَ فَضَلُّوا فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَبِيلًا ⑨

SECTION 2: **Truth of the Warning**

10 Blessed is He Who if He please, will give thee what is better than this: Gardens wherein flow rivers. And He will give thee palaces.[1775]

تَبٰرَكَ الَّذِي إِنْ شَاءَ جَعَلَ لَكَ خَيْرًا مِّنْ ذٰلِكَ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهٰرُ ۙ وَيَجْعَلْ لَّكَ قُصُورًا ⑩

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could mere stories bring about the transformation which the Holy Qur'ān was working in the hearts of men? Attention to this is drawn in the next verse.

1771a The secrets of the heavens and the earth which are known to God alone include the secrets of human nature. Transformation in men's lives has always been brought about by means of Divine revelation, and mortal efforts have ever failed in changing the hearts of men.

1772 The Prophet's life was one of the utmost simplicity. He did all his work himself. He aided his wives in their household duties, mended his clothes, tied up the goats, and even cobbled his sandals. Nay, his kind and genial nature often led him to do other's work. Once a woman, unable to work for herself, asked him to lead her into a certain street; he accompanied her there, only taking leave when her work was accomplished. He was a mortal, and partook of the ordinary food of a simple Arab. Hence they speak of him as *eating food*. The answer to this is given in v. 20, viz., that all prophets were mortal and subject to human laws, even as the Holy Prophet.

1773 Their idea of a messenger of God was that he should be rolling in wealth. In fact, wealth was all in all to them and they paid no consideration to the moral, the higher, values of life for which the Prophet came. They were at

1774, 1775, see next page.

11 But they deny the Hour, and We have prepared a burning Fire for him who denies the Hour.

بَلْ كَذَّبُوا بِالسَّاعَةِ ۖ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِمَنْ كَذَّبَ بِالسَّاعَةِ سَعِيرًا ﴿١١﴾

12 When it sees them from a far-off place, they will hear its raging and roaring.

إِذَا رَأَتْهُمْ مِنْ مَكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ سَمِعُوا لَهَا تَغَيُّظًا وَزَفِيرًا ﴿١٢﴾

13 And when they are cast into a narrow place thereof in chains, they will there pray for destruction.

وَإِذَا أُلْقُوا مِنْهَا مَكَانًا ضَيِّقًا مُقَرَّنِينَ دَعَوْا هُنَالِكَ ثُبُورًا ﴿١٣﴾

14 Pray not this day for destruction once but pray for destruction again and again.

لَا تَدْعُوا الْيَوْمَ ثُبُورًا وَاحِدًا وَادْعُوا ثُبُورًا كَثِيرًا ﴿١٤﴾

15 Say: Is this better or the Garden of Perpetuity, which the dutiful are promised? That is a reward and a resort for them.

قُلْ أَذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ أَمْ جَنَّةُ الْخُلْدِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ ۚ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَزَاءً وَمَصِيرًا ﴿١٥﴾

16 For them therein is what they desire, to abide. It is a promise to be prayed for from thy Lord.[1776]

لَهُمْ فِيهَا مَا يَشَاءُونَ خَالِدِينَ ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ وَعْدًا مَسْئُولًا ﴿١٦﴾

17 And on the day when He will gather them, and that which they serve besides Allāh, He will say: Was it you who led astray these My servants, or did they themselves stray from the path?

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَقُولُ أَأَنْتُمْ أَضْلَلْتُمْ عِبَادِي هَٰؤُلَاءِ أَمْ هُمْ ضَلُّوا السَّبِيلَ ﴿١٧﴾

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the same time told that, though the Muslims had to suffer privations, they would be rewarded for their sacrifices in this very life. Treasures were placed at the feet of the companions of the Holy Prophet, and they were given gardens. But all this happened in accordance with Divine law, which requires the fulfilment of prophecy to be brought about gradually, even as it requires all growth to be gradual in the physical world.

1774 Elsewhere, the disbelievers are quoted as saying: "Why was not this Qur'ān revealed to a man of importance in the two towns?" (43:31). Nothing except rank or wealth had any importance in their eyes, so narrow was their outlook on life. Their very conception of the real values of life was wrong, so they could not find a way.

1775 These words contain a clear prophecy that the Prophet and his followers will receive the good things of this life too. The gardens of Mesopotamia, the palaces of Persia and of the Caesars, were given to the companions of the Holy Prophet.

1776 The Garden is promised to the faithful but they should pray to their Lord for its bestowal, because prayer to God is the means by which it can be attained.

18 They will say: Glory be to Thee! it was not beseeming for us that we should take for protectors others besides Thee, but Thou didst make them and their fathers to enjoy until they forgot the Reminder, and they became a lost people.[1777]

قَالُوْا سُبْحٰنَكَ مَا كَانَ يَنْۢبَغِيْ لَنَآ اَنْ نَّتَّخِذَ مِنْ دُوْنِكَ مِنْ اَوْلِيَآءَ وَلٰكِنْ مَّتَّعْتَهُمْ وَاٰبَآءَهُمْ حَتّٰى نَسُوا الذِّكْرَ ۚ وَكَانُوْا قَوْمًۢا بُوْرًا ﴿۱۸﴾

19 So they will give you the lie in what you say, then you can neither ward off (evil), nor (obtain) help. And whoever among you does wrong, We shall make him taste a great chastisement.

فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوْكُمْ بِمَا تَقُوْلُوْنَ ۙ فَمَا تَسْتَطِيْعُوْنَ صَرْفًا وَّلَا نَصْرًا ۚ وَمَنْ يَّظْلِمْ مِّنْكُمْ نُذِقْهُ عَذَابًا كَبِيْرًا ﴿۱۹﴾

20 And We did not send before thee any messengers but they surely ate food and went about in the markets. And We make some of you a trial for others. Will you bear patiently? And thy Lord is ever Seeing.[1778]

وَمَآ اَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ اِلَّآ اِنَّهُمْ لَيَاْكُلُوْنَ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشُوْنَ فِي الْاَسْوَاقِ ؕ وَجَعَلْنَا بَعْضَكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ فِتْنَةً ؕ اَتَصْبِرُوْنَ ۚ وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ بَصِيْرًا ﴿۲۰﴾

PART XIX

SECTION 3: **The Day of Discrimination**

21 And those who look not for meeting with Us, say: Why have not angels been sent down to us, or (why) do we not see our Lord? Indeed they are too proud of themselves and revolt in great revolt.[1779]

وَقَالَ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يَرْجُوْنَ لِقَآءَنَا لَوْلَآ اُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ اَوْ نَرٰى رَبَّنَا ؕ لَقَدِ اسْتَكْبَرُوْا فِيْٓ اَنْفُسِهِمْ وَعَتَوْ عُتُوًّا كَبِيْرًا ﴿۲۱﴾

22 On the day when they will see the angels, there will be no good news for the guilty, and they will say: Let there be a strong barrier![1780]

يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ لَا بُشْرٰى يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُجْرِمِيْنَ وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ حِجْرًا مَّحْجُوْرًا ﴿۲۲﴾

1777 The words *it was not beseeming for us that we should take for protectors others besides Thee* show that those who worshipped God alone could not ask their followers to worship others than God. The reference is clearly to Jesus Christ.

1778 This is an injunction to the Muslims to bear the persecutions of their opponents patiently, for these trials will distinguish the bad from the good. The concluding words are a solace to them: *Thy Lord is ever Seeing* — He will punish the oppressors.

1779 The coming of the angels and the Lord signifies the coming of the threatened punishment, and the next verse makes it clear; see 268.

1780 The words *ḥijr-an maḥjūr-an* may bear different interpretations according as they are taken to be spoken by the angels or by the guilty. In the former

23 And We shall turn to the work they have done, so We shall render it as scattered motes.[1781]

وَقَدِمْنَآ إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا مِنْ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَٰهُ هَبَآءً مَّنثُورًا ﴿٢٣﴾

24 The owners of the Garden will on that day be in a better abiding-place and a fairer resting-place.

أَصْحَٰبُ الْجَنَّةِ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَيْرٌ مُّسْتَقَرًّا وَّأَحْسَنُ مَقِيلًا ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And on the day when the heaven bursts asunder with clouds, and the angels are sent down, as they are sent.[1782]

وَيَوْمَ تَشَقَّقُ السَّمَآءُ بِالْغَمَٰمِ وَنُزِّلَ الْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ تَنزِيلًا ﴿٢٥﴾

26 The kingdom on that day rightly belongs to the Beneficent, and it will be a hard day for the disbelievers.

الْمُلْكُ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ ۚ وَكَانَ يَوْمًا عَلَى الْكَٰفِرِينَ عَسِيرًا ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And on the day when the wrongdoer will bite his hands, saying: Would that I had taken a way with the Messenger![1783]

وَيَوْمَ يَعَضُّ الظَّالِمُ عَلَىٰ يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ يَٰلَيْتَنِي اتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ الرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا ﴿٢٧﴾

28 O woe is me! would that I had not taken such a one for a friend!

يَٰوَيْلَتَىٰ لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أَتَّخِذْ فُلَانًا خَلِيلًا ﴿٢٨﴾

29 Certainly he led me astray from the Reminder after it had come to me. And the devil ever deserts man.

لَقَدْ أَضَلَّنِي عَنِ الذِّكْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَآءَنِي ۗ وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَٰنُ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ خَذُولًا ﴿٢٩﴾

30 And the Messenger will say: My Lord, surely my people treat this Qur'ān as a forsaken thing.

وَقَالَ الرَّسُولُ يَٰرَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِي اتَّخَذُوا هَٰذَا الْقُرْءَانَ مَهْجُورًا ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And thus have We made for every prophet an enemy from among the guilty, and sufficient is thy Lord as a Guide and a Helper.

وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا مِّنَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِرَبِّكَ هَادِيًا وَّنَصِيرًا ﴿٣١﴾

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case, the meaning is that good news will be a forbidden thing to the guilty, which is equivalent to saying that they will be punished. In the latter case, the words are a kind of prayer for the coming of a barrier between them and their punishment.

1781 All the exertions of the Quraish were brought to naught in the battle of Badr, and all attempts to uproot Truth are dealt with similarly.

1782 This description of the day of Badr is also given in 8:11, where the falling of rain is clearly mentioned, and on the same occasion is also mentioned the coming of the angels. The next verse shows that it will be a day of victory for the Muslims, the believers in the Beneficent, and a hard day for the disbelievers. In fact, the distress and hardship the Quraish experienced in the battle of Badr were not tasted by them in any of their subsequent encounters with the Muslims.

1783 Commentators have here mentioned the names of some people who

32 And those who disbelieve say: Why has not the Qur'ān been revealed to him all at once? Thus, that We may strengthen thy heart thereby and We have arranged it well in arranging.[1784]

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْاٰنُ جُمْلَةً وَّاحِدَةً ۚ كَذٰلِكَ ۚ لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهٖ فُؤَادَكَ وَرَتَّلْنٰهُ تَرْتِيْلًا ﴿٣٢﴾

33 And they cannot bring thee a question, but We have brought thee the truth and the best explanation.[1785]

وَلَا يَاْتُوْنَكَ بِمَثَلٍ اِلَّا جِئْنٰكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَاَحْسَنَ تَفْسِيْرًا ﴿٣٣﴾

34 Those who will be gathered to hell on their faces — they are in an evil plight and straying farther away from the path.

اَلَّذِيْنَ يُحْشَرُوْنَ عَلٰى وُجُوْهِهِمْ اِلٰى جَهَنَّمَ ۙ اُولٰٓئِكَ شَرٌّ مَّكَانًا وَّ اَضَلُّ سَبِيْلًا ﴿٣٤﴾

SECTION 4: A Lesson in the Fate of Former People

35 And certainly We gave Moses the Book and We appointed with him his brother Aaron, an aider.

وَلَقَدْ اٰتَيْنَا مُوْسَى الْكِتٰبَ وَجَعَلْنَا مَعَهٗٓ اَخَاهُ هٰرُوْنَ وَزِيْرًا ﴿٣٥﴾

36 Then We said: Go you both to the people who reject Our messages. So We destroyed them with utter destruction.

فَقُلْنَا اذْهَبَآ اِلَى الْقَوْمِ الَّذِيْنَ كَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا ۭ فَدَمَّرْنٰهُمْ تَدْمِيْرًا ﴿٣٦﴾

37 And the people of Noah, when they rejected the messengers, We drowned them, and made them a sign for men. And We have prepared a painful chastisement for the wrongdoers —

وَقَوْمَ نُوْحٍ لَّمَّا كَذَّبُوا الرُّسُلَ اَغْرَقْنٰهُمْ وَجَعَلْنٰهُمْ لِلنَّاسِ اٰيَةً ۭ وَاَعْتَدْنَا لِلظّٰلِمِيْنَ عَذَابًا اَلِيْمًا ﴿٣٧﴾

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fought with the Prophet at Badr. But the statement is general and the evildoer often regrets the evil he did, when he suffers the consequences of the evil done.

1784 *Rattala* means *he put together and arranged well the component parts of the speech* (LL). The Qur'ān was revealed piecemeal so that, under the varying circumstances through which the Prophet passed, the Divine revelation might be a source of strength to his heart; and then, as it were, to refute any suggestion that the revelation might remain a disorderly collection of fragments revealed under different circumstances, having no connection with each other, it is added that the entire arrangement was also Divinely accomplished. The arrangement of the Qur'ān, according to this verse, was a part of the Divine scheme, brought about in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet, who was the recipient of the Divine revelation.

1785 *Mathal* signifies *a description, state,* or *case,* and is metaphorically applied to *a state* or *condition* that is *strange* or *wonderful* (LL), or it means *ḥujjat,* i.e., an *argument* (T). The meaning is that they cannot bring any *strange question* (Kf) or *strange objection* (JB) which has not been answered in the Holy Qur'ān with truth, and of which the best explanation is not given therein. The verse lays down the basis of an important principle, viz., that the Holy Qur'ān not only contains answers to all objections against it, but also adduces arguments

38 And 'Ād and Thamūd and the dwellers of Rass and many generations in between.[1786]

وَّعَادًا وَّثَمُوْدَاْ وَاَصْحٰبَ الرَّسِّ وَقُرُوْنًا بَيْنَ ذٰلِكَ كَثِيْرًا ﴿۳۸﴾

39 And to each We gave examples and each did We destroy with utter destruction.[1787]

وَكُلًّا ضَرَبْنَا لَهُ الْاَمْثَالَ وَكُلًّا تَبَّرْنَا تَتْبِيْرًا ﴿۳۹﴾

40 And indeed they pass by the town wherein was rained an evil rain.[1788] Do they not see it? Nay, they hope not to be raised again.

وَلَقَدْ اَتَوْا عَلَى الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِيْٓ اُمْطِرَتْ مَطَرَ السَّوْءِ ؕ اَفَلَمْ يَكُوْنُوْا يَرَوْنَهَا ۚ بَلْ كَانُوْا لَا يَرْجُوْنَ نُشُوْرًا ﴿۴۰﴾

41 And when they see thee, they take thee for naught but a jest: Is this he whom Allāh has raised to be a messenger?

وَاِذَا رَاَوْكَ اِنْ يَّتَّخِذُوْنَكَ اِلَّا هُزُوًا ؕ اَهٰذَا الَّذِيْ بَعَثَ اللّٰهُ رَسُوْلًا ﴿۴۱﴾

42 He had well-nigh led us astray from our gods had we not adhered to them patiently! And they will know, when they see the chastisement, who is more astray from the path.

اِنْ كَادَ لَيُضِلُّنَا عَنْ اٰلِهَتِنَا لَوْلَآ اَنْ صَبَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا ؕ وَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُوْنَ حِيْنَ يَرَوْنَ الْعَذَابَ مَنْ اَضَلُّ سَبِيْلًا ﴿۴۲﴾

43 Hast thou seen him who takes his low desires for his god?[1789] Wilt thou be a guardian over him?

اَرَءَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ اِلٰهَهٗ هَوٰىهُ ؕ اَفَاَنْتَ تَكُوْنُ عَلَيْهِ وَكِيْلًا ﴿۴۳﴾

44 Or thinkest thou that most of them hear or understand? They are but as the cattle; nay, they are farther astray from the path.

اَمْ تَحْسَبُ اَنَّ اَكْثَرَهُمْ يَسْمَعُوْنَ اَوْ يَعْقِلُوْنَ ؕ اِنْ هُمْ اِلَّا كَالْاَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ اَضَلُّ سَبِيْلًا ﴿۴۴﴾

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of the truth of the assertions made. No other religious book of the world satisfies this requirement, which circumstance alone places the Qur'ān above all scriptures, and points to it as a unique revelation capable of satisfying the spiritual requirements of all men in all times.

1786 According to Zj, Rass was a country in which a part of the tribe of Thamūd resided; others say that Rass is the name of a town in Yamāmah (T). Rass also means a *well*, and it is said that they were a people who threw their prophet into a well (JB).

1787 The meaning is that every one of these generations was warned of its doom by citing examples of those who had previously perished, but, not heeding the warning, was destroyed.

1788 This town is Sodom, which was situated on the way to Syria.

1789 This verse shows how broad is the idea of *shirk* or *polytheism* according to the Holy Qur'ān. It is not simply worship of idols that is condemned, but blindly following one's desires is equally condemned. Many men who consider themselves the servants of the One God really bow in submission before the greatest of their idols, i.e., their desire. The monotheistic doctrine has here been brought to a perfection not to be met with elsewhere.

SECTION 5: A Lesson from Nature

45 Seest thou not how thy Lord extends the shade? And if He pleased, He would have made it stationary. Then We have made the sun an indication of it,

46 Then We take it to Ourselves, taking little by little.[1790]

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَيْفَ مَدَّ الظِّلَّ
وَلَوْ شَآءَ لَجَعَلَهُ سَاكِنًا ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا
الشَّمْسَ عَلَيْهِ دَلِيلًا ﴿٤٥﴾
ثُمَّ قَبَضْنَٰهُ إِلَيْنَا قَبْضًا يَسِيرًا ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And He it is Who made the night a covering for you, and sleep a rest, and He made the day to rise up again.

48 And He it is Who sends the winds as good news before His mercy; and We send down pure water from the clouds,

49 That We may give life thereby to a dead land,[1791] and give it for drink to cattle and many people that We have created.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا
وَّالنَّوْمَ سُبَاتًا وَّجَعَلَ النَّهَارَ نُشُورًا ﴿٤٧﴾
وَهُوَ الَّذِيٓ أَرْسَلَ الرِّيٰحَ بُشْرًا
بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ ۚ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ
السَّمَآءِ مَآءً طَهُورًا ﴿٤٨﴾
لِّنُحْـِۧيَ بِهِ بَلْدَةً مَّيْتًا وَّنُسْقِيَهُ مِمَّا
خَلَقْنَآ أَنْعَامًا وَّأَنَاسِيَّ كَثِيرًا ﴿٤٩﴾

50 And certainly We repeat this to them that they may be mindful, but most men consent to naught but denying.

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَٰهُ بَيْنَهُمْ لِيَذَّكَّرُوا ۖ
فَأَبَىٰٓ أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ إِلَّا كُفُورًا ﴿٥٠﴾

51 And if We pleased, We could raise a warner in every town.[1792]

52 So obey not the disbelievers, and strive against them a mighty striving with it.[1793]

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَبَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ قَرْيَةٍ نَّذِيرًا ﴿٥١﴾
فَلَا تُطِعِ الْكٰفِرِينَ وَجٰهِدْهُمْ
بِهِ جِهَادًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٥٢﴾

1790 This and the previous verse show that Allāh deals mercifully with His servants. He would not destroy them all at once. The sun of righteousness had risen, and there were clear indications that the shadows of darkness would disappear, but, as in physical nature, they would not disappear suddenly, but gradually, diminishing little by little.

1791 The mercy of Allāh, which appears in the form of rain in physical nature, comes spiritually in the form of revelation. As the pure water from the clouds gives life to a dead land, so does the pure water of revelation from Him raise the spiritually dead to life.

1792 The companions of the Holy Prophet no doubt had this in mind when they spread far and wide, taking his message and warning to every distant town. How few Muslims there are to-day who are inspired with that zeal to prove the truth of every word of the Qur'ān!

It should, however, be noted that the verse does not contradict the statement in 35:24, and elsewhere, that a prophet was raised among every nation. The chapter opens with the statement that the Prophet was a warner to all nations.

1793, see next page.

53 And He it is Who has made the two seas to flow freely, the one sweet, very sweet, and the other saltish, bitter. And between the two He has made a barrier and inviolable obstruction.[1794]

وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ هَٰذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ وَهَٰذَا مِلْحٌ أُجَاجٌ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخًا وَحِجْرًا مَحْجُورًا ٥٣

54 And He it is Who has created man from water, then He has made for him blood-relationship and marriage-relationship.[1795] And thy Lord is ever Powerful.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ مِنَ الْمَاءِ بَشَرًا فَجَعَلَهُ نَسَبًا وَصِهْرًا ۗ وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ قَدِيرًا ٥٤

55 And they serve besides Allāh that which can neither profit them, nor harm them. And the disbeliever is ever an aider against his Lord.[1796]

وَيَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ وَلَا يَضُرُّهُمْ ۗ وَكَانَ الْكَافِرُ عَلَىٰ رَبِّهِ ظَهِيرًا ٥٥

56 And We have not sent thee but as a giver of good news and as a warner.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا ٥٦

57 Say: I ask of you naught in return for it except that he who will may take a way to his Lord.

قُلْ مَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا ٥٧

The statement made here shows that, if God had pleased, He would have raised a warner in every town, but the oneness of humanity, which was a grand object following upon the Oneness of God, could not have thus been brought about. Hence the verse that follows requires a hard striving on the part of the Prophet and his followers for this grand achievement.

1793 This verse affords a clear proof of the significance of the word *jihād,* as used in the Holy Qur'ān. Every exertion to spread the Truth is, according to this verse, a *jihād;* nay, it is called the *jihād kabīr* or the *great jihād. Fighting in defence of religion* received the name of *jihād,* because under the circumstances it became necessary for the Truth to live and prosper; if fighting had not been permitted, Truth would surely have been uprooted. The commentators all accept this significance of the word here. It should be noted that the greatest *jihād* which a Muslim can carry on is one by means of the Qur'ān, to which the personal pronoun *it* at the end of the verse unquestionably refers, because it must be carried on by every Muslim under all circumstances.

1794 Apparently the reference is to the sweet-water rivers flowing on earth or underground and to the saltish sea-water. But there is a deeper reference to the two lives which man leads on earth, a sweet life of faith and goodness, which brings satisfaction and peace to the mind, and a bitter life of faithlessness and wickedness, which ever increases the thirst for material gains and never brings satisfaction to the mind of man. Both existed in the world side by side, and so they would continue.

1795 The passage seems to hint at the flight to Madīnah. The Prophet was related to the Makkans through his father, and to the Madinans through his mother. As his blood-relations had persecuted him and were bent upon killing him, he is now reminded of his relationship through marriage to another people. It was no doubt due to some such hint in the Divine revelation that the Prophet was searching, on the occasion of the pilgrimage, for adherents among the people of Madīnah.

1796, see next page.

58 And rely on the Ever-Living Who dies not, and celebrate His praise. And sufficient is He as being Aware of His servants' sins,[1798]

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْحَيِّ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِهِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِهِ بِذُنُوبِ عِبَادِهِ خَبِيرًا ﴿٥٨﴾

59 Who created the heavens and the earth and what is between them in six periods, and He is established on the Throne of Power, the Beneficent. So ask respecting Him one aware.[1799]

الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ ۚ الرَّحْمَٰنُ فَاسْأَلْ بِهِ خَبِيرًا ﴿٥٩﴾

60 And when it is said to them: Make obeisance to the Beneficent, they say: And what is the Beneficent? Shall we make obeisance to what thou biddest us? And it adds to their aversion.[1799a]

Prostration

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اسْجُدُوا لِلرَّحْمَٰنِ قَالُوا وَمَا الرَّحْمَٰنُ أَنَسْجُدُ لِمَا تَأْمُرُنَا وَزَادَهُمْ نُفُورًا ۩ ﴿٦٠﴾

SECTION 6: **The Transformation wrought**

61 Blessed is He Who made the stars in the heavens and made therein a sun and a moon giving light!

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ فِي السَّمَاءِ بُرُوجًا وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا سِرَاجًا وَقَمَرًا مُنِيرًا ﴿٦١﴾

62 And He it is, Who made the night and the day to follow each other, for him who desires to be mindful or desires to be thankful.[1799b]

وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ خِلْفَةً لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَذَّكَّرَ أَوْ أَرَادَ شُكُورًا ﴿٦٢﴾

63 And the servants of the Beneficent are they who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say, Peace![1800]

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا ﴿٦٣﴾

64 And they who pass the night prostrating themselves before their Lord and standing.

وَالَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَامًا ﴿٦٤﴾

1796 The disbeliever aided the cause of untruth, as against his Lord, while the Prophet aimed at establishing the Truth in the world.

1798 So He knows best when to punish and whom to punish.

1799 The one aware is the Prophet, who possessed true knowledge of the Divine Being.

1799a The recitation of this verse is followed by an actual prostration; see 978.

1799b The night is here spoken of as being the more opportune time for being mindful, i.e., for prayers, and the day for being thankful, i.e., for work and livelihood.

1800 From here to the end of the chapter is described the great transformation which the Prophet had already brought about. The great qualities spoken of as being met with in the servants of the Beneficent present a striking contrast

65 And they who say : Our Lord, avert from us the chastisement of hell; surely the chastisement thereof is a lasting evil :

وَالَّذِيْنَ يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَا اصْرِفْ عَنَّا عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا ﴿٦٥﴾

66 It is surely an evil abode and resting-place !

إِنَّهَا سَاءَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَّمُقَامًا ﴿٦٦﴾

67 And they who, when they spend are neither extravagant nor parsimonious, and the just mean is ever between these.

وَالَّذِيْنَ إِذَآ أَنْفَقُوْا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوْا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوْا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذٰلِكَ قَوَامًا ﴿٦٧﴾

68 And they who call not upon another god with Allāh and slay not the soul which Allāh has forbidden, except in the cause of justice, nor commit fornication ; and he who does this shall meet a requital of sin —

وَالَّذِيْنَ لَا يَدْعُوْنَ مَعَ اللّٰهِ إِلٰهًا اٰخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُوْنَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِيْ حَرَّمَ اللّٰهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُوْنَ ۚ وَمَنْ يَّفْعَلْ ذٰلِكَ يَلْقَ أَثَامًا ﴿٦٨﴾

69 The chastisement will be doubled to him on the day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein in abasement—

يُّضٰعَفْ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيْهِ مُهَانًا ﴿٦٩﴾

70 Except him who repents and believes and does good deeds ; for such Allāh changes their evil deeds to good ones.[1800a] And Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful.

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَاٰمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولٰٓئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللّٰهُ سَيِّاٰتِهِمْ حَسَنٰتٍ ۗ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿٧٠﴾

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with the evils which reigned supreme in Arabia. They were an arrogant people, who trampled the rights of their fellow-men under their feet, but the faithful now walked in humility and led lives of lowliness, in which they had the greatest regard for others' rights (v. 63). In the days of ignorance they passed their nights in drunken orgies, but now they kept awake at night in devotion and were instead drunk with the love of God (v. 64). In the days of ignorance they spent money extravagantly, when it was a question of pride, and they did not care for the poor dying of hunger, but now they saved every penny they could to spend on others (v. 67). Formerly idols were worshipped in the land of Arabia, human blood was shed on the slightest pretext, sex-relations were loose to an extreme, but they had now become the torch-bearers of Divine Unity, for whose sake they willingly suffered every privation, homicide was looked upon with abhorrence, the highest value was placed on the chastity of men and women, and righteousness was the one thing in which men and women vied one with another (vv. 68-71). Truth and faithfulness were the great qualities that ruled men's minds, in the new dispensation, and a life full of vigour and earnestness was seen in the place of ignorance, superstition and immorality, which were the chief features of pre-Islamic Arabia (vv. 72-74).

1800a Here we are plainly told that the transformation had already been wrought ; the vices in which the people indulged erstwhile had been changed, to good and righteous deeds, and those who found pleasure in evil deeds now found pleasure in the doing of good. It was the soul-force of the Prophet that had wrought this miraculous transformation.

71 And whoever repents and does good, he surely turns to Allāh a (goodly) turning.

وَمَنْ تَابَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَإِنَّهُ يَتُوبُ إِلَى اللّٰهِ مَتَابًا ﴿٧١﴾

72 And they who witness no falsehood, and when they pass by what is vain, they pass by nobly.[1800b]

وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَشْهَدُونَ الزُّورَ وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّوا كِرَامًا ﴿٧٢﴾

73 And they who, when reminded of the messages of their Lord, fall not down thereat deaf and blind.

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا بِآيٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يَخِرُّوا عَلَيْهَا صُمًّا وَعُمْيَانًا ﴿٧٣﴾

74 And they who say, Our Lord, grant us in our wives and our offspring the joy of our eyes, and make us leaders for those who guard against evil.

وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيّٰتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا ﴿٧٤﴾

75 These are rewarded with high places because they are patient, and are met therein with greetings and salutation,[1801]

أُولٰٓئِكَ يُجْزَوْنَ الْغُرْفَةَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَيُلَقَّوْنَ فِيهَا تَحِيَّةً وَسَلٰمًا ﴿٧٥﴾

76 Abiding therein. Goodly the abode and the resting-place!

خٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ حَسُنَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا ﴿٧٦﴾

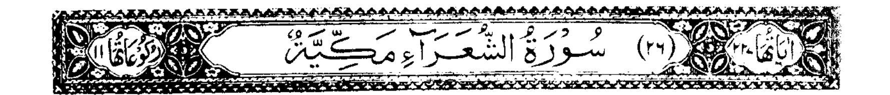
77 Say: My Lord would not care for you, were it not for your prayer. Now indeed you have rejected, so the punishment will come.[1801a]

قُلْ مَا يَعْبَؤُا بِكُمْ رَبِّي لَوْلَا دُعَآؤُكُمْ ۚ فَقَدْ كَذَّبْتُمْ فَسَوْفَ يَكُونُ لِزَامًا ﴿٧٧﴾

1800b They not only shunned falsehood but were now above everything that was vain or futile.

1801 Apparently they were being expelled from their homes but they felt as if they were being rewarded with high places, because their outlook on life was now spiritual and not material. In addition to the greetings and salutations of the angels they were promised greetings and salutations in their new centre of activity, Madīnah, whither they were fleeing, because there a similar brotherhood of the righteous was now ready to receive these emigrants.

1801a The Truth had finally been rejected by the Makkans, so the disgrace and abasement which was promised for the opponents of truth was now awaiting them. The righteous were finally separated from the wicked, so the punishment must come.



CHAPTER 26

Al-Shu'arā' : THE POETS

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 11 *sections*; 227 *verses*)

The title of this chapter, *The Poets,* is taken from a reference to the poets in v. 224, where arguments are given that the Holy Qur'ān is not the work of a poet. In fact, the whole chapter deals with this oft-repeated allegation of the opponents by showing that the Holy Prophet's work and preaching were similar in detail to the work and preaching of preceding prophets, bearing no resemblance whatever to the work of poets.

While the prophets spoken of here are identical with those in the 7th chapter, where they are mentioned chronologically, their order in this chapter is different, Moses coming first, the object being to draw attention to a repetition of the history of Moses in the history of the Prophet. In the opening section of the chapter the Holy Prophet is given consolation, and told not to grieve too much on account of the disbelief of the people, nor yet to despair of their reformation. The history of Moses is taken up in the next three sections from the time of his message to Pharaoh to that of Pharaoh's drowning, together with his hosts, in the Red Sea. The fifth section takes us back to Abraham, because that patriarch gives us the connecting link between the houses of Israel and Ishmael, or between the two great prophets, Moses and Muḥammad. The next five sections are devoted to the narratives of Noah, Hūd, Ṣāliḥ, Lot, and Shu'aib in chronological order; the fate of the opponents of each of these prophets being, as it were, a warning to the opponents of the Holy Prophet; and this is clearly indicated in the concluding section of the chapter.

The three chapters, 26th, 27th and 28th, form a group, not only connected in subject, but also belonging to the same period, and may be called the *Ṭā sīn mīm* group. All three belong to the middle Makkan period. The chief point in each is the story of Moses, with which they all begin, although the 27th chapter makes only a brief reference to it. In each case that story begins with Moses being called to prophethood at Mount Sinai with a special message for Pharaoh, ending with Pharaoh being drowned in the Red Sea: the later wanderings of the Israelites are not referred to in any of them. This common thread of the narrative in all three chapters gives us a clue to the subject-matter and to their connection with what has gone before. The 25th chapter speaks of the Furqān, or the great distinctive sign that was given to the Holy Prophet, and these three chapters really supply the furqān or distinctive sign given to Moses, which, as shown in 85, was the drowning of the Egyptians in the Red Sea; hence the narrative is in all cases brought to an end with that incident.

SECTION 1 **The Prophet is consoled**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Benignant, Hearing, Knowing God.[1802]

طٰسٓمّٓ ۝١

2 These are the verses of the Book that makes manifest.[1803]

تِلْكَ اٰيٰتُ الْكِتٰبِ الْمُبِيْنِ ۝٢

3 Perhaps thou wilt kill thyself with grief because they believe not.[1804]

لَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَّفْسَكَ اَلَّا يَكُوْنُوْا مُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۝٣

4 If We please, We could send down on them a sign from heaven, so that their necks would bend before it.[1805]

اِنْ نَّشَاْ نُنَزِّلْ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ اٰيَةً فَظَلَّتْ اَعْنَاقُهُمْ لَهَا خٰضِعِيْنَ ۝٤

5 And there comes not to them a new Reminder from the Beneficent but they turn away from it.

وَمَا يَاْتِيْهِمْ مِّنْ ذِكْرٍ مِّنَ الرَّحْمٰنِ مُحْدَثٍ اِلَّا كَانُوْا عَنْهُ مُعْرِضِيْنَ ۝٥

6 They indeed reject, so the news will soon come to them of that at which they mock.[1806]

فَقَدْ كَذَّبُوْا فَسَيَاْتِيْهِمْ اَنْۢبٰٓؤُا مَا كَانُوْا بِهٖ يَسْتَهْزِءُوْنَ ۝٦

7 See they not the earth, how many of every noble kind We cause to grow in it?

اَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا اِلَى الْاَرْضِ كَمْ اَنْۢبَتْنَا فِيْهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍ كَرِيْمٍ ۝٧

1802 The interpretation I adopt is based on the remark, which is traceable to I'Ab, that these letters are the names of the Divine Being. I take *ṭā* as standing for *Laṭīf*, meaning *Benignant*, *sīn* as standing for *Samī'*, meaning *Hearing*, and *mīm* as standing for *'Alīm*, meaning *Knowing*. I may, however, suggest another interpretation. These chapters speak in particular of the calling of Moses at Mount Sinai, *ṭā sīn* may stand for *Ṭūr Sīnā'*, or *Mount Sinai*, and *mīm* may stand for Moses; attention is thus called in these letters to the *revelation granted to Moses at Mount Sinai*, which bears testimony to the truth of the Prophet. This is corroborated by the plain statement made in the last chapter of this group, that the disbelievers called the revelations of Moses and Muḥammad two enchantments backing up each other (28:48).

1803 The Holy Qur'ān *makes manifest all that is needed* for a right development of the human faculties, and it also makes manifest the whole truth.

1804 The Prophet was informed by Divine revelation of the doom of an evil generation, but instead of cursing it, he exerted himself heroically to save his people by bringing about a mighty transformation among them, a transformation for which he was so anxious that he is described here as almost killing himself with grief.

1805 Such a sign was sent in the battle of Badr and again in the conquest of Makkah. In the former place their chiefs were laid low, and in the latter they accepted submission.

1806 It was the prophecies of their own vanquishment and of the predominance of Islām at which they mocked.

8 Surely in this is a sign ; yet most of them believe not.

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨﴾

9 And surely thy Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful.[1807]

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٩﴾

SECTION 2 : **Moses is called and sent to Pharaoh**

10 And when thy Lord called Moses, saying : Go to the iniquitous people —

وَإِذْ نَادَىٰ رَبُّكَ مُوسَىٰ أَنِ ائْتِ الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

11 The people of Pharaoh. Will they not guard against evil ?

قَوْمَ فِرْعَوْنَ ۚ أَلَا يَتَّقُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12 He said : My Lord, I fear that they will reject me.

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَن يُكَذِّبُونِ ﴿١٢﴾

13 And my breast straitens, and my tongue is not eloquent,[1807a] so send for Aaron (too).

وَيَضِيقُ صَدْرِي وَلَا يَنطَلِقُ لِسَانِي فَأَرْسِلْ إِلَىٰ هَارُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

14 And they have a crime against me, so I fear that they will kill me.[1808]

وَلَهُمْ عَلَيَّ ذَنبٌ فَأَخَافُ أَن يَقْتُلُونِ ﴿١٤﴾

15 He said : By no means ; so go you both with Our signs ; surely We are with you, Hearing.

قَالَ كَلَّا ۖ فَاذْهَبَا بِآيَاتِنَا ۖ إِنَّا مَعَكُم مُّسْتَمِعُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

16 Then come to Pharaoh, and say : We are bearers of a message of the Lord of the worlds :

فَأْتِيَا فِرْعَوْنَ فَقُولَا إِنَّا رَسُولُ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

1807 Seven prophets in all are spoken of in this chapter, and it is related how the enemies of every one of them were exterminated in the final triumph of the Truth. Yet to give an indication of the fate of the Prophet's opponents each prophet's mention is ended with the two attributes of the Divine Being mentioned here, the *Mighty,* the *Merciful,* the first of these indicating that Truth will, even now, be made to overcome all opposition and the second that the dealing with the opponents of the Prophet would be a merciful dealing. The Prophet's opponents were vanquished indeed but they were not destroyed and a reformed people rose again to power.

1807a In 20 : 27 Moses prays to God : *And loose the knot from my tongue.* Here the same idea is expressed by the words : *And my tongue is not eloquent ;* see 1583.

1808 The reference is to the killing of the Egyptian, as mentioned in 28 : 15. It is stated here that the people of Pharaoh charged Moses with a crime, not that he was actually guilty ; see 1811, 1875.

17 Send with us the Children of Israel.

18 (Pharaoh) said: Did we not bring thee up as a child among us, and thou didst tarry (many) years of thy life among us?

19 And thou didst (that) deed of thine which thou didst and thou art of the ungrateful ones.

20 He said: I did it then when I was of those who err.[1811]

21 So I fled from you when I feared you, then my Lord granted me judgment and made me of the messengers.

22 And is it a favour of which thou remindest me that thou hast enslaved the Children of Israel?[1812]

23 Pharaoh said: And what is the Lord of the worlds?

24 He said: The Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, if you would be sure.

25 (Pharaoh) said to those around him: Do you not hear?

26 He said: Your Lord and the Lord of your fathers of old.

27 (Pharaoh) said: Surely your messenger, who is sent to you, is mad.

28 He said: The Lord of the East and the West and what is between them, if you have any sense.

29 (Pharaoh) said: If thou takest a god besides me, I will certainly put thee in prison.[1813]

أَنْ أَرْسِلْ مَعَنَا بَنِيٓ إِسْرَآءِيلَ ﴿١٧﴾
قَالَ أَلَمْ نُرَبِّكَ فِينَا وَلِيدًا وَّلَبِثْتَ فِينَا مِنْ عُمُرِكَ سِنِينَ ﴿١٨﴾
وَفَعَلْتَ فَعْلَتَكَ الَّتِي فَعَلْتَ وَأَنْتَ مِنَ الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿١٩﴾
قَالَ فَعَلْتُهَآ إِذًا وَّأَنَا مِنَ الضَّآلِّينَ ﴿٢٠﴾
فَفَرَرْتُ مِنْكُمْ لَمَّا خِفْتُكُمْ فَوَهَبَ لِي رَبِّي حُكْمًا وَّجَعَلَنِي مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٢١﴾
وَتِلْكَ نِعْمَةٌ تَمُنُّهَا عَلَيَّ أَنْ عَبَّدْتَّ بَنِيٓ إِسْرَآءِيلَ ﴿٢٢﴾
قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَا رَبُّ الْعٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾
قَالَ رَبُّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ۭ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّوْقِنِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾
قَالَ لِمَنْ حَوْلَهٗٓ أَلَا تَسْتَمِعُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾
قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ اٰبَآئِكُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾
قَالَ إِنَّ رَسُولَكُمُ الَّذِيٓ أُرْسِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ لَمَجْنُونٌ ﴿٢٧﴾
قَالَ رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ۭ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾
قَالَ لَئِنِ اتَّخَذْتَ إِلٰهًا غَيْرِي لَأَجْعَلَنَّكَ مِنَ الْمَسْجُونِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

1811 The circumstances in which Moses' act of striking an Egyptian with his fist led to the death of the Egyptian are related in 28:15. There was no intention to kill the man, nor did Moses use any weapon with which death could be caused. Rz explains *dāll* here as meaning *one perplexed, being unable to know what was incumbent on him.* He used his fist against the oppressor, and death was simply accidental.

1812 The Israelites were employed only in menial work by Pharaoh and the Egyptians; it is this subjection to hardship which is here called *enslavement.*

1813 The gods of the Egyptians were innumerable. There were the abstract gods, the cosmic gods, the human gods, and the animal gods. Their god-cult may be summed up briefly in the words of the En. Br. (vol. ix, p. 51): "Truly it might have been said in ancient Egypt, Of the making of gods there is no end"

30 He said: Even if I show thee something plain?

قَالَ اَوَلَوْ جِئْتُكَ بِشَیْءٍ مُّبِیْنٍ ۳۰

31 (Pharaoh) said: Show it, then, if thou art of the truthful.

قَالَ فَاْتِ بِهٖۤ اِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصّٰدِقِیْنَ ۳۱

32 So he cast down his rod, and lo! it was an obvious serpent;

فَاَلْقٰى عَصَاهُ فَاِذَا هِیَ ثُعْبَانٌ مُّبِیْنٌ ۳۲

33 And he drew forth his hand, and lo! it appeared white to the beholders.[1813a]

وَّ نَزَعَ یَدَهٗ فَاِذَا هِیَ بَیْضَآءُ لِلنّٰظِرِیْنَ ۳۳

SECTION 3: **Moses and the Enchanters**

34 (Pharaoh) said to the chiefs around him: Surely this is a skilful enchanter,

قَالَ لِلْمَلَاِ حَوْلَهٗۤ اِنَّ هٰذَا لَسٰحِرٌ عَلِیْمٌ ۳۴

35 Who desires to turn you out of your land with his enchantment. What is it then that you counsel?

یُّرِیْدُ اَنْ یُّخْرِجَكُمْ مِّنْ اَرْضِكُمْ بِسِحْرِهٖ ۖ فَمَاذَا تَاْمُرُوْنَ ۳۵

36 They said: Give him and his brother respite and send heralds into the cities

قَالُوْۤا اَرْجِهْ وَ اَخَاهُ وَ ابْعَثْ فِی الْمَدَآئِنِ حٰشِرِیْنَ ۳۶

37 That they bring to thee every skilful enchanter.

یَاْتُوْكَ بِكُلِّ سَحَّارٍ عَلِیْمٍ ۳۷

38 So the enchanters were gathered together for the appointment of a well-known day,

فَجُمِعَ السَّحَرَةُ لِمِیْقَاتِ یَوْمٍ مَّعْلُوْمٍ ۳۸

39 And it was said to the people: Will you gather together?

وَّ قِیْلَ لِلنَّاسِ هَلْ اَنْتُمْ مُّجْتَمِعُوْنَ ۳۹

40 Haply we may follow the enchanters, if they are the vanquishers.

لَعَلَّنَا نَتَّبِعُ السَّحَرَةَ اِنْ كَانُوْا هُمُ الْغٰلِبِیْنَ ۴۰

41 So when the enchanters came, they said to Pharaoh: Will there be a reward for us, if we are the vanquishers?

فَلَمَّا جَآءَ السَّحَرَةُ قَالُوْا لِفِرْعَوْنَ اَئِنَّ لَنَا لَاَجْرًا اِنْ كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْغٰلِبِیْنَ ۴۱

42 He said: Yes, and surely you will then be of those who are nearest (to me).

قَالَ نَعَمْ وَ اِنَّكُمْ اِذًا لَّمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِیْنَ ۴۲

43 Moses said to them: Cast what you are going to cast.

قَالَ لَهُمْ مُّوْسٰۤى اَلْقُوْا مَاۤ اَنْتُمْ مُّلْقُوْنَ ۴۳

Pharaoh's claim to divinity among a people who were willing to deify anything has therefore nothing strange about it.

1813a See 926, 1581, 1582.

44 So they cast down their cords and their rods and said: By Pharaoh's power we shall most surely be victorious.

فَأَلْقَوْا حِبَالَهُمْ وَعِصِيَّهُمْ وَقَالُوا بِعِزَّةِ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الْغٰلِبُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 Then Moses cast down his rod, and lo! it swallowed up their fabrication.

فَأَلْقٰى مُوسٰى عَصَاهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 And the enchanters were thrown down prostrate —

فَأُلْقِيَ السَّحَرَةُ سٰجِدِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 They said: We believe in the Lord of the worlds,

قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِرَبِّ الْعٰلَمِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 The Lord of Moses and Aaron.

رَبِّ مُوسٰى وَهٰرُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 (Pharaoh) said: You believe in him before I give you leave; surely he is the chief of you who taught you enchantment, so you shall know. Certainly I will cut off your hands and your feet on opposite sides, and I will crucify you all.

قَالَ آمَنْتُمْ لَهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ آذَنَ لَكُمْ إِنَّهُ لَكَبِيرُكُمُ الَّذِي عَلَّمَكُمُ السِّحْرَ فَلَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ لَأُقَطِّعَنَّ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ مِّنْ خِلَافٍ وَّلَأُصَلِّبَنَّكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 They said: No harm; surely to our Lord we return.

قَالُوا لَا ضَيْرَ إِنَّا إِلٰى رَبِّنَا مُنْقَلِبُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 We hope that our Lord will forgive us our wrongs because we are the first of the believers.

إِنَّا نَطْمَعُ أَنْ يَّغْفِرَ لَنَا رَبُّنَا خَطٰيٰنَا أَنْ كُنَّا أَوَّلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥١﴾

SECTION 4: **Moses is delivered and Pharaoh drowned**

52 And We revealed to Moses, saying: Travel by night with My servants — you will be pursued.

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلٰى مُوسٰى أَنْ أَسْرِ بِعِبَادِي إِنَّكُمْ مُّتَّبَعُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 And Pharaoh sent heralds into the cities (proclaiming):

فَأَرْسَلَ فِرْعَوْنُ فِي الْمَدَآئِنِ حٰشِرِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 These are indeed a small band,

إِنَّ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ لَشِرْذِمَةٌ قَلِيلُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 And they have surely enraged us:

وَإِنَّهُمْ لَنَا لَغَآئِظُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

56 And we are truly a vigilant multitude.

وَإِنَّا لَجَمِيعٌ حٰذِرُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 So We turned them out of gardens and springs,

فَأَخْرَجْنٰهُمْ مِّنْ جَنّٰتٍ وَّعُيُونٍ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 And treasures and goodly dwellings —

وَّكُنُوزٍ وَّمَقَامٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 Even so. And We gave them as a heritage to the Children of Israel.[1814]

كَذٰلِكَ وَأَوْرَثْنٰهَا بَنِيٓ إِسْرَآءِيلَ ﴿٥٩﴾

1814 The pronoun *them* refers to gardens and springs, etc., in general, and not to the particular gardens, etc., from which the Egyptians were turned out.

60 Then they pursued them at sunrise.

فَأَتْبَعُوهُم مُّشْرِقِينَ ﴿٦٠﴾

61 So when the two hosts saw each other, the companions of Moses cried out: Surely we are overtaken.

فَلَمَّا تَرَاءَ الْجَمْعٰنِ قَالَ أَصْحٰبُ مُوسٰى إِنَّا لَمُدْرَكُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

62 He said: By no means; surely my Lord is with me — He will guide me.

قَالَ كَلَّا ۚ إِنَّ مَعِيَ رَبِّي سَيَهْدِينِ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 Then We revealed to Moses: March on to the sea with thy staff.[1815] So it parted, and each party was like a huge mound.[1816]

فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلٰى مُوسٰى أَنِ اضْرِب بِّعَصَاكَ الْبَحْرَ ۖ فَانفَلَقَ فَكَانَ كُلُّ فِرْقٍ كَالطَّوْدِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 And there We brought near the others.

وَأَزْلَفْنَا ثَمَّ الْآخَرِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

65 And We saved Moses and those with him, all.

وَأَنجَيْنَا مُوسٰى وَمَن مَّعَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 Then We drowned the others.

ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا الْآخَرِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 Surely there is a sign in this; yet most of them believe not.

إِنَّ فِي ذٰلِكَ لَآيَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 And surely thy Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful.

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٦٨﴾

SECTION 5: **History of Abraham**

69 And recite to them the story of Abraham.

وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ إِبْرٰهِيمَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 When he said to his sire and his people: What do you worship?

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

71 They said: We worship idols, so we shall remain devoted to them.

قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ أَصْنَامًا فَنَظَلُّ لَهَا عٰكِفِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

72 He said: Do they hear you when you call (on them),

قَالَ هَلْ يَسْمَعُونَكُمْ إِذْ تَدْعُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

73 Or do they benefit or harm you?

أَوْ يَنفَعُونَكُمْ أَوْ يَضُرُّونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

The heritage of gardens and treasures was given to the Israelites in the land of Canaan, the promised land flowing with milk and honey.

1815 The words *idrib bi-'asā-ka-l-bahra* are on all fours with the words *idrib bi-'asā-ka-l-hajara* occurring in 2:60; see 96. Elsewhere the same idea is expressed by saying: "Strike for them a dry path in the sea, not fearing to be overtaken, nor being afraid" (20:77); see 82, 1593.

1816 The sea had gone back, thus leaving a *dry way* (20:77) for the Israelites. The meaning may be that each wave, as it receded, was like a huge mound.

74 They said: Nay, we found our fathers doing so.

75 He said: Do you then see what you worship —

76 You and your ancient sires?

77 Surely they are an enemy to me, but not (so) the Lord of the worlds,

78 Who created me, then He shows me the way,

79 And Who gives me to eat and to drink,

80 And when I am sick, He heals me,

81 And Who will cause me to die, then give me life,

82 And Who, I hope, will forgive me my mistakes on the day of Judgment.[1817]

83 My Lord, grant me wisdom, and join me with the righteous,

84 And ordain for me a goodly mention in later generations,

85 And make me of the heirs of the Garden of bliss,

86 And forgive my sire, surely he is of the erring ones,

87 And disgrace me not on the day when they are raised —

88 The day when wealth will not avail, nor sons,

89 Save him who comes to Allāh with a sound heart.

90 And the Garden is brought near for the dutiful,

قَالُوا بَلْ وَجَدْنَآ اٰبَآءَنَا كَذٰلِكَ يَفْعَلُوْنَ ﴿٧٤﴾

قَالَ اَفَرَءَيْتُمْ مَّا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُوْنَ ﴿٧٥﴾

اَنْتُمْ وَ اٰبَآؤُكُمُ الْاَقْدَمُوْنَ ﴿٧٦﴾

فَاِنَّهُمْ عَدُوٌّ لِّيْٓ اِلَّا رَبَّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٧٧﴾

الَّذِيْ خَلَقَنِيْ فَهُوَ يَهْدِيْنِ ﴿٧٨﴾

وَ الَّذِيْ هُوَ يُطْعِمُنِيْ وَ يَسْقِيْنِ ﴿٧٩﴾

وَ اِذَا مَرِضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِيْنِ ﴿٨٠﴾

وَ الَّذِيْ يُمِيْتُنِيْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيْنِ ﴿٨١﴾

وَ الَّذِيْٓ اَطْمَعُ اَنْ يَّغْفِرَ لِيْ خَطِيْٓـَٔتِيْ يَوْمَ الدِّيْنِ ﴿٨٢﴾

رَبِّ هَبْ لِيْ حُكْمًا وَّ اَلْحِقْنِيْ بِالصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿٨٣﴾

وَ اجْعَلْ لِّيْ لِسَانَ صِدْقٍ فِي الْاٰخِرِيْنَ ﴿٨٤﴾

وَ اجْعَلْنِيْ مِنْ وَّرَثَةِ جَنَّةِ النَّعِيْمِ ﴿٨٥﴾

وَ اغْفِرْ لِاَبِيْٓ اِنَّهٗ كَانَ مِنَ الضَّآلِّيْنَ ﴿٨٦﴾

وَ لَا تُخْزِنِيْ يَوْمَ يُبْعَثُوْنَ ﴿٨٧﴾

يَوْمَ لَا يَنْفَعُ مَالٌ وَّ لَا بَنُوْنَ ﴿٨٨﴾

اِلَّا مَنْ اَتَى اللّٰهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيْمٍ ﴿٨٩﴾

وَ اُزْلِفَتِ الْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿٩٠﴾

The word *ṭaud,* it may be noted, means a *mountain,* as well as an *elevated* or *overlooking tract of land* (LL), and is even applied by a poet to a *camel's hump* (LL).

1817 The prophets, being always conscious of their weakness, seek Allāh's protection. Expressions like this invariably indicate human weakness before Divine perfection, and are not evidence of sinfulness. Compare Jesus' confession of weakness in a similar strain: "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but One, that is, God" (Matt. 19:17).

91 And hell is made manifest to the deviators,[1818]

وَبُرِّزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِلْغَاوِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

92 And it is said to them: Where are those that you worshipped

وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ أَيْنَمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

93 Besides Allāh? Can they help you or help themselves?

مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ هَلْ يَنصُرُونَكُمْ أَوْ يَنتَصِرُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

94 So they are hurled into it, they and the deviators,

فَكُبْكِبُوا فِيهَا هُمْ وَالْغَاوُونَ ﴿٩٤﴾

95 And the hosts of the devil, all.

وَجُنُودُ إِبْلِيسَ أَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

96 They will say, while they quarrel therein:

قَالُوا وَهُمْ فِيهَا يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

97 By Allāh! We were certainly in manifest error,

تَاللَّهِ إِن كُنَّا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٩٧﴾

98 When we made you equal with the Lord of the worlds.

إِذْ نُسَوِّيكُم بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٩٨﴾

99 And none but the guilty led us astray.

وَمَا أَضَلَّنَا إِلَّا الْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

100 So we have no intercessors,

فَمَا لَنَا مِن شَافِعِينَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

101 Nor a true friend.

وَلَا صَدِيقٍ حَمِيمٍ ﴿١٠١﴾

102 Now, if we could but once return, we would be believers.

فَلَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

103 Surely there is a sign in this; yet most of them believe not.

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠٣﴾

104 And surely thy Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful.

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٠٤﴾

SECTION 6: **History of Noah**

105 The people of Noah rejected the messengers.

كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

106 When their brother Noah said to them: Will you not guard against evil?

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ نُوحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

107 Surely I am a faithful messenger to you:

إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٠٧﴾

108 So keep your duty to Allāh and obey me.

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٠٨﴾

1818 The making manifest of hell shows that it already exists, but is hidden from the human eye, while on the day of Resurrection it will be made plain.

109 And I ask of you no reward for it: my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds.

وَمَآ أَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۚ إِنْ أَجْرِىَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

110 So keep your duty to Allāh and obey me.

فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١١٠﴾

111 They said: Shall we believe in thee and the meanest follow thee?

قَالُوٓا أَنُؤْمِنُ لَكَ وَاتَّبَعَكَ الْأَرْذَلُونَ ﴿١١١﴾

112 He said: And what knowledge have I of what they did?

قَالَ وَمَا عِلْمِى بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

113 Their reckoning is only with my Lord, if you but perceive.

إِنْ حِسَابُهُمْ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّى لَوْ تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١١٣﴾

114 And I am not going to drive away the believers;

وَمَآ أَنَا بِطَارِدِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٤﴾

115 I am only a plain warner.

إِنْ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١١٥﴾

116 They said: If thou desist not, O Noah, thou wilt certainly be stoned to death.

قَالُوا لَئِنْ لَّمْ تَنْتَهِ يٰنُوحُ لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمَرْجُومِينَ ﴿١١٦﴾

117 He said: My Lord, my people give me the lie.

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنَّ قَوْمِى كَذَّبُونِ ﴿١١٧﴾

118 So judge Thou between me and them openly, and deliver me and the believers who are with me.

فَافْتَحْ بَيْنِى وَبَيْنَهُمْ فَتْحًا وَّنَجِّنِى وَمَنْ مَّعِىَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾

119 So We delivered him and those with him in the laden ark.

فَأَنْجَيْنٰهُ وَمَنْ مَّعَهُ فِى الْفُلْكِ الْمَشْحُونِ ﴿١١٩﴾

120 Then We drowned the rest afterwards.[1818a]

ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا بَعْدُ الْبٰقِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

121 Surely there is sign in this, yet most of them believe not.

إِنَّ فِى ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٢١﴾

122 And surely thy Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful.

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٢٢﴾

SECTION 7: **History of Hūd**

123 'Ād gave the lie to the messengers.

كَذَّبَتْ عَادٌ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

1818a Wherever Noah is mentioned only such of his people are spoken of as having been drowned as rejected and persecuted him; see also 1180.

124 When their brother Hūd said to them: Will you not guard against evil?

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ هُودٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

125 Surely I am a faithful messenger to you:

إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٢٥﴾

126 So keep your duty to Allāh and obey me.

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٢٦﴾

127 And I ask of you no reward for it; surely my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds.

وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

128 Do you build on every height a monument? You (only) sport.[1819]

أَتَبْنُونَ بِكُلِّ رِيعٍ آيَةً تَعْبَثُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

129 And you make fortresses that you may abide.

وَتَتَّخِذُونَ مَصَانِعَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَخْلُدُونَ ﴿١٢٩﴾

130 And when you seize, you seize as tyrants.

وَإِذَا بَطَشْتُمْ بَطَشْتُمْ جَبَّارِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾

131 So keep your duty to Allāh and obey me.

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٣١﴾

132 And keep your duty to Him Who aids you with that which you know —

وَاتَّقُوا الَّذِي أَمَدَّكُمْ بِمَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

133 He aids you with cattle and children

أَمَدَّكُمْ بِأَنْعَامٍ وَبَنِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

134 And gardens and fountains.

وَجَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿١٣٤﴾

135 Surely I fear for you the chastisement of a grievous day.

إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٣٥﴾

136 They said: It is the same to us whether thou admonish, or art not one of the admonishers:

قَالُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْنَا أَوَعَظْتَ أَمْ لَمْ تَكُنْ مِنَ الْوَاعِظِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

137 This is naught but a fabrication of the ancients:[1820]

إِنْ هَٰذَا إِلَّا خُلُقُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

138 And we will not be chastised.

وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿١٣٨﴾

139 So they rejected him, then We destroyed them. Surely there is a sign in this; yet most of them believe not.

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾

1819 The word *āyat,* literally a *sign,* is used here to indicate the *lofty building that should acquire renown as a sign of greatness;* see 67. These lofty buildings were, no doubt, used to terrorize others, as v. 130 shows that acts of

1820, see next page.

140 And surely thy Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful.

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٤٠﴾

SECTION 8 : **History of Ṣāliḥ**

141 Thamūd gave the lie to the messengers.

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾

142 When their brother Ṣāliḥ said to them : Will you not guard against evil ?

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ أَخُوهُمْ صٰلِحٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٤٢﴾

143 Surely I am a faithful messenger to you :

إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٤٣﴾

144 So keep your duty to Allāh and obey me.

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٤٤﴾

145 And I ask of you no reward for it ; my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds.

وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٤٥﴾

146 Will you be left secure in what is here,

أَتُتْرَكُونَ فِي مَا هٰهُنَا آمِنِينَ ﴿١٤٦﴾

147 In gardens and fountains,

فِي جَنّٰتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ﴿١٤٧﴾

148 And corn-fields and palm-trees having fine flower-spikes ?

وَزُرُوعٍ وَنَخْلٍ طَلْعُهَا هَضِيمٌ ﴿١٤٨﴾

149 And you hew houses out of the mountains exultingly.

وَتَنْحِتُونَ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا فٰرِهِينَ ﴿١٤٩﴾

150 So keep your duty to Allāh and obey me.

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٥٠﴾

151 And obey not the bidding of the extravagant,

وَلَا تُطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿١٥١﴾

152 Who make mischief in the land and act not aright.

الَّذِينَ يُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُونَ ﴿١٥٢﴾

153 They said : Thou art only a deluded person.

قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَحَّرِينَ ﴿١٥٣﴾

154 Thou art naught but a mortal like ourselves — so bring a sign if thou art truthful.

مَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُنَا فَأْتِ بِآيَةٍ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصّٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٥٤﴾

155 He said : This is a she-camel ; she has her portion of water, and you have your portion of water at an appointed time.[1821]

قَالَ هٰذِهِ نَاقَةٌ لَهَا شِرْبٌ وَلَكُمْ شِرْبُ يَوْمٍ مَعْلُومٍ ﴿١٥٥﴾

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cruelty and violence were committed by 'Ād, while they considered themselves safe in their fortresses.

1820 The word *khuluq* sometimes carries the same significance as the word *ikhtilāq*, i.e., a *fabrication*.

1821 See 911 for Thamūd. They are described in v. 149 as hewing houses out of the mountains, and, as it appears from here and 54: 28, the springs of

156 And touch her not with evil, lest the chastisement of a grievous day overtake you.

وَلَا تَمَسُّوْهَا بِسُوْٓءٍ فَيَاْخُذَكُمْ عَذَابُ يَوْمٍ عَظِيْمٍ ﴿١٥٦﴾

157 But they hamstrung her, then regretted,

فَعَقَرُوْهَا فَاَصْبَحُوْا نٰدِمِيْنَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

158 So the chastisement overtook them. Surely there is a sign in this; yet most of them believe not.

فَاَخَذَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ ؕ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيَةً ؕ وَمَا كَانَ اَكْثَرُهُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

159 And surely thy Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful.

وَاِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿١٥٩﴾

SECTION 9: **History of Lot**

160 The people of Lot gave the lie to the messengers.

كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ لُوْطٍ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ ﴿١٦٠﴾

161 When their brother Lot said to them: Will you not guard against evil?

اِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ اَخُوْهُمْ لُوْطٌ اَلَا تَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿١٦١﴾

162 Surely I am a faithful messenger to you:

اِنِّيْ لَكُمْ رَسُوْلٌ اَمِيْنٌ ﴿١٦٢﴾

163 So keep your duty to Allāh and obey me.

فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَاَطِيْعُوْنِ ﴿١٦٣﴾

164 And I ask of you no reward for it; my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds.

وَمَآ اَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ اَجْرٍ ۚ اِنْ اَجْرِيَ اِلَّا عَلٰى رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿١٦٤﴾

165 Do you come to the males from among the creatures,

اَتَاْتُوْنَ الذُّكْرَانَ مِنَ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿١٦٥﴾

166 And leave your wives whom your Lord has created for you? Nay, you are a people exceeding limits.

وَتَذَرُوْنَ مَا خَلَقَ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِّنْ اَزْوَاجِكُمْ ؕ بَلْ اَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ عٰدُوْنَ ﴿١٦٦﴾

167 They said: If thou desist not, O Lot, thou wilt surely be banished.

قَالُوْا لَئِنْ لَّمْ تَنْتَهِ يٰلُوْطُ لَتَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْمُخْرَجِيْنَ ﴿١٦٧﴾

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water seem to have been few, and access to these was probably specially guarded, so that they were open only at particular times. For the she-camel, see 913. Ṣāliḥ seems to have demanded that the she-camel should be allowed to drink at such times. See 54:28, where it is stated that every share of the water will be attended by the she-camel, or that she will have access to water at all times when the others are allowed to drink. A similar demand as regards her pasture is contained in 11:64 in the words "Leave her to pasture on Allāh's earth", followed by the same words as those following this demand for drink: "And touch her not with evil".

The word *shirb* signifies either *an act of drinking*, or *a share*, or *portion that falls to one's lot, of water*, or *a watering place*, or *a time of drinking*. And in

168 He said: Surely I abhor what you do.

قَالَ إِنِّي لِعَمَلِكُم مِّنَ الْقَالِينَ ﴿١٦٨﴾

169 My Lord, deliver me and my followers from what they do.

رَبِّ نَجِّنِي وَأَهْلِي مِمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٦٩﴾

170 So We delivered him and his followers all,

فَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٧٠﴾

171 Except an old woman, among those who remained behind.[1822]

إِلَّا عَجُوزًا فِي الْغَابِرِينَ ﴿١٧١﴾

172 Then We destroyed the others.

ثُمَّ دَمَّرْنَا الْآخَرِينَ ﴿١٧٢﴾

173 And We rained on them a rain, and evil was the rain on those warned.[1822a]

وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِم مَّطَرًا ۖ فَسَاءَ مَطَرُ الْمُنذَرِينَ ﴿١٧٣﴾

174 Surely there is a sign in this; yet most of them believe not.

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً ۖ وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٧٤﴾

175 And surely thy Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful.

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٧٥﴾

SECTION 10: **History of Shu'aib**

176 The dwellers of the thicket gave the lie to the messengers.[1823]

كَذَّبَ أَصْحَابُ لْـَٔيْكَةِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٧٦﴾

177 When Shu'aib said to them: Will you not guard against evil?

إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ شُعَيْبٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

178 Surely I am a faithful messenger to you;

إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ ﴿١٧٨﴾

179 So keep your duty to Allāh and obey me.

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿١٧٩﴾

180 And I ask of you no reward for it; my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds.

وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ ۖ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٨٠﴾

181 Give full measure and be not of those who diminish.

أَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُخْسِرِينَ ﴿١٨١﴾

182 And weigh with a true balance.

وَزِنُوا بِالْقِسْطَاسِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ ﴿١٨٢﴾

183 And wrong not men of their dues, and act not corruptly in the earth, making mischief.

وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ وَلَا تَعْثَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ﴿١٨٣﴾

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law it signified *the use of water for the watering of sown fields and of beasts* (LL).

1822 See 917 for Lot. The old woman referred to here was Lot's wife.

1822a See 918. Stones were rained on them as the result of a volcanic eruption.

1823 They are the same as the people of Midian.

184 And keep your duty to Him Who created you and the former generations.[1824]

وَاتَّقُوا الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالْجِبِلَّةَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٨٤﴾

185 They said: Thou art only a deluded person,

قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَحَّرِينَ ﴿١٨٥﴾

186 And thou art naught but a mortal like ourselves, and we deem thee to be a liar.

وَمَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُنَا وَإِنْ نَظُنُّكَ لَمِنَ الْكٰذِبِينَ ﴿١٨٦﴾

187 So cause a portion of the heaven to fall on us, if thou art truthful.[1825]

فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا كِسَفًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصّٰدِقِينَ ﴿١٨٧﴾

188 He said: My Lord knows best what you do.[1826]

قَالَ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨٨﴾

189 But they rejected him, so the chastisement of the day of Covering overtook them. Surely it was the chastisement of a grievous day![1827]

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابُ يَوْمِ الظُّلَّةِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٨٩﴾

190 Surely there is a sign in this; yet most of them believe not.

إِنَّ فِي ذٰلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾

191 And surely thy Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful.

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٩١﴾

SECTION 11 : **Prophet's opponents warned**

192 And surely this is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds.

وَإِنَّهُ لَتَنْزِيلُ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٩٢﴾

193 The Faithful Spirit has brought it[1828]

نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ ﴿١٩٣﴾

194 On thy heart that thou mayest be a warner,[1829]

عَلٰى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنْذِرِينَ ﴿١٩٤﴾

1824 The word *jibillat* means *nature, quality,* or *property.* But it is also synonymous with *jibill,* and the lexicologists recognize the two words as conveying the same meaning, viz., *a great company of men,* or *nation,* or *people* (LL).

1825 *Kisaf* means *a portion* (R), and *a portion of the heaven* signifies *punishment from heaven.* According to JB, *kisaf* means *punishment.*

1826 It should be noted that the demand for the threatened punishment is always met with expressions signifying that the matter rests in the hands of Allāh. Such statements are really equivalent to saying that the thing will certainly come to pass.

1827 *Ẓullah* signifies a *shade,* or a *covering,* and the day of punishment is called *the day of Covering* because it covered them with punishment.

1828 The Faithful Spirit is the angel Gabriel, who brought the Divine revelation to the Holy Prophet. The Prophet himself was known in Makkah as *al-Amīn* or the *Faithful one* before revelation came to him.

1829 The addition of the words *on thy heart* is to indicate that the Prophet's

195 In plain Arabic language.

بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿١٩٥﴾

196 And surely the same is in the Scriptures of the ancients.[1830]

وَ اِنَّهٗ لَفِيْ زُبُرِ الْاَوَّلِيْنَ ﴿١٩٦﴾

197 Is it not a sign to them that the learned men of the Children of Israel know it?

اَوَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَّهُمْ اٰيَةً اَنْ يَّعْلَمَهٗ عُلَمٰٓؤُا بَنِيْٓ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ ﴿١٩٧﴾

198 And if We had revealed it to any of the foreigners,

وَ لَوْ نَزَّلْنٰهُ عَلٰى بَعْضِ الْاَعْجَمِيْنَ ﴿١٩٨﴾

199 And he had read it to them, they would not have believed in it.[1831]

فَقَرَاَهٗ عَلَيْهِمْ مَّا كَانُوْا بِهٖ مُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿١٩٩﴾

200 Thus do We cause it to enter into the hearts of the guilty.[1832]

كَذٰلِكَ سَلَكْنٰهُ فِيْ قُلُوْبِ الْمُجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿٢٠٠﴾

201 They will not believe in it till they see the painful chastisement:

لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِهٖ حَتّٰى يَرَوُا الْعَذَابَ الْاَلِيْمَ ﴿٢٠١﴾

202 So it will come to them suddenly, while they perceive not;

فَيَاْتِيَهُمْ بَغْتَةً وَّ هُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُوْنَ ﴿٢٠٢﴾

203 Then they will say: Shall we be respited?

فَيَقُوْلُوْا هَلْ نَحْنُ مُنْظَرُوْنَ ﴿٢٠٣﴾

204 Do they still seek to hasten on Our chastisement?

اَفَبِعَذَابِنَا يَسْتَعْجِلُوْنَ ﴿٢٠٤﴾

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heart, being the receptacle of the mighty revelation, was no doubt truly responsive to the great truths contained in it. The high morals and the broad humanitarian truths which the Qur'ān contains give us a true picture of the great mind. This is referred to in one of the earliest revelations: "And surely thou conformest thyself to sublime morality" (68:4). The pithy but most beautiful statement of 'Ā'ishah, the Prophet's wife, than whom none was more familiar with the recipient of the Quranic revelation, remains unsurpassed in depicting the character of the Holy Prophet. When asked about it she replied: *His character is the Qur'ān.* She thus intimated in brief words that all those wonderful pictures of moral sublimity drawn in the Holy Qur'ān were pictures of the noble mind to which the Qur'ān was revealed.

1830 The prophecies relating to the advent of the Prophet Muḥammad, as met with in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, are referred to very often in the Holy Qur'ān. The statement made here is, however, more comprehensive: *They are met with in all ancient scriptures.* See 3:80, where a covenant is spoken of as being made through all the prophets of the world with regard to the Prophet's advent; see 458. There is a reference in the next verse to the learned men of the Children of Israel in particular because the Jews and the Christians had long been in contact with the Arabs. Such references are of frequent occurrence in the early Makkan revelations, and there is not the least ground for the statement that because of the mention of the learned men of the Children of Israel, these verses must have been revealed at Madīnah

1831 Because prophecy plainly showed that the Arabs were to be the recipients of the revelation; see Isa. 42:11: "Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit". In the Old Testament, Kedar, the son of Ishmael, stands for the Arab nation. Hence earlier prophecy required that the final revelation should be granted to an Arab.

1832 The meaning is that the Qur'ān was made to enter into their hearts by reason of the convincing proof of its truth; but they rejected it, as the next verse shows.

205 Seest thou, if We let them enjoy themselves for years,

أَفَرَءَيْتَ إِن مَّتَّعْنَٰهُمْ سِنِينَ ﴿٢٠٥﴾

206 Then that which they are promised comes to them —

ثُمَّ جَآءَهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يُوعَدُونَ ﴿٢٠٦﴾

207 That which they were made to enjoy will not avail them?

مَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُم مَّا كَانُوا۟ يُمَتَّعُونَ ﴿٢٠٧﴾

208 And We destroyed no town but it had (its) warners —

وَمَآ أَهْلَكْنَا مِن قَرْيَةٍ إِلَّا لَهَا مُنذِرُونَ ﴿٢٠٨﴾

209 To remind. And We are never unjust.

ذِكْرَىٰ وَمَا كُنَّا ظَٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٠٩﴾

210 And the devils have not brought it.

وَمَا تَنَزَّلَتْ بِهِ ٱلشَّيَٰطِينُ ﴿٢١٠﴾

211 And it behoves them not, nor have they the power to do (it).

وَمَا يَنۢبَغِى لَهُمْ وَمَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ﴿٢١١﴾

212 Surely they are far removed from hearing it.[1833]

إِنَّهُمْ عَنِ ٱلسَّمْعِ لَمَعْزُولُونَ ﴿٢١٢﴾

213 So call not upon another god with Allāh, lest thou be of those who are chastised.

فَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ ٱللَّهِ إِلَٰهًا ءَاخَرَ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿٢١٣﴾

214 And warn thy nearest relations,[1834]

وَأَنذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ ٱلْأَقْرَبِينَ ﴿٢١٤﴾

215 And lower thy wing to the believers who follow thee.

وَٱخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ ٱتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢١٥﴾

216 But if they disobey thee, say: I am clear of what you do.

فَإِنْ عَصَوْكَ فَقُلْ إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢١٦﴾

217 And rely on the Mighty, the Merciful,[1835]

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱلْعَزِيزِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿٢١٧﴾

1833 The argument here is similar to that advanced by Jesus Christ when he said: "And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself" (Matt. 12:26). The evil one cannot be the source of the Qur'ān, for the Qur'ān calls to righteousness. See also vv. 221-223 and 1836.

1834 When this verse was revealed, the Holy Prophet, standing on Mount Ṣafā, invited every tribe by name, and when the representatives of all the tribes had gathered together — among those assembled being also the Quraish and that inveterate enemy of the Holy Prophet, Abū Lahab — the Holy Prophet thus addressed them: "Tell me, if I were to inform you that a great army in the valley lies in wait to make a raid upon you, would you believe me?" "Aye!" was the reply in one voice, "for we have never found anything but truth emanating from thy lips". "Then," said the Prophet, "know that I am a warner to you of an approaching punishment". "Mayest thou perish," cried out the ill-tempered Abū Lahab, "was it for this that thou didst call us together?" (B. 65: xxvi, 2).

1835 The Prophet is here told to rely on the Mighty, the Merciful, the very words that are repeated at the end of almost every section of this chapter, thus

218 Who sees thee when thou standest up,

الَّذِي يَرَاكَ حِينَ تَقُومُ ﴿٢١٨﴾

219 And thy movements among those who prostrate themselves.

وَتَقَلُّبَكَ فِي السَّاجِدِينَ ﴿٢١٩﴾

220 Surely He is the Hearing, the Knowing.

إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٢٢٠﴾

221 Shall I inform you upon whom the devils descend ?

هَلْ أُنَبِّئُكُمْ عَلَىٰ مَنْ تَنَزَّلُ الشَّيَاطِينُ ﴿٢٢١﴾

222 They descend upon every lying, sinful one —

تَنَزَّلُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿٢٢٢﴾

223 They give ear, and most of them are liars.[1836]

يُلْقُونَ السَّمْعَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ كَاذِبُونَ ﴿٢٢٣﴾

224 And the poets — the deviators follow them.

وَالشُّعَرَاءُ يَتَّبِعُهُمُ الْغَاوُونَ ﴿٢٢٤﴾

225 Seest thou not that they wander in every valley,[1837]

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّهُمْ فِي كُلِّ وَادٍ يَهِيمُونَ ﴿٢٢٥﴾

226 And that they say that which they do not ?[1838]

وَأَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ مَا لَا يَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢٢٦﴾

227 Except those who believe and do good and remember Allāh much, and defend themselves after they are oppressed.[1839] And they who do wrong, will know to what final place of turning they will turn back.

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَانْتَصَرُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا ظُلِمُوا ۗ وَسَيَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا أَيَّ مُنْقَلَبٍ يَنْقَلِبُونَ ﴿٢٢٧﴾

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showing that the fate of the opponents of former prophets was spoken of simply to warn his own opponents. The attribute of *mightiness* is used to indicate the power to punish the wicked, while *mercy* indicates the deliverance and triumph of the righteous, or a merciful dealing even with the opponents.

1836 The subject of v. 212 is reverted to here, and it corroborates what is said in 1833. The opponents of the Qur'ān would not listen to what is said in the Qur'ān — they are far removed from hearing it, as stated in v. 212 — but they listen to what their leaders in evil say.

1837 That is, they pursue an aimless course, while the Prophet has a set purpose before him, and it is to make men walk in the ways of righteousness.

1838 The first suggestion of the disbelievers was that the Qur'ān was the work of the devil. That being shown to be inconsistent with its very nature and with the righteousness it preached, they said that it was the work of a poet. As against this they are told that none of the characteristics of a poet's work are to be met with in the Qur'ān. The poet never leads his followers to a life of righteousness, while the Qur'ān was bringing about a pure transformation in the lives of those who followed it. Again, the poets say things which they do not practice, whereas the Prophet was not only a preacher of righteousness, but also an exemplar who translated into practice what he taught in words. And the weightiest consideration of all is that the poets cannot utter prophecies like those which are met with in the Qur'ān. It is to this that attention is called in the next verse.

1839 The passage gives a description of the true believers in general, a new statement being introduced with *illā* (*except*); or it may refer particularly to the poets from among the believers.

سُورَةُ النَّمْلِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٢٧) آيَاتُهَا ٩٣ رُكُوعَاتُهَا ٧

CHAPTER 27

Al-Naml : THE NAML

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 7 *sections*; 93 *verses*)

The title of this chapter is taken from the mention in v. 18 of a tribe known as the *Naml* in connection with Solomon's march against the Queen of Sheba. For the date of revelation and its relation to the preceding chapter, see the introductory note on the last chapter.

The Qur'ān is the word of Allāh, which the Holy Prophet received from on high, just as Moses received a call at Mount Sinai, and the enemies of the former would be dealt with even as those of the latter. This is the substance of the first section. The second and third are devoted to Solomon's history, wherein the Holy Prophet's future greatness is indicated. It is really a part of Mosaic history, for the Israelite kingdom attained its full glory under Solomon, and Moses passed away before any Israelitish kingdom was established. On the other hand, the Holy Prophet Muḥammad was destined to combine prophetic greatness with kingship, the glory of Solomon with the lowliness of Moses. In his lifetime he was recognized as the king of Arabia, yet, notwithstanding his being crowned with kingly glory, he led a life of marked simplicity. The rest of the chapter is taken up with a brief reference, in the fourth section, to the histories of Ṣāliḥ and Lot, whose opponents were destroyed, and the fifth may be regarded as the natural sequel that the faithful shall be exalted. The sixth section states, however, that the Prophet's triumph was not to be marked by the utter destruction of his enemies, as in the case of these prophets, but by the ultimate spiritual resurrection of those who seemed to be quite deaf, dumb, and dead. That none but the great opponents would pass away is shown in the last section.

SECTION 1 A Reference to Moses' History

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

1 Benignant, Hearing God![1839a] These are the verses of the Qur'ān and the Book that makes manifest:

طٰسٓ تِلْكَ اٰيٰتُ الْقُرْاٰنِ وَكِتَابٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ۝١

2 A guidance and good news for the believers,

هُدًى وَّ بُشْرٰى لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ۝٢

3 Who keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, and they are sure of the Hereafter.

الَّذِيْنَ يُقِيْمُوْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَ يُؤْتُوْنَ الزَّكٰوةَ وَهُمْ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوْقِنُوْنَ ۝٣

4 Those who believe not in the Hereafter, We make their deeds fair-seeming to them, but they blindly wander on.[1840]

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ زَيَّنَّا لَهُمْ اَعْمَالَهُمْ فَهُمْ يَعْمَهُوْنَ ۝٤

5 These are they for whom is an evil chastisement, and in the Hereafter they are the greatest losers.

اُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِيْنَ لَهُمْ سُوْٓءُ الْعَذَابِ وَهُمْ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ هُمُ الْاَخْسَرُوْنَ ۝٥

6 And thou art surely made to receive the Qur'ān from the Wise, the Knowing.

وَاِنَّكَ لَتُلَقَّى الْقُرْاٰنَ مِنْ لَّدُنْ حَكِيْمٍ عَلِيْمٍ ۝٦

7 When Moses said to his family: Surely I see a fire; I will bring you news thence, or bring you therefrom a burning brand, so that you may warm yourselves.

اِذْ قَالَ مُوْسٰى لِاَهْلِهٖٓ اِنِّيْٓ اٰنَسْتُ نَارًا ؕ سَاٰتِيْكُمْ مِّنْهَا بِخَبَرٍ اَوْ اٰتِيْكُمْ بِشِهَابٍ قَبَسٍ لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُوْنَ ۝٧

8 So when he came to it, a voice issued, saying: Blessed is he who is in search of fire and those around it. And glory be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds![1842]

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهَا نُوْدِيَ اَنْۢ بُوْرِكَ مَنْ فِي النَّارِ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا ؕ وَسُبْحٰنَ اللّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ۝٨

1839a See 1802 for the explanation.

1840 By *their deeds* are meant the deeds which they ought to perform. Evil deeds are made fairseeming to evildoers by the devil (6:43), while Allāh commends good deeds. Elsewhere: "But Allāh has endeared the faith to you and has made it seemly in your hearts, and He has made hateful to you unbelief and transgression and disobedience" (49:7).

1842 The words *man fi-l-nār* have been explained in a number of ways. The best explanation is that in which the word *fī* (lit., *in*) may be rendered as

9 O Moses, surely I am Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise :

يٰمُوْسٰۤى اِنَّهٗۤ اَنَا اللّٰهُ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ۙ﴿۹﴾

10 And cast down thy rod. So when he saw it in motion as if it were a serpent, he turned back retreating and did not return. O Moses, fear not. Surely the messengers fear not in My presence —

وَ اَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ؕ فَلَمَّا رَاٰهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَاَنَّهَا جَآنٌّ وَّلّٰى مُدْبِرًا وَّ لَمْ يُعَقِّبْ ؕ يٰمُوْسٰى لَا تَخَفْ ۟ اِنِّىْ لَا يَخَافُ لَدَىَّ الْمُرْسَلُوْنَ ۖ﴿۱۰﴾

11 Nor he who does wrong, then does good instead after evil ;[1843] surely I am Forgiving, Merciful,

اِلَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ ثُمَّ بَدَّلَ حُسْنًۢا بَعْدَ سُوْٓءٍ فَاِنِّىْ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۱۱﴾

12 And put thy hand into thy bosom, it will come forth white without evil, among nine signs to Pharaoh and his people.[1843a] Surely they are a transgressing people.

وَ اَدْخِلْ يَدَكَ فِىْ جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجْ بَيْضَآءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوْٓءٍ ۟ فِىْ تِسْعِ اٰيٰتٍ اِلٰى فِرْعَوْنَ وَ قَوْمِهٖ ؕ اِنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا قَوْمًا فٰسِقِيْنَ ﴿۱۲﴾

13 So when Our clear signs came to them, they said : This is clear enchantment.

فَلَمَّا جَآءَتْهُمْ اٰيٰتُنَا مُبْصِرَةً قَالُوْا هٰذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ۚ﴿۱۳﴾

14 And they denied them unjustly and proudly, while their souls were convinced of them. See then, what was the end of the mischief-makers !

وَ جَحَدُوْا بِهَا وَ اسْتَيْقَنَتْهَاۤ اَنْفُسُهُمْ ظُلْمًا وَّ عُلُوًّا ؕ فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُفْسِدِيْنَ ﴿۱۴﴾

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meaning *after* or *in search of*. Thus one of the explanations of the phrase given by AH is *he who is in the place* or *follows the direction in which the fire appears to him to be burning,* so that the meaning is that Moses was blessed as also those who lived in this land. Rz says Moses may be said to be *fi-l-nār,* because of his *nearness* to the fire, for he says that *one who is very near a thing is spoken of as being in it.* According to another commentator, the meaning is, *he who is in search of it and after it.* Still another explanation is that by *man* is meant *that* or *what,* and the place where fire was seen by Moses to be burning is meant. The addition of the words *whatever is around it* is to show that the whole of this land was blessed, because so many prophets for the guidance of humanity were raised there.

That the fire was not a physical fire is suggested by commentators. This is in fact clear. The voice that came to Moses was the voice of God and it came in the manner in which the Divine call comes to all prophets. Moses received a Divine revelation, and what he saw was in a state of transformation.

1843 The word *illā* with which this verse opens is here equivalent to *wāw* (i.e., *and*) according to Mughnī. But as the negative *lā* in the previous passage, to which the latter is conjoined, would be regarded as understood after *wāw,* hence the correct translation of *illā* here is *and not* or *nor.* Others consider *illā* here as introducing a new statement (Bd).

1843a For the nine signs, see 935.

SECTION 2 : History of Solomon

15 And certainly We gave knowledge to David and Solomon.[1843b] And they said : Praise be to Allāh, Who has made us excel many of His believing servants !

وَلَقَدْ اٰتَيْنَا دَاوٗدَ وَسُلَيْمٰنَ عِلْمًا ۚ وَقَالَا الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِيْ فَضَّلَنَا عَلٰى كَثِيْرٍ مِّنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿١٥﴾

16 And Solomon was David's heir, and he said : O men, we have been taught the speech of birds,[1844] and we have been granted of all things.[1845] Surely this is manifest grace.

وَوَرِثَ سُلَيْمٰنُ دَاوٗدَ وَقَالَ يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ عُلِّمْنَا مَنْطِقَ الطَّيْرِ وَاُوْتِيْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ؕ اِنَّ هٰذَا لَهُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْمُبِيْنُ ﴿١٦﴾

17 And his hosts of the jinn and the men and the birds were gathered to Solomon, and they were formed into groups.[1846]

وَحُشِرَ لِسُلَيْمٰنَ جُنُوْدُهٗ مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْاِنْسِ وَالطَّيْرِ فَهُمْ يُوْزَعُوْنَ ﴿١٧﴾

1843b The history of David and Solomon, being the history of the temporal greatness of the Israelites, forms really a part of the history of Moses, and reference to it is really prophetical, to show that Islām was also destined to rise to greatness temporally as well as spiritually.

1844 The root word *nuṭq,* from which the word *manṭiq* is derived, signifies originally *articulate speech* or *jointed voices uttered by the tongue and kept by the ears* (R). Its use with regard to other than human beings is looked upon as a kind of metaphor, and the use of the word is allowable when one understands the significance, though it may not be articulate speech (R). Solomon's understanding the speech of birds may imply the use he made of birds in conveying messages from one place to another, these messages being metaphorically called the speech of birds. See also next footnote. The reference here is to the great resources of Solomon's kingdom in his victorious marches against near and distant enemies. Note also that Solomon does not speak of himself alone ; his people are included when he is made to say : *We have been taught.* This shows that his people also knew that speech.

1845 By *all things* are meant *all things pertaining to the needs of a strong kingdom.*

1846 The hosts of Solomon are here divided into three classes, the jinn, the men, and the *ṭair.* As regards the jinn, it has been shown in 1647 that these were men belonging to certain mountain tribes whom Solomon had subjugated. *Ṭair* may mean either *birds* or *horse,* i.e., cavalry. The gathering together of all three classes and their division into groups shows that all three were human beings. The word *ṭair,* or *ṭā'ir,* is derived from *ṭāra,* which indicates *it flew,* and is applied not only to birds, but " is also said of other things than those which have wings " (LL). *Ṭā'ir* signifies *flying thing,* and as the root word applies to other than winged beings, *ṭā'ir,* of which *ṭair* (the word used here) is a plural, may also be applied to *swift animals such as horses.* Thus *ṭayyār,* which is an intensive form of *ṭā'ir,* signifies, when standing alone, *a sharp, spirited, vigorous horse that is almost made to fly by reason of the vehemence of its running* (T, LL). It also means *a company of men* (LL). *Ṭayyūr,* which is another intensive form of the nominative *ṭā'ir,* signifies *a man who is sharp and quick* (Q, LL). Thus the context taken in the light of these explanations would justify the conclusion that *ṭair* here means

18 Until when they came to the valley of the Naml,[1847] a Namlite said: O Naml, enter your houses, (lest) Solomon and his hosts crush you, while they know not.

حَتّٰۤى اِذَاۤ اَتَوۡا عَلٰى وَادِ النَّمۡلِ ۙ قَالَتۡ نَمۡلَةٌ يّٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّمۡلُ ادۡخُلُوۡا مَسٰكِنَكُمۡ ۚ لَا يَحۡطِمَنَّكُمۡ سُلَيۡمٰنُ وَجُنُوۡدُهٗ ۙ وَهُمۡ لَا يَشۡعُرُوۡنَ ﴿۱۸﴾

19 So he smiled, wondering[1848] at her word, and said: My Lord, grant me that I may be grateful for Thy favour which Thou hast bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do good such as Thou art pleased with, and admit me, by Thy mercy, among Thy righteous servants.

فَتَبَسَّمَ ضَاحِكًا مِّنۡ قَوۡلِهَا وَقَالَ رَبِّ اَوۡزِعۡنِىۡۤ اَنۡ اَشۡكُرَ نِعۡمَتَكَ الَّتِىۡۤ اَنۡعَمۡتَ عَلَىَّ وَعَلٰى وَالِدَىَّ وَاَنۡ اَعۡمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرۡضٰٮهُ وَاَدۡخِلۡنِىۡ بِرَحۡمَتِكَ فِىۡ عِبَادِكَ الصّٰلِحِيۡنَ ﴿۱۹﴾

20 And he reviewed the birds, then said: How is it I see not Hudhud, or is it that he is one of the absentees?[1849]

وَتَفَقَّدَ الطَّيۡرَ فَقَالَ مَا لِىَ لَاۤ اَرَى الۡهُدۡهُدَ ۖ اَمۡ كَانَ مِنَ الۡغَآٮِٕبِيۡنَ ﴿۲۰﴾

21 I will certainly punish him with a severe punishment, or kill him, or he shall bring me a clear excuse.

لَاُعَذِّبَنَّهٗ عَذَابًا شَدِيۡدًا اَوۡ لَاَاذۡبَحَنَّهٗۤ اَوۡ لَيَاۡتِيَنِّىۡ بِسُلۡطٰنٍ مُّبِيۡنٍ ﴿۲۱﴾

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horse, i.e., *cavalry*, because it could be moved quickly. This is corroborated by the statement regarding Solomon's love of horses in 38:31-33. But it may be added that the use of birds in conveying messages made the birds a necessary adjunct to a military expedition, and hence the word may also be taken literally as meaning *birds*.

1847 Many of the fables regarding Solomon have been due to a misconception of the word *naml*. It should be noted that *wādi-l-Naml* cannot be properly translated as the *valley of the ants*, for *Naml* is a proper noun, and according to T (see under the root *wady*), the valley of the Naml is situated between Jibrīn and 'Asqalān. And *Namlah* is the name of a tribe, like *Māzin*, which literally signifies *the eggs of the ants*. *Namil* means *a clever man* (T). The name Namlah used also to be given to a child in whose hands an ant was placed at its birth, because it was said such a child would be wise and intelligent (T). And the Namlah are plainly spoken of as a tribe in the Qāmūs, which says under the word *barq*, *Abriqah is of the waters of Namlah*.

1848 *Ḍāḥik* means *wondering*, for *ḍiḥk* is used as well for simple *joy* as for simple *wonder* (R). See also LL, which says *ḍaḥaka* signifies also *he wondered*, synonym *'ajiba*.

1849 The opening words may mean either a review of birds or a review of horses; see 1846. By *Hudhud* is not to be understood the *lapwing*, but *a person of that name*. In every language many of the proper names given to men will be found to be identical with the names of animals. The Arab writers speak of a king of Himyar as *Hudad* (LA), which is almost identical with *Hudhud* mentioned in the Qur'ān. The Bible speaks of a king of Syria, named Ben Hadad (I Kings 15:18, etc.). The *Muntaha-l-arab* states that Hudhad was the name of the father of Balqīs, the queen of Sheba. According to LA, Hudhud is also written as Hudāhad, and Hudāhad and Hadad was the name of a tribe in Yaman. This shows that there is nothing strange in such a name being given to men. The verses that follow show clearly that Solomon was speaking of one of his own

22 And he tarried not long, then said: I have compassed that which thou hast not compassed and I have come to thee from Saba' with sure information —[1850]

فَمَكَثَ غَيْرَ بَعِيدٍ فَقَالَ أَحَطتُّ بِمَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِۦ وَجِئْتُكَ مِن سَبَإٍۭ بِنَبَإٍ يَقِينٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given of everything and she has a mighty throne.

إِنِّى وَجَدتُّ ٱمْرَأَةً تَمْلِكُهُمْ وَأُوتِيَتْ مِن كُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَلَهَا عَرْشٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 I found her and her people adoring the sun instead of Allāh, and the devil has made their deeds fair-seeming to them and turned them from the way, so they go not aright —

وَجَدتُّهَا وَقَوْمَهَا يَسْجُدُونَ لِلشَّمْسِ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ فَهُمْ لَا يَهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 So that they worship not Allāh, Who brings forth what is hidden in the heavens and the earth and knows what you hide and what you proclaim.

أَلَّا يَسْجُدُوا۟ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى يُخْرِجُ ٱلْخَبْءَ فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُخْفُونَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 Allāh, there is no God but He, the Lord of the mighty Throne.[1850a]

Prostration

ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ ٱلْعَرْشِ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ۩ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 He said: We shall see whether thou speakest the truth or whether thou art a liar.

قَالَ سَنَنظُرُ أَصَدَقْتَ أَمْ كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلْكَٰذِبِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 Take this my letter and hand it over to them, then turn from them and see what (answer) they return.

ٱذْهَب بِّكِتَٰبِى هَٰذَا فَأَلْقِهْ إِلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ فَٱنظُرْ مَاذَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 She said: O chiefs, an honourable letter has been delivered to me.

قَالَتْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمَلَؤُا۟ إِنِّىٓ أُلْقِىَ إِلَىَّ كِتَٰبٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 It is from Solomon, and it is in the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful:

إِنَّهُۥ مِن سُلَيْمَٰنَ وَإِنَّهُۥ بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 Proclaiming, Exalt not yourselves against me and come to me in submission.

أَلَّا تَعْلُوا۟ عَلَىَّ وَأْتُونِى مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

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officers: the infliction of severe punishment on a small bird by such a mighty monarch, as Solomon, and the exposition of the great religious doctrine of Unity by the lapwing, are quite incomprehensible.

1850 *Saba'* is the same as the Sheba of the Bible. The story as given here is not met with in the Bible, but it was known to Jewish rabbis. The Bible speaks of the coming of the queen of Sheba to Solomon with large presents to test him. See 1 Kings 10 and 2 Chron. 9. And later on it speaks of many strange women as Solomon's wives (1 Kings 11).

1850a The recitation of this verse is followed by an actual prostration; see 978.

SECTION 3 : **History of Solomon**

32 She said : O chiefs, advise me respecting my affair ; I never decide an affair until you are in my presence.

قالت يايها الملؤا افتوني في امري ما كنت قاطعة امرا حتى تشهدون ﴿٣٢﴾

33 They said : We are possessors of strength and possessors of mighty prowess. And the command is thine, so consider what thou wilt command.

قالوا نحن اولوا قوة و اولوا باس شديد و الامر اليك فانظري ماذا تامرين ﴿٣٣﴾

34 She said : Surely the kings, when they enter a town, ruin it and make the noblest of its people to be low ; and thus they do.

قالت ان الملوك اذا دخلوا قرية افسدوها و جعلوا اعزة اهلها اذلة وكذلك يفعلون ﴿٣٤﴾

35 And surely I am going to send them a present, and to see what (answer) the messengers bring back.

و اني مرسلة اليهم بهدية فنظرة بم يرجع المرسلون ﴿٣٥﴾

36 So when (the envoy) came to Solomon, he said : Will you help me with wealth ? But what Allāh has given me is better than that which He has given you. Nay, you are exultant because of your present.[1850b]

فلما جاء سليمن قال اتمدونن بمال فما اتىن الله خير مما اتىكم بل انتم بهديتكم تفرحون ﴿٣٦﴾

37 Go back to them, so we shall certainly come to them with hosts which they have no power to oppose, and we shall certainly expel them therefrom in disgrace, while they are abased.

ارجع اليهم فلناتينهم بجنود لا قبل لهم بها و لنخرجنهم منها اذلة و هم صغرون ﴿٣٧﴾

38 He said : O chiefs, which of you can bring me her throne before they come to me in submission ?[1851]

قال يايها الملؤا ايكم ياتيني بعرشها قبل ان ياتوني مسلمين ﴿٣٨﴾

1850b Why was Solomon angry on receiving a present from the queen ? Later events, as narrated further on, show that the present sent to Solomon was a throne which was decorated either with nude art or with idolatrous paintings, or was offensive in some other way. Solomon's order in v. 38 to bring *her throne* to him shows clearly that by it was meant the throne which she had sent to him as a present, and his order in v. 41 to make alterations in this throne shows that the paintings on the throne were abhorrent to a true worshipper of God.

1851 As usual, the narrative here omits the return of the messengers to the queen, and her willingness to submit to Solomon on receiving the threat mentioned in the last verse, and continues at the point where Solomon makes preparations to receive her. By *her thro.ie* is meant the throne which she had sent as a present.

39 One audacious among the jinn said: I will bring it to thee before thou rise up from thy place; and surely I am strong, trusty for it.[1852]

قَالَ عِفْرِيْتٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ اَنَا اٰتِيْكَ بِهٖ قَبْلَ اَنْ تَقُوْمَ مِنْ مَّقَامِكَ ۚ وَاِنِّيْ عَلَيْهِ لَقَوِيٌّ اَمِيْنٌ ﴿۳۹﴾

40 One having knowledge of the Book said: I will bring it to thee in the twinkling of an eye.[1853] Then when he saw it settled beside him,[1854] he said: This is of the grace of my Lord, that He may try me whether I am grateful or ungrateful. And whoever is grateful, he is grateful only for his own soul, and whoever is ungrateful, then surely my Lord is Self-sufficient, Bountiful.

قَالَ الَّذِيْ عِنْدَهٗ عِلْمٌ مِّنَ الْكِتٰبِ اَنَا اٰتِيْكَ بِهٖ قَبْلَ اَنْ يَّرْتَدَّ اِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ ؕ فَلَمَّا رَاٰهُ مُسْتَقِرًّا عِنْدَهٗ قَالَ هٰذَا مِنْ فَضْلِ رَبِّيْ ۖ لِيَبْلُوَنِيْٓ ءَاَشْكُرُ اَمْ اَكْفُرُ ؕ وَمَنْ شَكَرَ فَاِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهٖ ۚ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَاِنَّ رَبِّيْ غَنِيٌّ كَرِيْمٌ ﴿۴۰﴾

41 He said: Alter her throne for her; we may see whether she follows the right way or is of those who go not aright.[1854a]

قَالَ نَكِّرُوْا لَهَا عَرْشَهَا نَنْظُرْ اَتَهْتَدِيْٓ اَمْ تَكُوْنُ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يَهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿۴۱﴾

42 So when she came, it was said: Was thy throne like this? She said: It is as it were the same; and we were given the knowledge before about it, and we submitted.[1854b]

فَلَمَّا جَآءَتْ قِيْلَ اَهٰكَذَا عَرْشُكِ ؕ قَالَتْ كَاَنَّهٗ هُوَ ۚ وَاُوْتِيْنَا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِيْنَ ﴿۴۲﴾

1852 The *rising up from the place* does not signify his standing up from the sitting posture, but his marching away from the place where he was at the time. The reference to being trusty shows that the execution of the work required an honest worker. The audacious jinn is apparently one of the Amalekites, who were men of large stature.

1853 By *one having knowledge of the Book* is meant an Israelite as against the Amalekite referred to in the previous verses. The literal meaning of the concluding words of the sentence is, *before thy gaze returns to thee.* It is the same as *in the twinkling of an eye,* the idea conveyed being that he could do it without delay.

1854 Strange and curious legends are introduced by some commentators on the supposition that the events narrated took place in immediate succession. The words *so when he saw it settled beside him* do not indicate that he saw it settled in the course of the conversation given in the previous passage. It is an altogether different incident.

1854a As pointed out in **1850b**, Solomon was offended by the throne which the queen sent him as a present because of the indecent or idolatrous paintings on it, and therefore before she came to him, he caused certain alterations to be made in the throne. The purpose of the alteration is given here in express words, *whether she follows the right way.* In fact, she seems to have invited Solomon in the symbolic language of the paintings on the throne to her religion of idolatry, and by making alterations Solomon indicated that he could not make a compromise with idolatry.

1854b By putting the question, *was thy throne like this?* Solomon wanted

43 And that which she worshipped besides Allāh prevented her; for she was of a disbelieving people.

وَصَدَّهَا مَا كَانَتْ تَّعْبُدُ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ
اِنَّهَا كَانَتْ مِنْ قَوْمٍ كٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 It was said to her: Enter the palace. But when she saw it she deemed it to be a great expanse of water, and prepared herself to meet the difficulty.[1855] He said: Surely it is a palace made smooth with glass.[1856] She said: My Lord, surely I have wronged myself, and I submit with Solomon to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds.[1857]

قِيْلَ لَهَا ادْخُلِي الصَّرْحَ ۚ فَلَمَّا رَاَتْهُ
حَسِبَتْهُ لُجَّةً وَّكَشَفَتْ عَنْ سَاقَيْهَا ؕ
قَالَ اِنَّهٗ صَرْحٌ مُّمَرَّدٌ مِّنْ قَوَارِيْرَ ؕ
قَالَتْ رَبِّ اِنِّيْ ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِيْ وَاَسْلَمْتُ
مَعَ سُلَيْمٰنَ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٤٤﴾

SECTION 4: Ṣāliḥ and Lot

45 And certainly We sent to Thamūd their brother Ṣāliḥ, saying: Serve Allāh. Then lo! they became two parties, contending.

وَلَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَاۤ اِلٰى ثَمُوْدَ اَخَاهُمْ
صٰلِحًا اَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ فَاِذَا هُمْ
فَرِيْقٰنِ يَخْتَصِمُوْنَ ﴿٤٥﴾

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to draw her attention pointedly to the alterations made. The queen's answer shows that her envoy had already told her that Solomon was offended by the present which she had sent — *we were given the knowledge before about it.* The submission referred to in the act of surrendering her kingdom does not mean that she had turned a Muslim. This is made clear in v. 43; she was prevented from becoming a true Muslim owing to her worship of the sun. Hence submission to God comes later; see the concluding words of v. 44.

1855 The use of the word *sāq* to signify *difficulty* or *distress* in many phrases is a commonplace of Arabic literature, and only crass ignorance of the Arabic language would make anyone adopt the literal significance of the word *sāq* (i.e., *shank*) in the face of the recognized idiomatic uses of the word. *Al-kashf 'ani-l-sāq* is a well-known idiom, and refers to a man when difficulty befalls him — meaning *he prepared himself for the difficulty* — "they mention the *sāq* when they mean to express the difficulty of a case or an event, and to tell of the terror occasioned thereby" (T, LL). Thus the statement in 68:42, *yauma yukshafu 'an sāq-in,* means *on a day when difficulty or calamity shall be disclosed* (I'Ab). And similarly, *qāmati-l-ḥarbu 'alā sāq-in* signifies *the battle became vehement* (LL). See also 2546, where it is shown that the commentators attach the same significance to these words.

1856 Solomon was a wealthy king and he had undoubtedly his palaces. It appears that, in order to impress upon the queen that it was the unseen hand of God that worked in nature, he made water to flow under the smooth glass floor. Thus he conveyed to her the message that God was the real force behind all in symbolic language, as she had conveyed to him the message of idolatry in the symbolic language of the throne which she had sent him as a present. The queen mistook the glass for the water which ran beneath; and when Solomon drew her attention to it, she at once realized her own error in worshipping outward objects. like the sun, while the real force or the source of life was Allāh, whose hand worked in these objects. Perhaps in words, too, he impressed on her the great message of Divine Unity. The result was that the queen accepted the religion of Solomon — *I submit with Solomon to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds.*

1857 In this the Qur'ān contradicts the Bible, the latter holding that Solomon had gone over to idol-worship on account of his non-Israelitish wives, while the

46 He said: O my people, why do you hasten on the evil before the good? Why do you not ask forgiveness of Allāh so that you may have mercy?

قَالَ يٰقَوْمِ لِمَ تَسْتَعْجِلُوْنَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ قَبْلَ الْحَسَنَةِ ۚ لَوْلَا تَسْتَغْفِرُوْنَ اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُوْنَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 They said: We augur evil of thee and those with thee. He said: Your evil augury is with Allāh; nay, you are a people who are tried.

قَالُوا اطَّيَّرْنَا بِكَ وَبِمَنْ مَّعَكَ ۗ قَالَ طٰٓئِرُكُمْ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ بَلْ اَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ تُفْتَنُوْنَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And there were in the city nine persons who made mischief in the land and did not act aright.[1858]

وَكَانَ فِي الْمَدِيْنَةِ تِسْعَةُ رَهْطٍ يُّفْسِدُوْنَ فِي الْاَرْضِ وَلَا يُصْلِحُوْنَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 They said: Swear one to another by Allāh that we shall attack him and his family by night, then we shall say to his heir: We witnessed not the destruction of his family, and we are surely truthful.[1859]

قَالُوْا تَقَاسَمُوْا بِاللّٰهِ لَنُبَيِّتَنَّهٗ وَاَهْلَهٗ ثُمَّ لَنَقُوْلَنَّ لِوَلِيِّهٖ مَا شَهِدْنَا مَهْلِكَ اَهْلِهٖ وَاِنَّا لَصٰدِقُوْنَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 And they planned a plan, and We planned a plan, while they perceived not.

وَمَكَرُوْا مَكْرًا وَّمَكَرْنَا مَكْرًا وَّهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُوْنَ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 See, then, what was the end of their plan, that We destroyed them and their people, all (of them).

فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ مَكْرِهِمْ ۙ اَنَّا دَمَّرْنٰهُمْ وَقَوْمَهُمْ اَجْمَعِيْنَ ﴿٥١﴾

52 So those are their houses fallen down because they were iniquitous. Surely there is a sign in this for a people who know.

فَتِلْكَ بُيُوْتُهُمْ خَاوِيَةًۢ بِمَا ظَلَمُوْا ۗ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَّعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٥٢﴾

Qur'ān states that his wives were converts to his religion and believers in Divine Unity. Higher criticism of the Bible upholds the Quranic view; see 147.

1858 There is no doubt a reference here to the enemies of the Holy Prophet, the chief of them being nine in number, eight of whom were slain at Badr, the exception was Abū Lahab, who died at Makkah on hearing the news of the defeat at Badr. Their names were Abū Jahl, Muṭ'im ibn 'Adiyy, Shaibah ibn Rabī'ah, 'Utbah ibn Rabī'ah, Walīd ibn 'Utbah, Umayyah ibn Khalf, Naḍar ibn al-Ḥarth, 'Aqbah ibn Abī Mu'aiṭ and Abū Lahab.

1859 There seems to be a prophetical reference here to the plot against the Holy Prophet, for the same plan was ultimately agreed upon by the Quraish to do away with him. It should be borne in mind that the revelation of this chapter belongs to an early period. The plot against the Prophet's life was to have been executed in the following manner: One man from every tribe of the Quraish was selected, who should take the Prophet unawares. They were to thrust their swords into his body simultaneously so that no particular tribe could be held guilty. This was agreed upon immediately before the Prophet's flight to Madīnah, and thus the incident as relating to Ṣāliḥ is meant as a prophecy.

53 And We delivered those who believed and kept their duty.

وَأَنْجَيْنَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 And Lot, when he said to his people: Do you commit foul deeds, while you see?

وَلُوطًا إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَتَأْتُونَ الْفَاحِشَةَ وَأَنْتُمْ تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 Will you come to men lustfully rather than women? Nay, you are a people who act ignorantly.

أَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَأْتُونَ الرِّجَالَ شَهْوَةً مِنْ دُونِ النِّسَاءِ ۚ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

56 But the answer of his people was naught except that they said: Drive out Lot's followers from your town; surely they are a people who would keep pure!

فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا أَخْرِجُوا آلَ لُوطٍ مِنْ قَرْيَتِكُمْ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ أُنَاسٌ يَتَطَهَّرُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 But We delivered him and his followers except his wife; We ordained her to be of those who remained behind.

فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلَّا امْرَأَتَهُ قَدَّرْنَاهَا مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 And We rained on them a rain; so evil was the rain on those who had been warned.[1859a]

وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مَطَرًا ۖ فَسَاءَ مَطَرُ الْمُنْذَرِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

SECTION 5: The Faithful will be Exalted

59 Say: Praise be to Allāh and peace on His servants whom He has chosen! Is Allāh better, or what they associate (with Him)?

قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَسَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ عِبَادِهِ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَىٰ ۗ آللَّهُ خَيْرٌ أَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

PART XX

60 Or, Who created the heavens and the earth, and sends down for you water from the cloud? Then We cause to grow thereby beautiful gardens — it is not possible for you to make the trees thereof to grow. Is there a god with Allāh? Nay, they are a people who deviate!

أَمَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً ۚ فَأَنْبَتْنَا بِهِ حَدَائِقَ ذَاتَ بَهْجَةٍ ۚ مَا كَانَ لَكُمْ أَنْ تُنْبِتُوا شَجَرَهَا ۗ أَإِلَٰهٌ مَعَ اللَّهِ ۚ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ يَعْدِلُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

1859a Stones were rained on them; see 918.

61 Or, Who made the earth a resting-place, and made in it rivers, and raised on it mountains, and placed between the two seas a barrier?[1859b] Is there a god with Allāh? Nay, most of them know not!

أَمَّنْ جَعَلَ الْأَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَّجَعَلَ خِلٰلَهَآ أَنْهٰرًا وَّجَعَلَ لَهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ حَاجِزًا ۗ ءَإِلٰهٌ مَّعَ اللّٰهِ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

62 Or, Who answers the distressed one when he calls upon Him and removes the evil, and will make you successors in the earth?[1860] Is there a god with Allāh? Little is it that you mind!

أَمَّنْ يُّجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوْٓءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَآءَ الْأَرْضِ ۗ ءَإِلٰهٌ مَّعَ اللّٰهِ ۗ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 Or, Who guides you in the darkness of the land and the sea, and Who sends the winds as good news before His mercy? Is there a god with Allāh? Exalted be Allāh above what they associate (with Him)!

أَمَّنْ يَّهْدِيكُمْ فِي ظُلُمٰتِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ وَمَنْ يُّرْسِلُ الرِّيٰحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهٖ ۗ ءَإِلٰهٌ مَّعَ اللّٰهِ ۗ تَعٰلَى اللّٰهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 Or, Who originates the creation, then reproduces it, and Who gives you sustenance from the heaven and the earth? Is there a god with Allāh? Say: Bring your proof, if you are truthful.

أَمَّنْ يَّبْدَؤُا الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ وَمَنْ يَّرْزُقُكُمْ مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ ءَإِلٰهٌ مَّعَ اللّٰهِ ۗ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

65 Say: No one in the heavens and the earth knows the unseen but Allāh; and they know not when they will be raised.

قُلْ لَّا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ ۗ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

1859b See 1794.

1860 The manifestation of the marvellous power of God in nature, the creation of the heavens and the earth, the sending down of rain, the making of rivers and mountains — all these wonderful signs of the existence of the Great Creator are here followed by another equally wonderful sign of the existence of God, the manifestation of His marvellous power in man. But mark the contrast. This manifestation of the existence of God is not to be sought in the greatness and power of man as the conqueror of the forces of nature, but in his weakness in his great distress when, unable to find help from any source, he throws himself on the Divine threshold and seeks help from God. We are thus told that the manifestation of God's great power in the mighty forces of nature is as clear an indication of the existence of God as the manifestation of His power in a weak mortal who finds himself in extreme distress. But what is more, this manifestation of God's power is beautifully mingled with prophecy — *and He will make you successors in the earth*. The distressed ones here are no other than the Muslims, who were being cruelly persecuted and tortured, and they are told that the manifestation of God's power in making them rulers of the earth would be as great as it was in His creation of the heavens and the earth. This also shows the purpose underlying the narration of the histories of David and Solomon.

66 Nay, their knowledge reaches not the Hereafter. Nay, they are in doubt about it. Nay, they are blind to it.[1860a]

بَلِ ادّٰرَكَ عِلْمُهُمْ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ ۚ بَلْ هُمْ فِيْ شَكٍّ مِّنْهَا ۚ بَلْ هُمْ مِّنْهَا عَمُوْنَ ﴿٦٦﴾

SECTION 6 : **The Spiritual Resurrection**

67 And those who disbelieve say: When we have become dust and our fathers (too), shall we indeed be brought forth?

وَقَالَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا ءَاِذَا كُنَّا تُرٰبًا وَّاٰبَآؤُنَآ اَئِنَّا لَمُخْرَجُوْنَ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 We have certainly been promised this — we and our fathers before; these are naught but stories of the ancients!

لَقَدْ وُعِدْنَا هٰذَا نَحْنُ وَاٰبَآؤُنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ ۙ اِنْ هٰذَآ اِلَّآ اَسَاطِيْرُ الْاَوَّلِيْنَ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 Say: Travel in the earth, then see what was the end of the guilty!

قُلْ سِيْرُوْا فِي الْاَرْضِ فَانْظُرُوْا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 And grieve not for them, nor be distressed because of what they plan.

وَلَا تَحْزَنْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا تَكُنْ فِيْ ضَيْقٍ مِّمَّا يَمْكُرُوْنَ ﴿٧٠﴾

71 And they say: When will this promise come to pass, if you are truthful?

وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ مَتٰى هٰذَا الْوَعْدُ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٧١﴾

72 Say: Maybe somewhat of that which you seek to hasten has drawn nigh to you.

قُلْ عَسٰٓى اَنْ يَّكُوْنَ رَدِفَ لَكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِيْ تَسْتَعْجِلُوْنَ ﴿٧٢﴾

73 And surely thy Lord is full of grace to men, but most of them do not give thanks.

وَاِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُوْ فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 And surely thy Lord knows what their breasts conceal and what they manifest.

وَاِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُوْرُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُوْنَ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 And there is nothing concealed in the heaven and the earth but it is in a clear book.

وَمَا مِنْ غَآئِبَةٍ فِي السَّمَآءِ وَالْاَرْضِ اِلَّا فِيْ كِتٰبٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 Surely this Qur'ān declares to the Children of Israel most of that wherein they differ.

اِنَّ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ يَقُصُّ عَلٰى بَنِيْٓ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ اَكْثَرَ الَّذِيْ هُمْ فِيْهِ يَخْتَلِفُوْنَ ﴿٧٦﴾

1860a Human knowledge cannot reach the life after death and God has vouchsafed this knowledge to man through His revelation. But men are in doubt about it; in fact, they shut their eyes to it.

77 And surely it is a guidance and a mercy for the believers.

وَإِنَّهُ لَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

78 Truly thy Lord will judge between them by His judgment, and He is the Mighty, the Knowing.

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِي بَيْنَهُم بِحُكْمِهِ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٧٨﴾

79 So rely on Allāh. Surely thou art on the plain truth.

فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّكَ عَلَى الْحَقِّ الْمُبِينِ ﴿٧٩﴾

80 Certainly thou canst not make the dead to hear the call, nor canst thou make the deaf to hear, when they go back retreating.[1862]

إِنَّكَ لَا تُسْمِعُ الْمَوْتَىٰ وَلَا تُسْمِعُ الصُّمَّ الدُّعَاءَ إِذَا وَلَّوْا مُدْبِرِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

81 Nor canst thou lead the blind out of their error. Thou canst make none to hear except those who believe in Our messages, so they submit.

وَمَا أَنتَ بِهَادِي الْعُمْيِ عَن ضَلَالَتِهِمْ ۖ إِن تُسْمِعُ إِلَّا مَن يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُم مُّسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

82 And when the word comes to pass against them, We shall bring forth for them a creature from the earth that will speak to them, because people did not believe in Our messages.[1863]

وَإِذَا وَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَخْرَجْنَا لَهُمْ دَابَّةً مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ تُكَلِّمُهُمْ أَنَّ النَّاسَ كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا لَا يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

SECTION 7 : **Passing away of Opposition**

83 And the day when We gather from every nation a party from among those who rejected Our messages, then they will be formed into groups.

وَيَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ فَوْجًا مِّمَّن يُكَذِّبُ بِآيَاتِنَا فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿٨٣﴾

84 Until, when they come, He will say: Did you reject My messages, while you did not comprehend them in knowledge? Or what was it that you did?

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءُوا قَالَ أَكَذَّبْتُم بِآيَاتِي وَلَمْ تُحِيطُوا بِهَا عِلْمًا أَمَّاذَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

1862 This verse is a clear testimony to what is meant by the Prophet's raising the dead; for here we are told that, if the dead go back retreating, the Prophet cannot make them hear. Evidently this verse and the opening words of the following verse speak of the reprobate who shut their eyes and close their ears to all truth.

1863 By the *creature from the earth who will speak to them* are evidently meant people who are bent low upon earth. These people are the materialistic nations of the West who have lost all sense of the higher values of life. The coming forth of the *dābbat al-arḍ* is one of the signs of the approach of the Hour according to the Ḥadīth. But the Hour may mean either the day of Judgment or the doom of a people, and this verse gives us an indication that the Hour in this case stands for the doom of a nation; because here it is spoken of as being a punishment for not believing in the Divine messages.

85 And the word will come to pass against them because they were unjust, so they will not speak.

وَوَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمَا ظَلَمُوْا فَهُمْ لَا يَنْطِقُوْنَ ﴿٨٥﴾

86 See they not that We have made the night that they may rest therein, and the day to give light? Surely there are signs in this for a people who believe.

اَلَمْ يَرَوْا اَنَّا جَعَلْنَا الَّيْلَ لِيَسْكُنُوْا فِيْهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا ؕ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُّؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٨٦﴾

87 And the day when the trumpet is blown, then those in the heavens and those in the earth will be struck with terror, except such as Allāh please. And all shall come to Him abased.[1864]

وَيَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّوْرِ فَفَزِعَ مَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْاَرْضِ اِلَّا مَنْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ ؕ وَكُلٌّ اَتَوْهُ دٰخِرِيْنَ ﴿٨٧﴾

88 And thou seest the mountains—thou thinkest them firmly fixed—passing away as the passing away of the cloud: the handiwork of Allāh, Who has made everything thoroughly. Surely He is Aware of what you do.[1865]

وَتَرَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبُهَا جَامِدَةً وَّهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ ؕ صُنْعَ اللّٰهِ الَّذِيْٓ اَتْقَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ؕ اِنَّهٗ خَبِيْرٌۢ بِمَا تَفْعَلُوْنَ ﴿٨٨﴾

89 Whoever brings good, he will have better than it; and they will be secure from terror that day.

مَنْ جَآءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهٗ خَيْرٌ مِّنْهَا ۚ وَهُمْ مِّنْ فَزَعٍ يَّوْمَئِذٍ اٰمِنُوْنَ ﴿٨٩﴾

90 And whoever brings evil, these will be thrown down on their faces into the Fire. Are you rewarded aught except for what you did?

وَمَنْ جَآءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَكُبَّتْ وُجُوْهُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ ؕ هَلْ تُجْزَوْنَ اِلَّا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٩٠﴾

91 I am commanded only to serve the Lord of this city, Who has made it sacred, and His are all things,[1866] and I am commanded to be of those who submit,

اِنَّمَآ اُمِرْتُ اَنْ اَعْبُدَ رَبَّ هٰذِهِ الْبَلْدَةِ الَّذِيْ حَرَّمَهَا وَلَهٗ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ ؗ وَّاُمِرْتُ اَنْ اَكُوْنَ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ ﴿٩١﴾

1864 As a foretaste of what was in store for the rejectors of the Truth, the prophecy was also brought to fulfilment in this life. The whole of Arabia recognized the Holy Prophet as its temporal and spiritual head, and the proud opponents were abased.

1865 That *jabal* signifies a *great man* has been shown in 1280. That in the passing away of the mountains there is a clear reference to the removal of the

1866, see next page.

وَأَنْ أَتْلُوَا الْقُرْاٰنَ ۚ فَمَنِ اهْتَدٰى فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِيْ لِنَفْسِهٖ ۚ وَمَنْ ضَلَّ فَقُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَنَا مِنَ الْمُنْذِرِيْنَ ﴿٩٢﴾ وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ سَيُرِيْكُمْ اٰيٰتِهٖ فَتَعْرِفُوْنَهَا ۗ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٩٣﴾

92 And to recite the Qur'ān. So whoever goes aright, he goes aright for his own soul, and whoever goes astray — say: I am only one of the warners.

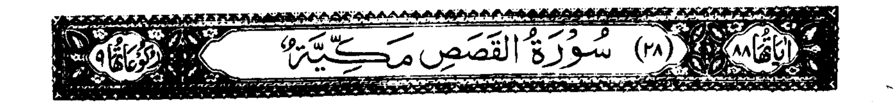
93 And say: Praise be to Allāh! He will show you His signs so that you shall recognize them. And thy Lord is not heedless of what you do.[1867]

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mighty men who opposed the Prophet's preaching is also shown by the concluding words of the verse, which clearly speak of the punishment of the evil deeds by One Who is Aware of what they do.

1866 The statement here that the Prophet is commanded to serve *the Lord of the city of Makkah* contains an allusion that the servant of the Lord will be the lord of that city.

1867 Mark the firmness of the tone in which the showing of signs is asserted.



CHAPTER 28

Al-Qaṣaṣ : THE NARRATIVE

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 9 *sections*; 88 *verses*)

This chapter known as *The Narrative* is devoted chiefly to Moses' story and draws attention pointedly to Moses' prophecy regarding the Prophet's advent. It is said by some to have been revealed to the Holy Prophet when fleeing from Makkah on his way to Madīnah, at a place known as Jaḥfah (I'Ab-AH). According to others, however, only v. 85, which predicted a triumphal return of the Holy Prophet to Makkah, was revealed there (AH). The latter seems to be the correct view. See introductory note on the 26th chapter.

The Prophet's likeness to Moses is the chief theme of this chapter, and the revelation of Moses is here spoken of as clear evidence of the truth of the revelation of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad. The first four sections of the chapter are taken up with a recital of the chief incidents of the life of Moses from the time of his birth to the time that he successfully led the Israelites out of Egypt, together with the drowning of the hosts of Egypt. Here we find many of the details of this period not given elsewhere. Moses' narrative is followed by showing in the fifth section that a prophet like him had now appeared, to whose truth the revelation of Moses bore a clear testimony. The sixth section upholds the truth of the revelation of the Qur'ān, while the seventh shows that its opponents will be humbled. The eighth instances Korah, whose very wealth led to his ruin, and is a warning to the opponents against placing too great faith upon earthly possessions, or it may be a warning to the Muslims against the time when they will grow rich and powerful. The chapter ends with a declaration of the ultimate triumph of the Holy Prophet, and of his triumphal entry into the very city from whence he was now being expelled.

SECTION 1 **History of Moses**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Benignant, Hearing, Knowing God![1867a]

طٰسٓمّٓ ۝١

2 These are the verses of the Book that makes manifest.

تِلْكَ اٰيٰتُ الْكِتٰبِ الْمُبِيْنِ ۝٢

3 We recite to thee the story of Moses and Pharaoh with truth, for a people who believe.

نَتْلُوْا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ نَّبَاِ مُوْسٰى وَ فِرْعَوْنَ بِالْحَقِّ لِقَوْمٍ يُّؤْمِنُوْنَ ۝٣

4 Surely Pharaoh exalted himself in the land and made its people into parties, weakening one party from among them;[1868] he slaughtered their sons and let their women live. Surely he was one of the mischief-makers.

اِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَ جَعَلَ اَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَّسْتَضْعِفُ طَآئِفَةً مِّنْهُمْ يُذَبِّحُ اَبْنَآءَهُمْ وَ يَسْتَحْيٖ نِسَآءَهُمْ ؕ اِنَّهٗ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِيْنَ ۝٤

5 And We desired to bestow a favour upon those who were deemed weak in the land, and to make them the leaders, and to make them the heirs,[1869]

وَ نُرِيْدُ اَنْ نَّمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ اسْتُضْعِفُوْا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَ نَجْعَلَهُمْ اَئِمَّةً وَّ نَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوٰرِثِيْنَ ۝٥

6 And to grant them power in the land, and to make Pharaoh and Hāmān and their hosts see from them what they feared.[1870]

وَ نُمَكِّنَ لَهُمْ فِي الْاَرْضِ وَ نُرِيَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَ هَامٰنَ وَ جُنُوْدَهُمَا مِنْهُمْ مَّا كَانُوْا يَحْذَرُوْنَ ۝٦

1867a See 1802.

1868 The two parties were the Israelites and the Egyptians, the latter being made the taskmasters of the former. This refers no doubt to the persecutions of the Muslims. The Quraish, the stronger party, wanted to crush the weaker party of the Muslims.

1869 By making them heirs is not meant that they would be made heirs to Pharaoh's possession, but heirs to a kingdom in the promised land of Canaan. And this refers also to the establishment of the kingdom of Islām and the vanquishment of its persecutors.

1870 Hāmān seems to have been a minister of Pharaoh. He is spoken of again in v. 8 and v. 38, and also in 29:39 and 40:24, 36. The Hāmān spoken of in Esther 3:1 is a different person. Pharaoh and his counsellors feared that the Israelites, who were aliens in the land of Egypt, might one day become powerful and supreme in the land. Hence they oppressed and persecuted them in various ways. Yet the Divine intention was to bring about what Pharaoh feared. Even such was the Divine intention with regard to the persecuted Muslims.

7 And We revealed to Moses' mother, saying: Give him suck; then when thou fearest for him, cast him into the river and fear not, nor grieve; surely We shall bring him back to thee and make him one of the messengers.

وَأَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰٓ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ ۖ
فَإِذَا خِفْتِ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِى الْيَمِّ
وَلَا تَخَافِى وَلَا تَحْزَنِىٓ ۖ إِنَّا رَآدُّوهُ
إِلَيْكِ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٧﴾

8 So Pharaoh's people took him up that he might be an enemy and a grief for them.[1871] Surely Pharaoh and Hāmān and their hosts were wrongdoers.

فَالْتَقَطَهُۥٓ ءَالُ فِرْعَوْنَ لِيَكُونَ لَهُمْ عَدُوًّا
وَحَزَنًا ۗ إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَـٰمَـٰنَ
وَجُنُودَهُمَا كَانُوا۟ خَـٰطِـِٔينَ ﴿٨﴾

9 And Pharaoh's wife said: A refreshment of the eye to me and to thee — slay him not; maybe he will be useful to us, or we may take him for a son. And they perceived not.

وَقَالَتِ امْرَأَتُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرَّتُ عَيْنٍ
لِّى وَلَكَ ۖ لَا تَقْتُلُوهُ عَسَىٰٓ أَن يَنفَعَنَآ
أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُۥ وَلَدًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾

10 And the heart of Moses' mother was free (from anxiety).[1872] She would almost have disclosed it, had We not strengthened her heart, so that she might be of the believers.

وَأَصْبَحَ فُؤَادُ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ فَـٰرِغًا ۖ إِن
كَادَتْ لَتُبْدِى بِهِۦ لَوْلَآ أَن رَّبَطْنَا عَلَىٰ
قَلْبِهَا لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

11 And she said to his sister: Follow him up. So she watched him from a distance, while they perceived not.

وَقَالَتْ لِأُخْتِهِۦ قُصِّيهِ ۖ فَبَصُرَتْ بِهِۦ
عَن جُنُبٍ وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12 And We did not allow him to suck before, so she said: Shall I point out to you the people of a house who will bring him up for you, and they will wish him well?

وَحَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَرَاضِعَ مِن قَبْلُ
فَقَالَتْ هَلْ أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰٓ أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ
يَكْفُلُونَهُۥ لَكُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُۥ نَـٰصِحُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 So We gave him back to his mother that her eye might be refreshed, and that she might not grieve, and that she might know that the promise of Allāh is true. But most of them know not.[1874]

فَرَدَدْنَـٰهُ إِلَىٰٓ أُمِّهِۦ كَىْ تَقَرَّ عَيْنُهَا
وَلَا تَحْزَنَ وَلِتَعْلَمَ أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ
حَقٌّ وَلَـٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

1871 It was not the object of Pharaoh's people that the child should be their enemy, but this ultimately happened. *Lām* used in this sense is called *lām al-'āqibah.*

1872 Her heart became free from anxiety on account of the assurance which she had received through Divine revelation; the words that follow show that her heart had been strengthened with patience, so it cannot be said to have

1874, see next page.

SECTION 2: **History of Moses**

14 And when he attained his maturity and became full-grown, We granted him wisdom and knowledge. And thus do We reward those who do good (to others).

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ اَشُدَّهٗ وَاسْتَوٰۤى اٰتَيْنٰهُ حُكْمًا وَّعِلْمًا ؕ وَكَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِى الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿۱۴﴾

15 And he went into the city at a time of carelessness on the part of its people, so he found therein two men fighting — one being of his party and the other of his foes; and he who was of his party cried out to him for help against him who was of his enemies, so Moses struck him with his fist and killed him. He said: This is on account of the devil's doing; surely he is an enemy, openly leading astray.[1875]

وَدَخَلَ الْمَدِيْنَةَ عَلٰى حِيْنِ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ اَهْلِهَا فَوَجَدَ فِيْهَا رَجُلَيْنِ يَقْتَتِلٰنِ ۫ هٰذَا مِنْ شِيْعَتِهٖ وَهٰذَا مِنْ عَدُوِّهٖ ۚ فَاسْتَغَاثَهُ الَّذِىْ مِنْ شِيْعَتِهٖ عَلَى الَّذِىْ مِنْ عَدُوِّهٖ ۙ فَوَكَزَهٗ مُوْسٰى فَقَضٰى عَلَيْهِ ۫ قَالَ هٰذَا مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطٰنِ ؕ اِنَّهٗ عَدُوٌّ مُّضِلٌّ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿۱۵﴾

16 He said: My Lord, surely I have done harm to myself, so do Thou protect me; so He protected him.[1876] Surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.

قَالَ رَبِّ اِنِّىْ ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِىْ فَاغْفِرْ لِىْ فَغَفَرَ لَهٗ ؕ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿۱۶﴾

17 He said: My Lord, because Thou hast bestowed a favour on me, I shall never be a backer of the guilty.

قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَاۤ اَنْعَمْتَ عَلَىَّ فَلَنْ اَكُوْنَ ظَهِيْرًا لِّلْمُجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿۱۷﴾

18 And he was in the city, fearing, awaiting, when lo, he who had asked his assistance the day before was cry-

فَاَصْبَحَ فِى الْمَدِيْنَةِ خَآئِفًا يَّتَرَقَّبُ فَاِذَا الَّذِى اسْتَنْصَرَهٗ بِالْاَمْسِ

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become devoid of patience. In fact, *fārigh* often, used elliptically, signifies *free from care* or *anxiety* or *disquietude* (LL).

1874 The reference is clearly to the opponents of the Holy Prophet, who did not know that the promise of Allāh, as given to the faithful, would prove true.

1875 The word "this", in Moses' statement, refers to the punishment which he had given to the Egyptian, the meaning being that it was on account of his devilish deed that the Egyptian had been so punished. The Rabbinical explanation of Exod. 2:12, which mentions Moses' slaying the Egyptian, is that the Egyptian merited death "because he had forced an Israelitish woman to commit adultery with him" (Jewish En., vol. ix, p. 48). The Qur'ān does not name the offence, but there is no doubt that it calls his offence *a devilish deed*. For the meaning of *ghafr*, see 380. V. 17 shows clearly that Moses did not consider himself as one who had done an unjust deed or helped a guilty person. See also 1808.

1876 Moses' prayer is not evidence of his being guilty, for the words *ẓalamtu nafsī* mean *I have caused detriment to myself*, the primary significance of *ẓulm* being *naqṣ* (T), or *making to suffer loss* or *detriment* (LL), and this is the meaning adopted in 7:160 and 18:33. *Ẓalama-hū* also signifies *he imposed upon him a burden that was above his power* or *ability*. The meaning here is that he had risked his own life in giving help to another.

ing out to him for help. Moses said to him: Thou art surely one erring manifestly.[1876a]

يستصرخه قال له موسى إنك لغوي مبين ﴿١٨﴾

19 So when he desired to seize him who was an enemy to them both, he said: O Moses, dost thou intend to kill me as thou didst kill a person yesterday? Thou only desirest to be a tyrant in the land, and thou desirest not to be of those who act aright.

فلما أن أراد أن يبطش بالذي هو عدو لهما قال يموسى أتريد أن تقتلني كما قتلت نفسا بالأمس إن تريد إلا أن تكون جبارا في الأرض وما تريد أن تكون من المصلحين ﴿١٩﴾

20 And a man came running from the remotest part of the city. He said: O Moses, the chiefs are consulting together to slay thee, so depart (at once); surely I am of those who wish thee well.

وجاء رجل من أقصا المدينة يسعى قال يموسى إن الملأ يأتمرون بك ليقتلوك فاخرج إني لك من النصحين ﴿٢٠﴾

21 So he went forth therefrom, fearing, awaiting. He said: My Lord, deliver me from the iniquitous people.

فخرج منها خائفا يترقب قال رب نجني من القوم الظلمين ﴿٢١﴾

SECTION 3: **History of Moses**

22 And when he turned his face towards Midian, he said: Maybe my Lord will guide me in the right path.

ولما توجه تلقاء مدين قال عسى ربي أن يهديني سواء السبيل ﴿٢٢﴾

23 And when he came to the water of Midian, he found there a group of men watering, and he found besides them two women keeping back (their flocks). He said: What is the matter with you? They said: We cannot water until the shepherds take away (their sheep) from the water; and our father is a very old man.

ولما ورد ماء مدين وجد عليه أمة من الناس يسقون ووجد من دونهم امرأتين تذودان قال ما خطبكما قالتا لا نسقي حتى يصدر الرعاء وأبونا شيخ كبير ﴿٢٣﴾

24 So he watered (their sheep) for them, then went back to the shade, and said: My Lord, I stand in need of whatever good Thou mayest send to me.

فسقى لهما ثم تولى إلى الظل فقال رب إني لما أنزلت إلي من خير فقير ﴿٢٤﴾

1876a Moses had helped the man on the first occasion because he was oppressed, but now this very man was oppressing another. Therefore he refused to help him.

25 Then one of the two women came to him walking bashfully. She said: My father[1877] invites thee that he may reward thee for having watered for us. So when he came to him and related to him the story, he said: Fear not, thou art secure from the iniquitous people.

فَجَآءَتۡهُ إِحۡدَىٰهُمَا تَمۡشِي عَلَى ٱسۡتِحۡيَآءٖ
قَالَتۡ إِنَّ أَبِي يَدۡعُوكَ لِيَجۡزِيَكَ أَجۡرَ مَا
سَقَيۡتَ لَنَاۚ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُۥ وَقَصَّ عَلَيۡهِ
ٱلۡقَصَصَ قَالَ لَا تَخَفۡۖ نَجَوۡتَ مِنَ
ٱلۡقَوۡمِ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 One of them said: O my father, employ him; surely the best of those that thou canst employ is the strong, the faithful one.

قَالَتۡ إِحۡدَىٰهُمَا يَٰٓأَبَتِ ٱسۡتَـٔۡجِرۡهُۖ
إِنَّ خَيۡرَ مَنِ ٱسۡتَـٔۡجَرۡتَ ٱلۡقَوِيُّ ٱلۡأَمِينُ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 He said: I desire to marry one of these two daughters of mine to thee on condition that thou serve me for eight years; but, if thou complete ten, it will be of thy own free will, and I wish not to be hard on thee. If Allāh please, thou wilt find me one of the righteous.[1878]

قَالَ إِنِّيٓ أُرِيدُ أَنۡ أُنكِحَكَ إِحۡدَى
ٱبۡنَتَيَّ هَٰتَيۡنِ عَلَىٰٓ أَن تَأۡجُرَنِي ثَمَٰنِيَ
حِجَجٖۖ فَإِنۡ أَتۡمَمۡتَ عَشۡرٗا فَمِنۡ
عِندِكَۖ وَمَآ أُرِيدُ أَنۡ أَشُقَّ عَلَيۡكَۚ
سَتَجِدُنِيٓ إِن شَآءَ ٱللَّهُ مِنَ ٱلصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 He said: That is (agreed) between me and thee; whichever of the two terms I fulfil, there will be no injustice to me; and Allāh is surety over what we say.

قَالَ ذَٰلِكَ بَيۡنِي وَبَيۡنَكَۖ أَيَّمَا ٱلۡأَجَلَيۡنِ
قَضَيۡتُ فَلَا عُدۡوَٰنَ عَلَيَّۖ وَٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ
مَا نَقُولُ وَكِيلٞ ﴿٢٨﴾

1877 According to Ex. 2:18, the old man was Reuel, but in Gen. 3:1 he is called Jethro and he is said to have had seven daughters. The Qur'ān does not state how many daughters the man had; it only speaks of two of them being in charge of their father's flock. Hence the alleged confusion of this story with that of Laban's two daughters is itself due to a confusion. The commentators say this man was Shu'aib, and Shu'aib is mentioned by the name of Jethro in the Bible.

1878 Christian critical opinion discovers here another confusion. Because Jacob had made an agreement with Laban to serve him for seven years as a condition of marrying one of his daughters (Gen. 29:18), it is alleged that this fact must have been present in the Prophet's mind in a confused state, giving rise to the story relating to Moses' serving Jethro for eight or ten years. According to Rabbinical accounts, Moses lived with Jethro for ten years, which corroborates the Quranic story in substance (see *Jewish En.*), and there is nothing improbable in the circumstance that he may have served him during that period and married one of his daughters. But what is stated here has really a deeper significance beneath it. In Moses' stay at Midian for ten years, there is a prophetical reference to the ten years of the Prophet's life at Madīnah. The mention of eight years has another underlying significance, for it was after eight years that the Prophet came back to Makkah as a conqueror, a clear reference to which is contained further on in v. 85: *He who has made the Qur'ān binding on thee will surely bring thee back to the place of return.* This occurred exactly eight years after his Flight. That such is the real significance of relating this narrative is made clear by the Qur'ān itself further on in v. 45, where the Prophet is thus addressed:

SECTION 4 : History of Moses

29 Then when Moses had completed the term, and was travelling with his family, he perceived a fire on the side of the mountain. He said to his family : Wait, I see a fire ; maybe I will bring to you from it some news or a brand of fire, so that you may warm yourselves.

فَلَمَّا قَضَىٰ مُوسَى الْأَجَلَ وَسَارَ بِأَهْلِهِ آنَسَ مِنْ جَانِبِ الطُّورِ نَارًا ۚ قَالَ لِأَهْلِهِ امْكُثُوا إِنِّي آنَسْتُ نَارًا لَعَلِّي آتِيكُمْ مِنْهَا بِخَبَرٍ أَوْ جَذْوَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَصْطَلُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 And when he came to it, he was called from the right side of the valley in the blessed spot of the bush : O Moses, surely I am Allāh, the Lord of the worlds :

فَلَمَّا أَتَاهَا نُودِيَ مِنْ شَاطِئِ الْوَادِ الْأَيْمَنِ فِي الْبُقْعَةِ الْمُبَارَكَةِ مِنَ الشَّجَرَةِ أَنْ يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنِّي أَنَا اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And cast down thy rod. So when he saw it in motion as if it were a serpent, he turned away retreating, and looked not back. O Moses, come forward and fear not ; surely thou art of those who are secure.

وَأَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ۖ فَلَمَّا رَآهَا تَهْتَزُّ كَأَنَّهَا جَانٌّ وَلَّىٰ مُدْبِرًا وَلَمْ يُعَقِّبْ ۚ يَا مُوسَىٰ أَقْبِلْ وَلَا تَخَفْ ۖ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الْآمِنِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 Insert thy hand into thy bosom, it will come forth white without evil, and remain calm in fear. These two are two arguments from thy Lord to Pharaoh and his chiefs. Surely they are a transgressing people.

اسْلُكْ يَدَكَ فِي جَيْبِكَ تَخْرُجْ بَيْضَاءَ مِنْ غَيْرِ سُوءٍ وَاضْمُمْ إِلَيْكَ جَنَاحَكَ مِنَ الرَّهْبِ ۖ فَذَانِكَ بُرْهَانَانِ مِنْ رَبِّكَ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 He said : My Lord, I killed one of them, so I fear lest they slay me.

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي قَتَلْتُ مِنْهُمْ نَفْسًا فَأَخَافُ أَنْ يَقْتُلُونِ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 And my brother, Aaron, he is more eloquent in speech than I, so send him with me as a helper to confirm me. Surely I fear that they would reject me.

وَأَخِي هَارُونُ هُوَ أَفْصَحُ مِنِّي لِسَانًا فَأَرْسِلْهُ مَعِيَ رِدْءًا يُصَدِّقُنِي ۖ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يُكَذِّبُونِ ﴿٣٤﴾

And thou wast not dwelling among the people of Midian reciting to them Our messages. It is, as it were, to say that it was Moses that lived among the people of Midian, but his episode really conveys the news of what will happen to thee.

It may be added here that Moses was paid his wages, and the condition of his staying in Midian for eight or ten years was as much in his own interest as

35 He said: We will strengthen thine arm with thy brother, and We will give you both an authority, so that they shall not reach you.[1879] With Our signs, you two and those who follow you, will triumph.

قَالَ سَنَشُدُّ عَضُدَكَ بِأَخِيكَ وَنَجْعَلُ لَكُمَا سُلْطَانًا فَلَا يَصِلُونَ إِلَيْكُمَا ۚ بِآيَاتِنَا أَنْتُمَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَكُمَا الْغَالِبُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 So when Moses came to them with Our clear signs, they said: This is nothing but forged enchantment, and we never heard of it among our fathers of old!

فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالُوا مَا هَٰذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُفْتَرًى وَمَا سَمِعْنَا بِهَٰذَا فِي آبَائِنَا الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 And Moses said: My Lord knows best who comes with guidance from Him, and whose shall be the good end of the abode. Surely the wrongdoers will not be successful.

وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ جَاءَ بِالْهُدَىٰ مِنْ عِنْدِهِ وَمَنْ تَكُونُ لَهُ عَاقِبَةُ الدَّارِ ۖ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 And Pharaoh said: O chiefs, I know no god for you besides myself; so kindle a fire for me, O Hāmān, on (bricks of) clay, then prepare for me a lofty building, so that I may obtain knowledge of Moses' God, and surely I think him a liar.[1880]

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرِي فَأَوْقِدْ لِي يَا هَامَانُ عَلَى الطِّينِ فَاجْعَلْ لِي صَرْحًا لَعَلِّي أَطَّلِعُ إِلَىٰ إِلَٰهِ مُوسَىٰ وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّهُ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 And he was unjustly proud in the land, he and his hosts, and they deemed that they would not be brought back to Us.

وَاسْتَكْبَرَ هُوَ وَجُنُودُهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 So We caught hold of him and his hosts, then We cast them into the sea, and see what was the end of the iniquitous.

فَأَخَذْنَاهُ وَجُنُودَهُ فَنَبَذْنَاهُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ ۖ فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 And We made them leaders who call to the Fire, and on the day of Resurrection they will not be helped.[1881]

وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَئِمَّةً يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ ۖ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا يُنْصَرُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

42 And We made a curse to follow them in this world, and on the day of Resurrection they will be hideous.

وَأَتْبَعْنَاهُمْ فِي هَٰذِهِ الدُّنْيَا لَعْنَةً ۖ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ هُمْ مِنَ الْمَقْبُوحِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

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in the interest of Jethro, for as the Bible narrative shows, Pharaoh had died by the time that Moses' stay in Midian had come to an end.

1879 See 926, 1581, 1582.

1880 Pharaoh mocks at the idea of the Lord of the heavens and the earth, and derisively commands one of his ministers to prepare bricks — such being the significance of *kindling a fire on clay* — and to erect a lofty building so that he may have a peep into the heavens to discover the Lord of the heavens and the earth.

1881, see next page.

SECTION 5: **A Prophet like Moses**

43 And certainly We gave Moses the Book after We had destroyed the former generations — clear arguments for men and a guidance and a mercy, that they may be mindful.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ بَعْدِ
مَا أَهْلَكْنَا الْقُرُونَ الْأُولٰى بَصَآئِرَ
لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَّرَحْمَةً لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 And thou wast not on the western side when We revealed to Moses the commandment, nor wast thou among those present;[1882]

وَمَا كُنْتَ بِجَانِبِ الْغَرْبِيِّ إِذْ قَضَيْنَآ
إِلٰى مُوسَى الْأَمْرَ وَمَا كُنْتَ مِنَ الشّٰهِدِيْنَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 But We raised up generations, then life became prolonged to them. And thou wast not dwelling among the people of Midian,[1882a] reciting to them Our messages, but We are the Sender (of messengers).

وَلٰكِنَّآ أَنْشَأْنَا قُرُوْنًا فَتَطَاوَلَ عَلَيْهِمُ
الْعُمُرُ ۚ وَمَا كُنْتَ ثَاوِيًا فِيْٓ أَهْلِ مَدْيَنَ
تَتْلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتِنَا ۙ وَلٰكِنَّا كُنَّا مُرْسِلِيْنَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 And thou wast not at the side of the mountain when We called, but a mercy from thy Lord that thou mayest warn a people to whom no warner came before thee, that they may be mindful.[1883]

وَمَا كُنْتَ بِجَانِبِ الطُّوْرِ إِذْ نَادَيْنَا
وَلٰكِنْ رَّحْمَةً مِّنْ رَّبِّكَ لِتُنْذِرَ قَوْمًا
مَّآ أَتٰىهُمْ مِّنْ نَّذِيْرٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٤٦﴾

1881 Pharaoh is thus made a prototype of evil, and the opponents of the Holy Prophet are warned that by walking in Pharaoh's footsteps they will meet a similar fate.

1882 Moses' prophecy about the advent of the Prophet — of a *prophet like him* from among the Ishmaelites, the brethren of the Israelites — was so clear that one would think that the Prophet was there at the side of the mountain and Moses saw him with his own eyes. Hence the words, *thou wast not on the western side of the mountain, nor wast thou among those present.* The opening words of the next verse show that a very long time had elapsed between these two prophets. The clear prophecy of Moses of the appearance of a prophet *like unto him* was fulfilled after about two thousand years, and yet none of the prophets who followed Moses one after another had ever claimed to be a *prophet like Moses,* not even Jesus Christ, the last of the line of the Israelite prophets.

1882a Why is Midian mentioned in particular, though Moses stayed there for a short time; see 1878. Moses lived in Midian for ten years, just as the Prophet passed ten years of his life at Madīnah, yet what a transformation was wrought in the course of these ten years! This very fact was a clear proof of his truth.

1883 This verse throws light on the significance of the foregoing verses: *Thou wast not there, but it was Divine mercy that put a prophecy into the mouth of Moses regarding thee.* This is made clear by the words *a mercy from thy Lord that thou mayest warn. . .* The people to whom no warner had come before were the Arabs. Compare 32:3; 36:6.

47 And lest, if a disaster should befall them for what their hands have sent before, they should say: Our Lord, why didst Thou not send to us a messenger so that we might have followed Thy messages and been of the believers?

وَلَوْلَآ اَنْ تُصِيْبَهُمْ مُّصِيْبَةٌۢ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ
اَيْدِيْهِمْ فَيَقُوْلُوْا رَبَّنَا لَوْلَآ اَرْسَلْتَ
اِلَيْنَا رَسُوْلًا فَنَتَّبِعَ اٰيٰتِكَ وَنَكُوْنَ
مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 But (now) when the Truth has come to them from Us, they say: Why is he not given the like of what was given to Moses? Did they not disbelieve in that which was given to Moses before? They say: Two enchantments backing up each other! And they say: Surely we are disbelievers in both.[1884]

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ عِنْدِنَا قَالُوْا
لَوْلَآ اُوْتِيَ مِثْلَ مَآ اُوْتِيَ مُوْسٰى ؕ اَوَلَمْ
يَكْفُرُوْا بِمَآ اُوْتِيَ مُوْسٰى مِنْ قَبْلُ ۚ
قَالُوْا سِحْرٰنِ تَظٰهَرَا ۚ وَقَالُوْٓا
اِنَّا بِكُلٍّ كٰفِرُوْنَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 Say: Then bring some (other) Book from Allāh which is a better guide than these two, I will follow it — if you are truthful.[1885]

قُلْ فَاْتُوْا بِكِتٰبٍ مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ هُوَ
اَهْدٰى مِنْهُمَآ اَتَّبِعْهُ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 But if they answer thee not, know that they only follow their low desires. And who is more erring than he who follows his low desires without any guidance from Allāh? Surely Allāh guides not the iniquitous people.

فَاِنْ لَّمْ يَسْتَجِيْبُوْا لَكَ فَاعْلَمْ اَنَّمَا
يَتَّبِعُوْنَ اَهْوَآءَهُمْ ؕ وَمَنْ اَضَلُّ
مِمَّنِ اتَّبَعَ هَوٰىهُ بِغَيْرِ هُدًى
مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَهْدِى
الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٥٠﴾

1884 The disbelievers did not adopt any one firm position against the Holy Prophet, and whenever one objection was shown to be erroneous, they took refuge in another. At the advent of the Prophet they said that he should have received a revelation like the revelation of Moses, but when the likeness was pointed out to them, and they were told that their fate would be like the fate of the opponents of Moses, they said that both Moses and Muḥammad were deceivers who enchanted people by their eloquence, the one helping the other, and therefore they believed neither in the one nor in the other.

1885 The meaning is that, if you do not admit the truth of either revelation, you should show some other revelation existing in the world, which should offer better guidance. This statement only draws attention to the fact that the revelation granted to Moses and that granted to the Holy Prophet both occupy a higher position than any other revelation. And this is in fact true, for among all the sacred books of the world the Bible occupies a position second only to the Holy Qur'ān. The words, however, do not signify that the Bible occupies a position equal to the Holy Qur'ān. For their comparative merits see 697, 703. See also 152.

SECTION 6 : **The Truth of Revelation**

51 And certainly We have made the Word to have many connections for their sake, so that they may be mindful.[1886]

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

52 Those to whom We gave the Book before it, they are believers in it.[1887]

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ هُمْ بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 And when it is recited to them they say : We believe in it ; surely it is the Truth from our Lord ; we were indeed before this submitting ones.

وَإِذَا يُتْلٰى عَلَيْهِمْ قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِهِ إِنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 These will be granted their reward twice, because they are steadfast, and they repel evil with good and spend out of what We have given them.[1888]

أُولٰئِكَ يُؤْتَوْنَ أَجْرَهُمْ مَرَّتَيْنِ بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَيَدْرَءُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنٰهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 And when they hear idle talk, they turn aside from it and say : For us are our deeds and for you your deeds. Peace be to you ! We desire not the ignorant.

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا اللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَقَالُوا لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ سَلٰمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ لَا نَبْتَغِي الْجٰهِلِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

1886 *Waṣṣala* signifies *he joined* or *connected much* or *he made* (a string) *to have many joinings* (T, LL). What is implied here is that the word of Allāh, as contained in the Qur'ān, is made to have many points of connection with previous revelation, so that it may be the easier for them to be reminded of its truth. Even if they did not believe in previous revelation, the broad points of likeness in the principles of two different prophets appearing at such a distance of time from each other, among entirely different nations, and under totally different circumstances, and the fulfilment of the prophecies uttered by one in the other, afforded conclusive evidence of the truth of them both. That the reference is to the connection with the previous revelation is also shown by the verse that follows, where those who have been given the Book are clearly spoken of.

1887 It is not meant that all those who have previously been given the Scriptures believe in the Qur'ān. The verse only draws attention to the fact that all believe in the truth of revelation from Allāh, and they cannot deny the points of connection between the two revelations, the truth of the fundamental principles and the fulfilment of prophecies. But only those would believe who have submitted themselves already to Allāh, as the verse that follows shows.

1888 The reason for a double reward — which only means a *greater reward* — is given in the words that follow: *Because they are steadfast and they repel evil with good and spend out of what We have given them.* They had to suffer persecution, and not only did they remain steadfast in these great trials, but they repelled the evil of their persecutors with good, and in addition to all this made great sacrifices in the cause of Truth. See also 1987 on 33:31 and 2458.

56 Surely thou canst not guide whom thou lovest, but Allāh guides whom He pleases; and He knows best those who walk aright.[1889]

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 And they say: If we follow the guidance with thee, we should be carried off from our country. Have We not settled them in a safe, sacred territory to which fruits of every kind are drawn? A sustenance from Us — but most of them know not.[1890]

وَقَالُوا إِنْ نَتَّبِعِ الْهُدَىٰ مَعَكَ نُتَخَطَّفْ مِنْ أَرْضِنَا ۚ أَوَلَمْ نُمَكِّنْ لَهُمْ حَرَمًا آمِنًا يُجْبَىٰ إِلَيْهِ ثَمَرَاتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ رِزْقًا مِنْ لَدُنَّا وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 And how many a town have We destroyed which exulted in its means of subsistence! So those are their abodes: they have not been dwelt in after them except a little. And We are ever the inheritors.[1891]

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ بَطِرَتْ مَعِيشَتَهَا ۖ فَتِلْكَ مَسَاكِنُهُمْ لَمْ تُسْكَنْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۖ وَكُنَّا نَحْنُ الْوَارِثِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 And thy Lord never destroyed the towns, until He had raised in their metropolis a messenger, reciting to them Our messages, and We never destroyed the towns except when their people were iniquitous.

وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ مُهْلِكَ الْقُرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ يَبْعَثَ فِي أُمِّهَا رَسُولًا يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِنَا ۚ وَمَا كُنَّا مُهْلِكِي الْقُرَىٰ إِلَّا وَأَهْلُهَا ظَالِمُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 And whatever things you have been given are only a provision of this world's life and its adornment, and whatever is with Allāh is better and more lasting. Do you not then understand?

وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَمَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتُهَا ۚ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

1889 It is related that when Abū Ṭālib was on his deathbed, the Holy Prophet asked him to believe in Divine Unity. Abū Jahl, being by him at the time, dissuaded him from doing so, saying that he should not desert the religion of his fathers. Abū Ṭālib died an unbeliever, and the words '*thou canst not guide whom thou lovest* were a comfort to the Prophet (B. 65: xxviii, 1). But the words are true in a general sense as well. The Prophet wished that all people should accept the Truth and better their lives. But all this was to be brought about gradually.

1890 The verse speaks first of the unfounded fears of those who thought that the weakness of the Muslims would result in the seizure, death, or expulsion of those who accepted the faith of Islām. In reply they are told that the prophecies which declare Makkah to be a safe and sacred territory, to which people will flock in all ages, must come to fulfilment, and Makkah will ultimately be theirs for whose sake these prophecies were uttered.

1891 That is, even now the Divine kingdom will be established, and the true believers in God will be made masters of the country.

SECTION 7 · **Opponents shall be brought low**

61 Is he to whom We have promised a goodly promise, which he will meet with, like him whom We have provided with the provisions of this world's life, then on the day of Resurrection he will be of those brought up (for punishment) ?[1892]

اَفَمَنْ وَّعَدْنٰهُ وَعْدًا حَسَنًا فَهُوَ لَاقِيْهِ كَمَنْ مَّتَّعْنٰهُ مَتَاعَ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ هُوَ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ مِنَ الْمُحْضَرِيْنَ ﴿٦١﴾

62 And the day when He will call them and say : Where are those whom you deemed to be My associates ?

وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيْهِمْ فَيَقُوْلُ اَيْنَ شُرَكَآءِيَ الَّذِيْنَ كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُوْنَ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 Those against whom the word has proved true will say : Our Lord, these are they whom we caused to deviate — we caused them to deviate as we ourselves deviated. We declare our innocence before Thee. Us they never worshipped.[1893]

قَالَ الَّذِيْنَ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلُ رَبَّنَا هٰٓؤُلَآءِ الَّذِيْنَ اَغْوَيْنَا ۚ اَغْوَيْنٰهُمْ كَمَا غَوَيْنَا ۚ تَبَرَّاْنَآ اِلَيْكَ ۫ مَا كَانُوْٓا اِيَّانَا يَعْبُدُوْنَ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 And it will be said : Call your associate-gods. So they will call upon them, but they will not answer them, and they will see the chastisement. Would that they had followed the right way !

وَقِيْلَ ادْعُوْا شُرَكَآءَكُمْ فَدَعَوْهُمْ فَلَمْ يَسْتَجِيْبُوْا لَهُمْ وَرَاَوُا الْعَذَابَ ۚ لَوْ اَنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا يَهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿٦٤﴾

65 And the day He will call them, then say : What was the answer you gave to the messengers ?

وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيْهِمْ فَيَقُوْلُ مَاذَآ اَجَبْتُمُ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 On that day excuses will become obscure to them, so they will not ask each other.[1894]

فَعَمِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْاَنْۢبَآءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَهُمْ لَا يَتَسَآءَلُوْنَ ﴿٦٦﴾

1892 There are two parties spoken of here: the Prophet and his followers, who have received a goodly promise from Allāh, though weak and oppressed at the time, and the powerful enemy, who has all the provisions of life in his possession, but who will one day be called upon to receive judgment.

1893 All commentators agree that by those against whom the *word has proved true* are meant *the leaders in unbelief* (JB, Kf). Their saying *Us they never worshipped* shows that these very leaders are spoken of as the gods whom their followers worship.

1894 They will not be able to offer an excuse, for the vanity of the false excuses, which satisfied them here, would then become manifest to them. Nor will they ask each other, for each will know the falsity of the excuses of the others.

67 But as to him who repents and believes and does good, maybe he will be among the successful.

فَأَمَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا
فَعَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُفْلِحِينَ ٦٧

68 And thy Lord creates and chooses whom He pleases. To choose is not theirs. Glory be to Allāh and exalted be He above what they associate (with Him)!

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ ۗ مَا
كَانَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ ۗ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَتَعَالَىٰ
عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ٦٨

69 And thy Lord knows what their breasts conceal and what they proclaim.

وَرَبُّكَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ
وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ٦٩

70 And He is Allāh, there is no God but He! His is the praise in this (life) and the Hereafter; and His is the judgment, and to Him you will be brought back.

وَهُوَ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۗ لَهُ الْحَمْدُ
فِي الْأُولَىٰ وَالْآخِرَةِ ۖ وَلَهُ الْحُكْمُ
وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ٧٠

71 Say: Do you see if Allāh were to make the night to continue incessantly on you till the day of Resurrection, who is the god besides Allāh who could bring you light? Will you not then hear?

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ
اللَّيْلَ سَرْمَدًا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَنْ
إِلَٰهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُمْ بِضِيَاءٍ ۗ
أَفَلَا تَسْمَعُونَ ٧١

72 Say: Do you see if Allāh were to make the day to continue incessantly on you till the day of Resurrection, who is the god besides Allāh that could bring you the night in which you take rest? Do you not then see?

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ
النَّهَارَ سَرْمَدًا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَنْ
إِلَٰهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُمْ بِلَيْلٍ تَسْكُنُونَ
فِيهِ ۗ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ٧٢

73 And out of His mercy He has made for you the night and the day, that you may rest therein, and that you may seek of His grace, and that you may give thanks.

وَمِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ
وَالنَّهَارَ لِتَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا
مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ٧٣

74 And the day when He will call them and say: Where are My associates whom you pretended?

وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيهِمْ فَيَقُولُ أَيْنَ شُرَكَائِيَ
الَّذِينَ كُنْتُمْ تَزْعُمُونَ ٧٤

75 And We shall draw forth from among every nation a witness and say: Bring your proof. Then shall they know that the Truth is Allāh's and that which they forged will fail them.

وَنَزَعْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا فَقُلْنَا
هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ فَعَلِمُوا أَنَّ الْحَقَّ لِلَّهِ
وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ٧٥

SECTION 8 : **Korah's Wealth leads him to Ruin**

76 Korah was surely of the people of Moses, but he oppressed them, and We gave him treasures, so much so that his hoards of wealth would weigh down a body of strong men.[1895] When his people said to him : Exult not ; surely Allāh loves not the exultant.

إِنَّ قَارُوْنَ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمِ مُوْسٰى فَبَغٰى
عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ وَ اٰتَيْنٰهُ مِنَ الْكُنُوْزِ مَآ إِنَّ
مَفَاتِحَهٗ لَتَنُوْٓأُ بِالْعُصْبَةِ أُولِى الْقُوَّةِ
إِذْ قَالَ لَهٗ قَوْمُهٗ لَا تَفْرَحْ إِنَّ
اللّٰهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَرِحِيْنَ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 And seek the abode of the Hereafter by means of what Allāh has given thee, and neglect not thy portion of the world, and do good (to others) as Allāh has done good to thee, and seek not to make mischief in the land. Surely Allāh loves not the mischief-makers.

وَ ابْتَغِ فِيْمَآ اٰتٰىكَ اللّٰهُ الدَّارَ الْاٰخِرَةَ
وَ لَا تَنْسَ نَصِيْبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَ
أَحْسِنْ كَمَآ أَحْسَنَ اللّٰهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ
الْفَسَادَ فِى الْاَرْضِ ۖ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا
يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِيْنَ ﴿٧٧﴾

78 He said : I have been given this only on account of the knowledge I have. Did he not know that Allāh had destroyed before him generations who were mightier in strength than he and greater in assemblage ? And the guilty are not questioned about their sins.[1896]

قَالَ إِنَّمَآ أُوْتِيْتُهٗ عَلٰى عِلْمٍ عِنْدِىْ ۖ
أَوَ لَمْ يَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللّٰهَ قَدْ أَهْلَكَ مِنْ
قَبْلِهٖ مِنَ الْقُرُوْنِ مَنْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُ
قُوَّةً وَّ أَكْثَرُ جَمْعًا ۖ وَ لَا يُسْـَٔلُ
عَنْ ذُنُوْبِهِمُ الْمُجْرِمُوْنَ ﴿٧٨﴾

1895 The story of Korah, or *Qārūn*, his revolt against the leadership of Moses and Aaron, and his being swallowed up by the earth, is given in Num. 16. The only addition of any importance to the story as given in the Qur'ān is the mention of his wealth, a fact noticed in Rabbinical literature (Jewish En.), according to which the fabulous renown of his wealth was so great that the keys of his treasures formed a load for three hundred mules. The word *mafātiḥ* as occurring in the Qur'ān is plural of *maftaḥ*, which means a *hoard*, or *treasure*, or *buried property* (LL). It is also plural of *miftāḥ*, meaning a *key*, but *kunūz* (meaning treasures, sing. *kanz*) being in the plural, the personal pronoun in *mafātiḥa-hū* does not refer to *kunūz* but to Korah ; accordingly *mafātiḥ* denotes *treasures*.

There may be a reference in the mention of Korah's wealth to the modern materialistic tendency of making the accumulation of wealth the great object of life to the utter neglect of the Truth. The hankering after wealth and the amassing of gold leads undoubtedly to ruin, as it is leading the world to-day.

1896 They will not be asked to give any explanation for their sins, as Allāh is All-Knowing.

79 So he went forth to his people in his finery. Those who desired this world's life said: O would that we had the like of what Korah is given! Surely he is possessed of mighty good fortune!

فَخَرَجَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ فِي زِينَتِهِ ۖ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا يَا لَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ قَارُونُ إِنَّهُ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٧٩﴾

80 But those who were given the knowledge said: Woe to you! Allāh's reward is better for him who believes and does good, and none is made to receive this except the patient.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَيْلَكُمْ ثَوَابُ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِمَنْ آمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ۚ وَلَا يُلَقَّاهَا إِلَّا الصَّابِرُونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

81 So We made the earth to swallow him up and his abode. He had no host to help him against Allāh, nor was he of those who can defend themselves.[1897]

فَخَسَفْنَا بِهِ وَبِدَارِهِ الْأَرْضَ فَمَا كَانَ لَهُ مِنْ فِئَةٍ يَنْصُرُونَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُنْتَصِرِينَ ﴿٨١﴾

82 And those who had yearned for his place the day before began to say: Ah! (know) that Allāh amplifies and straitens the means of subsistence for whom He pleases of His servants; had not Allāh been gracious to us, He would have abased us. Ah! (know) that the ungrateful are never successful.

وَأَصْبَحَ الَّذِينَ تَمَنَّوْا مَكَانَهُ بِالْأَمْسِ يَقُولُونَ وَيْكَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَقْدِرُ ۖ لَوْلَا أَنْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا لَخَسَفَ بِنَا ۖ وَيْكَأَنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿٨٢﴾

SECTION 9: **The Prophet will return to Makkah**

83 That abode of the Hereafter, We assign it to those who have no desire to exalt themselves in the earth nor to make mischief. And the good end is for those who keep their duty.

تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا ۚ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

84 Whoever brings good, he will have better than it; and whoever brings evil, those who do evil will be requited only for what they did.

مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِنْهَا ۖ وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَى الَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

1897 The meaning conveyed is that he perished. Khasf also signifies *abasing, humbling,* or *lowering* another, and the verb is khasafa in this case (T, Q, LL). I adopt this significance of *khasafa bi-nā* in the next verse.

85 He who has made the Qur'ān binding on thee will surely bring thee back to the Place of Return.[1898] Say: My Lord knows best him who has brought the guidance and him who is in manifest error.

إِنَّ الَّذِىْ فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْاٰنَ لَرَآدُّكَ اِلٰى مَعَادٍ ؕ قُلْ رَّبِّىْۤ اَعْلَمُ مَنْ جَآءَ بِالْهُدٰى وَ مَنْ هُوَ فِىْ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿٨٥﴾

86 And thou didst not expect that the Book would be inspired to thee, but it is a mercy from thy Lord, so be not a backer up of the disbelievers.

وَ مَا كُنْتَ تَرْجُوْۤا اَنْ يُّلْقٰۤى اِلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبُ اِلَّا رَحْمَةً مِّنْ رَّبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُوْنَنَّ ظَهِيْرًا لِّلْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٨٦﴾

87 And let them not turn thee aside from the messages of Allāh after they have been revealed to thee, and call (men) to thy Lord and be not of the polytheists.

وَ لَا يَصُدُّنَّكَ عَنْ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ بَعْدَ اِذْ اُنْزِلَتْ اِلَيْكَ وَ ادْعُ اِلٰى رَبِّكَ وَ لَا تَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ﴿٨٧﴾

88 And call not with Allāh any other god. There is no God but He. Everything will perish but He. His is the judgment, and to Him you will be brought back.

وَ لَا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللّٰهِ اِلٰهًا اٰخَرَ لَاۤ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ كُلُّ شَیْءٍ هَالِكٌ اِلَّا وَجْهَهٗ ؕ لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَ اِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُوْنَ ﴿٨٨﴾

1898 The word *ma'ād* means *the ultimate place of one's returning* (from *'āda,* meaning *he returned*) (LL). The word *ma'ād* here has been taken to mean Makkah according to an interpretation given by I'Ab, and T accepts this interpretation, because the conquest of it was promised to the Prophet, so that it was the place to which he would return. But Makkah is really called *ma'ād,* or Place of Return, because the pilgrims return to it (LL). According to some this verse was revealed on the Prophet's departure from Makkah, i.e., on his way to Madīnah. It contains a clear promise of the Prophet being brought back to the city from which he was now being expelled.



CHAPTER 29

Al-'Ankabūt: THE SPIDER

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 7 *sections*; 69 *verses*)

This chapter is entitled *The Spider* from the fact that false, idolatrous, and polytheistic beliefs are here (v. 41) compared with a spider's web. The significance is clear: false beliefs will not stand the test of time, and they shall be swept away before the strong current of Truth. This chapter and the three following form another group of Makkan revelation, each being headed by the letters *alif, lām, mīm,* and each containing clear prophecies of the onward march of Islām, and may be given the name of the *Alif lām mīm* Makkan group. These chapters belong to the close of the early, or the beginning of the middle, Makkan period.

The last chapter predicted in plain words a triumphal return of the Holy Prophet to Makkah, thus indicating the triumph of Islām. Here we are told that the great object of the triumph of Truth has never been achieved except by suffering sore afflictions and severe trials in its cause. Hence trials and persecutions were necessary. Starting thus, there is a reference to the persecution of children by their very parents, and the converts to Islām are told that they must yield to their parents in all other matters, but must resolutely reject false doctrines. The second, third and fourth sections make brief references to the histories of Noah, Abraham, Lot and other prophets, showing how the righteous had always to undergo trials and how they were subjected to persecutions, but false beliefs had no basis and had always been swept away by Truth. At the end of the fourth section, false beliefs are compared with a spider's web, thus illustrating their extreme frailty. The fifth section refers to the purifying effect of the Qur'ān, and the repeated demand for more signs is met with the simple answer that the Holy Word of God was in itself a sufficiently clear sign, because it wrought a transformation in the lives of those who followed it. The sixth section warns the disbelievers of the fate in store for them and of the consequences of their tyrannical persecutions of the Muslims; it also comforts the latter by stating that their sufferings will soon be changed into a state of happiness. The seventh section shows that Allāh, Who deals mercifully even with the disbelievers, will not allow the exertions of the faithful in the cause of Truth to remain unfruitful, and that those who strive hard and earnestly will be guided in the right way, which is the way to success.

SECTION 1 **Trials purify**

In the name of Allāh, the the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 I, Allāh, am the best Knower.[1899]

الٓمّٓ ۝١

2 Do men think that they will be left alone on saying, We believe, and will not be tried?[1900]

اَحَسِبَ النَّاسُ اَنْ يُّتْرَكُوْٓا اَنْ يَّقُوْلُوْٓا اٰمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُوْنَ ۝٢

3 And indeed We tried those before them, so Allāh will certainly know those who are true and He will know the liars.[1901]

وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ صَدَقُوْا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكٰذِبِيْنَ ۝٣

4 Or do they who work evil think that they will escape Us? Evil is it that they judge!

اَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِيْنَ يَعْمَلُوْنَ السَّيِّاٰتِ اَنْ يَّسْبِقُوْنَا ؕ سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُوْنَ ۝٤

5 Whoever hopes to meet with Allāh, the term of Allāh is then surely coming. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing.

مَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوْا لِقَآءَ اللّٰهِ فَاِنَّ اَجَلَ اللّٰهِ لَاٰتٍ ؕ وَهُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ ۝٥

6 And whoever strives hard, strives for himself. Surely Allāh is Self-sufficient, above (need of) (His) creatures.[1902]

وَمَنْ جَاهَدَ فَاِنَّمَا يُجَاهِدُ لِنَفْسِهٖ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَغَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ۝٦

7 And those who believe and do good, We shall certainly do away with their afflictions and reward them for the best of what they did.[1903]

وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ لَنُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّاٰتِهِمْ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ اَحْسَنَ الَّذِيْ كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝٧

1899 See 11.

1900 By the trials spoken of in these verses are meant the persecutions of the believers by the disbelievers. This is made clear in v. 10. A misconception as to the nature of these trials has led some critics to think that the first ten verses must have been revealed at Madīnah.

1901 The *knowing* in this case relates to a knowledge of the event when it takes place, when reward or punishment is meted out to a man for what he does. Allāh knows what a man will do but does not reward or punish, until He knows that the man has done a deed.

1902 As shown in 1793, the word *jihād* occurs in Makkan revelation frequently, and carries its proper significance of *striving hard* in Allāh's way. The suffering of persecutions and tertures at the hands of their enemies for the

1903, see next page.

8 And We have enjoined on man goodness to his parents. But if they contend with thee to associate (others) with Me, of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not. To Me is your return, so I will inform you of what you did.[1904]

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حُسْنًا ۖ وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ لِتُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا ۚ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾

9 And those who believe and do good, We shall surely make them enter among the righteous.

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَنُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ فِي الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٩﴾

10 And among men is he who says: We believe in Allāh; but when he is persecuted for the sake of Allāh, he thinks the persecution of men to be as the chastisement of Allāh.[1905] And if there comes help from thy Lord, they will say: Surely we were with you. Is not Allāh the Best Knower of what is in the hearts of mankind?

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ فَإِذَا أُوذِيَ فِي اللَّهِ جَعَلَ فِتْنَةَ النَّاسِ كَعَذَابِ اللَّهِ ۖ وَلَئِنْ جَاءَ نَصْرٌ مِنْ رَبِّكَ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّا كُنَّا مَعَكُمْ ۚ أَوَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِمَا فِي صُدُورِ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

11 And certainly Allāh will know those who believe, and He will know the hypocrites.

وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ ﴿١١﴾

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sake of their faith was no less a *jihād* for the Muslims at Makkah than their fighting in defence of Islām at Madīnah.

1903 *Kafara,* as also *kaffara,* means originally *he covered* or *concealed,* and *kaffara-l-sayyi'at, he did away with the evil* or *effaced it* (LL). *Sayyi'ah* has a double significance, it means *an evil deed* or *a sin,* as also *an evil accident, a trial* or *an affliction* (LL). Hence the words *la-nukaffiranna 'an-hum sayyi'āti-him* may signify either *the doing away with their afflictions* or *trials,* or *the doing away with their evil deeds.* I prefer the first because it is of the trials and afflictions of the believers that these verses speak. If the second significance is adopted, it would mean that the evil deeds which the believers did before they accepted the Truth would be effaced, because the course of their lives was now changed.

1904 This verse, while signifying the importance of obedience to parents, warns against attaching over-importance even to filial duty. It shows that when an important duty clashes with a still higher one, the former is to be sacrificed to the latter. It is related that when Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās became a convert to Islām, his mother swore that she would neither eat nor drink, until he reverted to disbelief, and that this verse was revealed on that occasion. It is a further proof that these verses were revealed at Makkah, because Sa'd was one of the early converts. In fact, it was at Makkah that children had to leave their parents on account of their conversion to Islām, the parents not allowing them to forsake their old religion.

1905 The meaning is that those who are weak in faith consider the persecution by the disbelievers, which was necessary to strengthen and purify their faith, as if it were a punishment from Allāh for their change of faith. The latter part of the verse is a prophecy as to what the weak in faith will say when they see the help of Allāh coming to the Muslims.

12 And those who disbelieve say to those who believe: Follow our path and we will bear your wrongs. And they can never bear aught of their wrongs. Surely they are liars.

وَقَالَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا
اتَّبِعُوْا سَبِيْلَنَا وَلْنَحْمِلْ خَطٰيٰكُمْ ؕ
وَمَا هُمْ بِحٰمِلِيْنَ مِنْ خَطٰيٰهُمْ مِّنْ
شَيْءٍ ؕ اِنَّهُمْ لَكٰذِبُوْنَ ﴿۱۲﴾

13 And they will certainly bear their own burdens, and other burdens besides their own burdens; and they will certainly be questioned on the day of Resurrection as to what they forged.[1906]

وَلَيَحْمِلُنَّ اَثْقَالَهُمْ وَاَثْقَالًا مَّعَ
اَثْقَالِهِمْ ز وَلَيُسْـَٔلُنَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ
عَمَّا كَانُوْا يَفْتَرُوْنَ ﴿۱۳﴾

SECTION 2: **Noah and Abraham**

14 And We indeed sent Noah to his people, so he remained among them a thousand years save fifty years.[1907] And the deluge overtook them, and they were wrongdoers.

وَلَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَا نُوْحًا اِلٰى قَوْمِهٖ فَلَبِثَ
فِيْهِمْ اَلْفَ سَنَةٍ اِلَّا خَمْسِيْنَ عَامًا ؕ
فَاَخَذَهُمُ الطُّوْفَانُ وَهُمْ ظٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿۱۴﴾

15 So We delivered him and the inmates of the ark, and made it a sign to the nations.

فَاَنْجَيْنٰهُ وَاَصْحٰبَ السَّفِيْنَةِ وَجَعَلْنٰهَآ
اٰيَةً لِّلْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿۱۵﴾

16 And (We sent) Abraham, when he said to his people: Serve Allāh and keep your duty to Him. That is better for you, if you did but know.

وَاِبْرٰهِيْمَ اِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ اعْبُدُوا
اللّٰهَ وَاتَّقُوْهُ ؕ ذٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ
اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۱۶﴾

17 You only worship idols besides Allāh and you invent a lie. Surely they whom you serve besides Allāh control no sustenance for you; so seek sustenance from Allāh and serve Him and be grateful to Him. To Him you will be brought back.

اِنَّمَا تَعْبُدُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ اَوْثَانًا
وَّتَخْلُقُوْنَ اِفْكًا ؕ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ
تَعْبُدُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ لَا يَمْلِكُوْنَ
لَكُمْ رِزْقًا فَابْتَغُوْا عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ الرِّزْقَ
وَاعْبُدُوْهُ وَاشْكُرُوْا لَهٗ ؕ اِلَيْهِ
تُرْجَعُوْنَ ﴿۱۷﴾

1906 It should be noted that the Qur'ān does not anywhere say that the burden of one shall be taken away by another. Each one is responsible for what he does. The "other burdens" are really their own burdens in misleading others, and thus the two burdens spoken of here are the burden of one's own wrongdoing and the burden of misleading others.

1907 The Bible gives 950 years to be the age of Noah. It is not improbable that the span of man's life may have been greater in his earlier history than at present, and Noah may have attained an extraordinary age among his compatriots. But there are indications that the reference here is to the abiding for 950 years of the law preached by Noah, his place then being taken by Abraham, and the reference

18 And if you reject, nations before you did indeed reject (the Truth). And the duty of the Messenger is only to deliver (the message) plainly.

وَإِن تُكَذِّبُوا فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ أُمَمٌ مِّن قَبْلِكُمْ ۖ وَمَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ ﴿١٨﴾

19 See they not how Allāh originates the creation, then reproduces it? Surely that is easy to Allāh.[1908]

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا كَيْفَ يُبْدِئُ اللَّهُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿١٩﴾

20 Say: Travel in the earth then see how He makes the first creation, then Allāh creates the latter creation. Surely Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.[1909]

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ بَدَأَ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ اللَّهُ يُنشِئُ النَّشْأَةَ الْآخِرَةَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 He chastises whom He pleases and has mercy on whom He pleases, and to Him you will be turned back.

يُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَرْحَمُ مَن يَشَاءُ ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ تُقْلَبُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 And you cannot escape in the earth nor in the heaven, and you have no protector or helper besides Allāh.

وَمَا أَنتُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ۖ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

SECTION 3: **Abraham and Lot**

23 And those who disbelieve in the messages of Allāh and the meeting with Him, they despair of My mercy, and for them is a painful chastisement.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَلِقَائِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ يَئِسُوا مِن رَّحْمَتِي وَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

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may be to these 950 years, as the mention of Abraham immediately afterwards shows.

1908 The law of creation and destruction of things, which is constantly working in nature, finds an expression in the lives of nations: a nation is brought into existence, then it is swept away and a new nation raised in its stead. It is to this law that the verse refers as a warning to the idolatrous Makkans that the time had now come when their place would be taken by another nation. This is made clear in the verses that follow.

It should be noted that vv. 18-23 are parenthetical, being an address to the opponents of the Holy Prophet. The Qur'ān frequently adopts this method of warning in the middle of another narration, for its object is not to relate a story, but to warn those who opposed the spread of Truth as revealed to the Holy Prophet.

1909 Elsewhere, the words *travel in the earth* are always followed by *then see what was the end of the rejectors,* instead of which we have here *how He makes the first creation, then Allāh creates the latter creation.* The apparent identity of the significance of these two statements is thus made clearer by the comparison, which shows that what is meant is the disappearance of one nation to give place to another.

24 So naught was the answer of his people except that they said: Slay him or burn him! But Allāh delivered him from the fire. Surely therein are signs for a people who believe.[1910]

فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهٖٓ اِلَّآ اَنْ قَالُوا
اقْتُلُوْهُ اَوْ حَرِّقُوْهُ فَاَنْجٰىهُ اللّٰهُ مِنَ
النَّارِ ۭ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُّؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And he said: You have only taken idols besides Allāh by way of friendship between you in this world's life, then on the day of Resurrection some of you will deny others, and some of you will curse others; and your abode is the Fire, and you will have no helpers.

وَقَالَ اِنَّمَا اتَّخَذْتُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ
اَوْثَانًا ۙ مَّوَدَّةَ بَيْنِكُمْ فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ
ثُمَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ يَكْفُرُ بَعْضُكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ
وَّيَلْعَنُ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا ۡ وَّمَاْوٰىكُمُ النَّارُ
وَمَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ نّٰصِرِيْنَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 So Lot believed in him. And he said: I am fleeing to my Lord. Surely He is the Mighty, the Wise.[1910a]

فَاٰمَنَ لَهٗ لُوْطٌ ۘ وَقَالَ اِنِّيْ مُهَاجِرٌ
اِلٰى رَبِّيْ ۭ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And We granted him Isaac and Jacob, and ordained prophethood and the Book among his seed. And We gave him his reward in this world, and in the Hereafter he will surely be among the righteous.

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهٗٓ اِسْحٰقَ وَيَعْقُوْبَ وَجَعَلْنَا
فِيْ ذُرِّيَّتِهِ النُّبُوَّةَ وَالْكِتٰبَ وَاٰتَيْنٰهُ
اَجْرَهٗ فِي الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَاِنَّهٗ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ
لَمِنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 And (We sent) Lot when he said to his people: Surely you are guilty of an abomination which none of the nations has done before you.

وَلُوْطًا اِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهٖٓ اِنَّكُمْ لَتَاْتُوْنَ
الْفَاحِشَةَ ۡ مَا سَبَقَكُمْ بِهَا مِنْ اَحَدٍ
مِّنَ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 Do you come to males and commit robbery on the highway, and commit evil deeds in your assemblies?[1911] But the answer of his people

اَىِٕنَّكُمْ لَتَاْتُوْنَ الرِّجَالَ وَتَقْطَعُوْنَ
السَّبِيْلَ ۙ وَتَاْتُوْنَ فِيْ نَادِيْكُمُ
الْمُنْكَرَ ۭ فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهٖٓ

1910 As in 21:69, so here, it is not stated that Abraham was actually cast into the fire. On the other hand, the plan was either *to slay* or *to burn* him, and therefore the *fire* may only stand for the opposition which these plans involved.

1910a The words *I am fleeing to my Lord* indicate his flight to another country whither he was commanded to flee by his Lord. This is more clearly stated in 19:48: "And I will withdraw from you," being followed by the statement made in 19:49: "So when he withdrew from them". This makes it further clear that his deliverance from the fire was brought about by his flight to another country.

1911 Three evils are ascribed to Lot's people — unnatural crime, highway

was only that they said: Bring on us Allāh's chastisement, if thou art truthful.

إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا ائْتِنَا بِعَذَابِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ ۝٢٩

30 He said: My Lord, help me against the mischievous people.

قَالَ رَبِّ انْصُرْنِي عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ۝٣٠

SECTION 4 : **Opposition to Truth ever a Failure**

31 And when Our messengers came to Abraham with good news, they said: We are going to destroy the people of this town, for its people are iniquitous.

وَلَمَّا جَاءَتْ رُسُلُنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ بِالْبُشْرَىٰ قَالُوا إِنَّا مُهْلِكُو أَهْلِ هَٰذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ ۖ إِنَّ أَهْلَهَا كَانُوا ظَالِمِينَ ۝٣١

32 He said: Surely in it is Lot. They said: We know well who is in it; we shall certainly deliver him and his followers, except his wife; she is of those who remain behind.

قَالَ إِنَّ فِيهَا لُوطًا ۚ قَالُوا نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ فِيهَا ۖ لَنُنَجِّيَنَّهُ وَأَهْلَهُ إِلَّا امْرَأَتَهُ كَانَتْ مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ ۝٣٢

33 And when Our messengers came to Lot, he was grieved on account of them, and he lacked strength to protect them.[1912] And they said: Fear not, nor grieve; surely we will deliver thee and thy followers, except thy wife — she is of those who remain behind.

وَلَمَّا أَنْ جَاءَتْ رُسُلُنَا لُوطًا سِيءَ بِهِمْ وَضَاقَ بِهِمْ ذَرْعًا وَقَالُوا لَا تَخَفْ وَلَا تَحْزَنْ ۖ إِنَّا مُنَجُّوكَ وَأَهْلَكَ إِلَّا امْرَأَتَكَ كَانَتْ مِنَ الْغَابِرِينَ ۝٣٣

34 Surely We are going to bring down upon the people of this town a punishment from heaven, because they transgressed.

إِنَّا مُنْزِلُونَ عَلَىٰ أَهْلِ هَٰذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ رِجْزًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ ۝٣٤

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robbery, and openly committing evil deeds in their assemblies. Therefore it is a mistake to explain all incidents in connection with Lot's story only with reference to unnatural crime as the sole evil of which they were guilty. *Qaṭ'al-sabīl* is, according to Kf, "the work of robbers, killing men and seizing their property". JB adds after the words *taqṭa'ūn al-sabīl* by way of explaining them, "for they used to murder the passers-by and rob them of their property". Other commentators give similar explanations.

1912 *Dhar'* signifies literally *the stretching forth of the arm,* and thus stands

35 And certainly We have left a clear sign of it for a people who understand.[1913]

وَلَقَد تَّرَكْنَا مِنْهَآ ءَايَةًۢ بَيِّنَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 And to Midian (We sent) their brother Shu'aib, so he said: O my people, serve Allāh and fear the Latter day, and act not corruptly, making mischief, in the land.

وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا فَقَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ ٱعْبُدُوا۟ ٱللَّهَ وَٱرْجُوا۟ ٱلْيَوْمَ ٱلْءَاخِرَ وَلَا تَعْثَوْا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 But they rejected him, so a severe earthquake overtook them and they lay prostrate in their abodes.

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ ٱلرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا۟ فِى دَارِهِمْ جَٰثِمِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 And 'Ād and Thamūd! And some of their dwellings are indeed apparent to you. And the devil made their deeds fairseeming to them, so he kept them back from the path, and they could see clearly.

وَعَادًا وَثَمُودَا۟ وَقَد تَّبَيَّنَ لَكُم مِّن مَّسَٰكِنِهِمْ ۖ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنُ أَعْمَٰلَهُمْ فَصَدَّهُمْ عَنِ ٱلسَّبِيلِ وَكَانُوا۟ مُسْتَبْصِرِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 And Korah and Pharaoh and Hāmān! And certainly Moses came to them with clear arguments, but they behaved haughtily in the land; and they could not outstrip (Us).

وَقَٰرُونَ وَفِرْعَوْنَ وَهَٰمَٰنَ ۖ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَهُم مُّوسَىٰ بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ فَٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَمَا كَانُوا۟ سَٰبِقِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 So each one We punished for his sin. Of them was he on whom We sent a violent storm, and of them was he whom the rumbling overtook, and of them was he whom We caused the earth to swallow, and of them was he whom We drowned.[1913a] And it was not Allāh, Who wronged them, but they wronged themselves.

فَكُلًّا أَخَذْنَا بِذَنۢبِهِۦ ۖ فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِ حَاصِبًا وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ أَخَذَتْهُ ٱلصَّيْحَةُ وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ خَسَفْنَا بِهِ ٱلْأَرْضَ وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ أَغْرَقْنَا ۚ وَمَا كَانَ ٱللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوٓا۟ أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

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for *power* or *ability* or *extent of power*; and *ḍāqa bi-l-amri dhar'-an* means *he was unable to accomplish the affair,* or *he lacked strength to accomplish the affair* (LL).

1913 Sodom and Gomorrah, the cities destroyed, are in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea, on the road from Arabia: "And it is on a road that still abides" (15:76).

1913a See 910 for the *storm*; 915, 918 for the *rumbling*; 1897 for the *swallowing*; 82, 902 for the *drowning*.

41 The parable of those who take guardians besides Allāh is as the parable of the spider that makes for itself a house; and surely the frailest of the houses is the spider's house — if they but knew![1914]

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ كَمَثَلِ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ اتَّخَذَتْ بَيْتًا ۖ وَإِنَّ أَوْهَنَ الْبُيُوتِ لَبَيْتُ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ ۖ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

42 Surely Allāh knows whatever they call upon besides Him. And He is the Mighty, the Wise.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 And these parables, We set them forth for men, and none understand them but the learned.

وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ ۖ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعَالِمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 Allāh created the heavens and the earth with truth. Surely there is a sign in this for the believers.

خَلَقَ اللَّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

PART XXI

SECTION 5: **The Qur'ān is a Purifier**

45 Recite that which has been revealed to thee of the Book and keep up prayer. Surely prayer keeps (one) away from indecency and evil; and certainly the remembrance of Allāh is the greatest (force). And Allāh knows what you do.[1915]

اتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ ۖ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

1914 A trust in false deities, which really stands for all false beliefs, is here compared with a spider's web to express the nature of its extreme frailty. It may prosper for a time, but no sooner is the light of criticism and research brought to bear upon it than it vanishes and leaves no trace behind.

There is also a reference here to the plans of the Holy Prophet's opponents, which were destined to be brought to naught by reason of their inability to withstand the overwhelming advance of Truth.

1915 This verse invites the followers of all religions to accept the Qur'ān on account of its purifying effect upon life, as the previous scriptures had ceased to effect deliverance from the bondage of sin, which is the real object of revelation. The verse also lays down the right principle for getting rid of the bondage of sin in the words *the remembrance of Allāh is the greatest*, i.e., *the most powerful and effective restraint* upon sin. It is a living belief in the Divine power, knowledge, and goodness that restrains man from walking in the ways of His displeasure. A sure and certain knowledge that every evil action leads to an evil consequence, that there is a Supreme Being, Who knows what is hid from human eyes and Whose moral law is effective where the moral force of society fails, that He is

46 And argue not with the People of the Book except by what is best,[1916] save such of them as act unjustly.[1917] But say : We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you, and our God and your God is One, and to Him we submit.

وَلَا تُجَادِلُوْٓا اَهْلَ الْكِتٰبِ اِلَّا بِالَّتِيْ هِيَ اَحْسَنُ ۖ اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا مِنْهُمْ وَقُوْلُوْٓا اٰمَنَّا بِالَّذِيْٓ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْنَا وَاُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكُمْ وَاِلٰهُنَا وَاِلٰهُكُمْ وَاحِدٌ وَّنَحْنُ لَهٗ مُسْلِمُوْنَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And thus have We revealed the Book to thee.[1918] So those whom We have given the Book believe in it, and of these there are those who believe in

وَكَذٰلِكَ اَنْزَلْنَآ اِلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ ۭ فَالَّذِيْنَ اٰتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِهٖ ۚ وَمِنْ هٰٓؤُلَاۗءِ مَنْ يُّؤْمِنُ بِهٖ ۭ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ

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the source of all goodness and it is through goodness that man can have communion with Him, are the only effective restraints upon evil.

It should also be noted that the recitation of the Book, the keeping up of prayer, and the remembrance of Allāh are really identical; for the Qur'ān is recited in prayers, and the Qur'ān is the best means of the remembrance of Allāh. Every line of it brings before the mind of the reader the goodness, power, and knowledge of the Divine Being, while there is no other Book which fulfils this requirement. The Qur'ān is neither a book of law, though it contains the principles of the laws necessary for the guidance of man, nor a book of sacred history, though it contains the necessary sacred history, but it is pre-eminently a Book that manifests the glory, greatness, grandeur, goodness, love, purity, power, and knowledge of the Supreme Being.

While, as generally understood, by the remembrance of Allāh is meant His glorification and praise in prayer, I'Ab is reported to have said that by the *dhikr* (*remembrance*) of Allāh is here meant Allāh's remembrance of man or His raising him to a place of eminence (IJ). Thus the significance would be that through prayer to God, not only is man freed from the bondage of sin, but (which is greater than this) he is raised to a place of higher eminence.

1916 It should be noted that this passage deals only with the mode of controversy to be adopted in inviting those who already had scriptures in their hands — which the Arabs had not — to the truth of Islām and the revelation of the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān makes its own meaning clear when it explains that it is the broad principles of religion that should demand paramount consideration. The fundamental principle of religion is that God exists and that He reveals Himself to man, and it is common to all revealed religions. The only difference is that a Muslim's is a purer monotheism, a conception of the Divine Being which gives the most perfect attributes to Him while declaring Him to be free from all imperfections and weaknesses, a conception which cannot reasonably be criticized by anyone who admits a belief in a Supreme Being. A Muslim's conception of Divine revelation is wider than that of the follower of any other religion, recognizing, as it does, that Divine revelation is granted in all ages and to all nations. A Muslim, therefore, admits the truth of all the prophets and revelations, and the follower of any other religion has nothing to lose but everything to gain by accepting Islām.

1917 The significance of the words *save such as act unjustly* is not that controversy is to be carried on with these in a different manner, but that the unjust would not accept this reasonable interpretation of the principles of religion. This is made clear in the verse that follows.

1918 *And thus have We revealed the Book*; that is, by confirming the truth of all previous revelation. The reference in *these* is to the Arabs, who possessed no sacred scriptures.

it; and none deny Our messages except the disbelievers.

بِآيٰتِنَآ إِلَّا الْكٰفِرُوْنَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And thou didst not recite before it any book, nor didst thou transcribe one with thy right hand, for then could the liars have doubted.[1919]

وَمَا كُنْتَ تَتْلُوْا مِنْ قَبْلِهٖ مِنْ كِتٰبٍ وَّلَا تَخُطُّهٗ بِيَمِيْنِكَ إِذًا لَّارْتَابَ الْمُبْطِلُوْنَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 Nay, it is clear messages in the hearts of those who are granted knowledge.[1920] And none deny Our messages except the iniquitous.

بَلْ هُوَ اٰيٰتٌۢ بَيِّنٰتٌ فِيْ صُدُوْرِ الَّذِيْنَ أُوْتُوا الْعِلْمَ ۚ وَمَا يَجْحَدُ بِآيٰتِنَآ إِلَّا الظّٰلِمُوْنَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 And they say: Why are not signs sent down upon him from his Lord? Say: Signs are with Allāh only, and I am only a plain warner.[1921]

وَقَالُوْا لَوْلَآ أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْهِ اٰيٰتٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّهٖ ۚ قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْاٰيٰتُ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ۚ وَإِنَّمَآ أَنَا نَذِيْرٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 Is it not enough for them that We have revealed to thee the Book which is recited to them? Surely there is mercy in this and a reminder for a people who believe.[1922]

أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِهِمْ أَنَّآ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ يُتْلٰى عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَرَحْمَةً وَّذِكْرٰى لِقَوْمٍ يُّؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٥١﴾

1919 The broad principles of religion and the beautiful moral and spiritual truths which find expression in the Qur'ān could not have been collected, if such a collection by human exertion were possible, except by one who had knowledge of all the previous scriptures; but the Holy Prophet had not read even a single book. He could neither read nor write. What might have been said against a prophet like Jesus, that he had read the previous scriptures and collected some beautiful truths from them, could not be said against the Holy Prophet, for the latter could neither read nor write, and his inability to do either is thus a confirmation of his truth. Leaving aside all the principles and truths, if we consider the broad principles that Islām taught with regard to the truth of Divine revelation in all ages and to all nations, a truth never taught or recognized by any religion or by any man before the Holy Prophet, it is remarkable that such a broad truth should have been preached by one who had never read the scriptures of any religion and who lived in a country which was almost cut off from all communication with other countries. See also 950.

1920 The Qur'ān contains not only truths which are met with in previous scriptures, but also others which are not to be found in any scripture, and which are only in the breasts of the learned ones, or those that may ever be conceived by the learned ones. What the most progressive religious thought of to-day considers desirable for the basis of a common religion of humanity is met with in Islām.

1921 The Prophet is a warner, and gives warning in due time that the signs are with Allāh, Whose power to send these signs they deny. Read also in this connection vv. 53-55, which uphold the coming of the punishment, leaving no doubt as to the meaning of signs being *with Allāh*.

1922 This is another reply to those who demanded signs. The Qur'ān is a mercy, if they would only accept it. They could see how the believers had benefited

SECTION 6 : **Warning and Consolation**

52 Say : Allāh is sufficient as a witness between me and you — He knows what is in the heavens and the earth. And those who believe in falsehood and disbelieve in Allāh, these it is that are the losers.

قُلْ كَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ بَيْنِيْ وَبَيْنَكُمْ شَهِيْدًا ۚ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ؕ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا بِالْبَاطِلِ وَكَفَرُوْا بِاللّٰهِ ۙ اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُوْنَ ﴿۵۲﴾

53 And they ask thee to hasten on the chastisement. And had not a term been appointed, the chastisement would certainly have come to them. And certainly it will come to them all of a sudden, while they perceive not.

وَيَسْتَعْجِلُوْنَكَ بِالْعَذَابِ ؕ وَلَوْلَاۤ اَجَلٌ مُّسَمًّى لَّجَآءَهُمُ الْعَذَابُ ؕ وَلَيَاْتِيَنَّهُمْ بَغْتَةً وَّهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُوْنَ ﴿۵۳﴾

54 They ask thee to hasten on the chastisement, and surely hell encompasses the disbelievers —[1923]

يَسْتَعْجِلُوْنَكَ بِالْعَذَابِ ؕ وَاِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمُحِيْطَةٌۢ بِالْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿۵۴﴾ ۙ

55 The day when the chastisement will cover them from above them, and from beneath their feet ! And He will say : Taste what you did.[1924]

يَوْمَ يَغْشٰىهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِنْ تَحْتِ اَرْجُلِهِمْ وَيَقُوْلُ ذُوْقُوْا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿۵۵﴾

56 O My servants who believe, surely My earth is vast, so serve Me only.[1925]

يٰعِبَادِيَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْۤا اِنَّ اَرْضِيْ وَاسِعَةٌ فَاِيَّايَ فَاعْبُدُوْنِ ﴿۵۶﴾

57 Every soul must taste of death ; then to Us you will be returned.

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَآئِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۟ ثُمَّ اِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُوْنَ ﴿۵۷﴾

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by it ; how a wonderful transformation had been wrought in their lives. Was it not a sufficient sign for them ? Indeed, this was direct evidence of the truth of the Holy Word, for to effect a pure transformation in the lives of those who would follow it was its avowed object, while the overthrow of its enemies was only an indirect testimony.

1923 Here the punishment of this life, which the disbelievers would hasten, is called *a hell*. If this verse is taken as indicating the punishment of the life after death, it is a transition from the punishment of this life to the punishment after death.

1924 The expression used is simply to indicate the all-encompassing nature of the punishment, which will not leave them a way to escape. Compare 6:65, and see 785.

1925 This is to comfort the Muslims against the severe persecutions by their enemies. If they are persecuted at Makkah, they will find a refuge elsewhere.

58 And those who believe and do good, We shall certainly give them an abode in high places in the Garden wherein flow rivers, abiding therein. Excellent the reward of the workers.

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُم مِّنَ الْجَنَّةِ غُرَفًا تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ نِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 Who are patient, and on their Lord they rely!

الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 And how many a living creature carries not its sustenance! Allāh sustains it and yourselves. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing.[1927]

وَكَأَيِّن مِّن دَابَّةٍ لَّا تَحْمِلُ رِزْقَهَا اللَّهُ يَرْزُقُهَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ ۚ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٦٠﴾

61 And if thou ask them, Who created the heavens and the earth and made the sun and the moon subservient? they would say, Allāh. Whence are they then turned away?

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ ۖ فَأَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٦١﴾

62 Allāh makes abundant the means of subsistence for whom He pleases of His servants, or straitens (them) for him. Surely Allāh is Knower of all things.

اللَّهُ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَقْدِرُ لَهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 And if thou ask them, Who is it that sends down water from the clouds, then gives life to the earth with it after its death? they will say, Allāh. Say: Praise be to Allāh! Nay, most of them understand not.[1928]

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّن نَّزَّلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ مِن بَعْدِ مَوْتِهَا لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ ۚ قُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ۚ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

SECTION 7: **Triumph of the Faithful**

64 And the life of this world is but a sport and a play. And the home of the Hereafter, that surely is the Life, did they but know!

وَمَا هَٰذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَهْوٌ وَلَعِبٌ ۚ وَإِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ الْحَيَوَانُ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

1927 This is a consolation to the Muslims that the giving up of their concerns and business at Makkah will not lead to their ruin.

1928 Most of them did not understand that the dead earth was now about to be raised to life.

65 So when they ride in the ships, they call upon Allāh, being sincerely obedient to Him ; but when He brings them safe to the land, lo! they associate others (with Him),

فَإِذَا رَكِبُوا فِي الْفُلْكِ دَعَوُا اللّٰهَ
مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ ۚ فَلَمَّا نَجّٰهُمْ
إِلَى الْبَرِّ إِذَا هُمْ يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 That they may be ungrateful for what We have given them, and that they may enjoy. But they shall soon know.

لِيَكْفُرُوا بِمَا آتَيْنٰهُمْ ۚ وَلِيَتَمَتَّعُوا ۗ
فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 See they not that We have made a sacred territory secure, while men are carried off by force from around them?[1928a] Will they still believe in the falsehood and disbelieve in the favour of Allāh ?

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا حَرَمًا آمِنًا وَّيُتَخَطَّفُ
النَّاسُ مِنْ حَوْلِهِمْ ۚ أَفَبِالْبَاطِلِ يُؤْمِنُونَ
وَبِنِعْمَةِ اللّٰهِ يَكْفُرُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

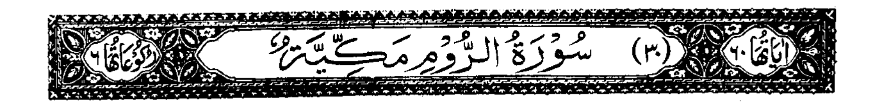
68 And who is more iniquitous than one who forges a lie against Allāh, or gives the lie to the Truth, when it has come to him? Is there not an abode in hell for the disbelievers ?

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ
كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُ ۚ
أَلَيْسَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 And those who strive hard for Us, We shall certainly guide them in Our ways. And Allāh is surely with the doers of good.

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ
سُبُلَنَا ۚ وَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾

1928a The *ḥaram* includes the city of Makkah and several miles of territory around it. War is forbidden within these limits. The reference in *men are carried off by force* is to the great insecurity of life and property in Arabia, while no one dared violate the sacredness of Makkah.



CHAPTER 30

Al-Rūm: THE ROMANS

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 6 *sections;* 60 *verses*)

The chapter receives its name from the important prophecy regarding the victory of *the Romans* over the Persians, who, at the time of the prophecy, had overrun the whole of the Roman Empire and were almost knocking at the gates of Constantinople. But the importance of this chapter does not lie in this prophecy alone, but in another and a grander prophecy declared along with it. This is the prophecy of the victory of the Muslims over their mighty foe, the Quraish; a circumstance which, in the light of all events on which human inference could be based, was an impossibility. This prophecy saw its fulfilment in the battle of Badr, which took place in the same year as the victory of the Romans over the Persians. Indeed, the one thing common to this group of the four chapters, 29th, 30th, 31st and 32nd, which begin with *alif lām mīm,* is the grand and majestic utterance that a great nation was about to be raised from the dead land of Arabia, and this prophecy, though clearly mentioned in all these chapters, finds the clearest expression here. The date of revelation of this chapter is put by the best authorities in the sixth or seventh year before the Hijrah.

The chapter opens with a reference to the Roman defeat, and immediately declares a prophecy of Rome's triumph over her foe, and adds a prophecy of a great Muslim victory over their oppressors at the same time. The second section speaks of the two parties of believers and disbelievers, stating that their respective conditions will soon be reversed, the Muslims getting the upper hand. The third section refers to the manifestation of Divine power in nature as an indication that a manifestation of the same power will bring about the triumph of Islām. The fourth section shows that the spiritual triumph of Islām is a certainty, because, responding as it does to human nature and answering all the requisites of the natural religion of man, it must ultimately appeal to man's nature and be accepted universally. This triumph, it is stated in the next section, was to be accomplished by a great and wonderful transformation in Arabia. Those who doubted the accomplishment of such a revolution, on account of the mighty opposition to the progress of Islām, are told in the concluding section that the overthrow of opposition was absolutely certain.

SECTION 1 A Great Prophecy

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 I, Allāh, am the Best Knower.[1928b]

الٓمّٓ ۝۱

2 The Romans are vanquished[1929]

غُلِبَتِ الرُّوْمُ ۝۲

3 In a near land, and they, after their defeat, will gain **victory**[1930]

فِيْٓ اَدْنَى الْاَرْضِ وَهُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ غَلَبِهِمْ سَيَغْلِبُوْنَ ۝۳

1928b See 11.

1929 The people of the empire called themselves Romans, and to them Greek, which was synonymous with heathen, was a term of reproach (Butler's *Arab Conquest of Egypt,* footnote, p. 141).

1930 The struggle between Persia and the Roman Empire had existed for a long time. The great struggle, in which Persia was victorious, began in 602 of the Christian era, when Chosroes II of Persia began war with Rome to avenge the death of Maurice, who was murdered by Phocas. "His armies plundered Syria and Asia Minor, and in 608 advanced to Chalcedon. In 613 and 614 Damascus and Jerusalem were taken by the General Shahabaraz, and the Holy Cross was carried away in triumph. Soon after, even Egypt was conquered. The Romans could offer but little resistance, as they were torn by internal dissensions and pressed by the Avars and Slavs" (En. Br., Art. "Chosrœs II"). When the news of this conquest reached Makkah, the Quraish were jubilant, as their sympathies were with the fire-worshipping Persians more than with the Christians, who, being the followers of the scriptures, were classed by them with the Muslims. It was in the year 615 or 616 that this revelation came to the Prophet, containing two different prophecies, one about the vanquishment of the victorious Persians, who had reached the very gates of Constantinople, by the Romans, who were by this time quite exhausted, and the other about the vanquishment of the powerful Makkans by the handful of persecuted Muslims.

It is noteworthy that a time limit was also announced along with these two prophecies, during which they would be brought to fulfilment. The word *biḍ'* occurring in the beginning of the next verse means *from three to nine* years, both inclusive, according to the best authorities (LL). It was exactly within nine years, in the year 624 of the Christian era, that the tables were turned against the powerful Persian Empire, the same being the year in which the mighty Quraish suffered a defeat at the hands of the helpless Muslims at Badr.

"In 624 he (Heraclius) advanced into northern Media, where he destroyed the great fire-temple of Goudzak" (En. Br., Art. "Chosrœs II"). In the same year, 313 Muslims, many of whom were raw, inexperienced youths without any arms, routed a strong force of about a thousand of the Quraish warriors, killing all the leaders and dealing a death-blow to the power of the enemy. The successes of the Muslim army, on the one hand, and of the Romans, on the other, continued until the Quraish were utterly crushed by the conquest of Makkah in 630, while "the Persian Empire, from the apparent greatness which it had reached ten years ago, sank into hopeless anarchy" (En. Br.).

Rodwell tries to mitigate the force of the prophecy by saying that the vowel-points were given later, and therefore the prophecy could be read either way, i.e., either as translated above, "And they, after their defeat, will gain victory", or reading *sa-yughlabūn,* "And they, after their defeat, will be defeated". In fact, thus read the statement is quite meaningless, because there is no sense at all in saying that *they will be defeated after their defeat.* The addition, however, of

4 Within nine years. Allāh's is the command before and after. And on that day the believers will rejoice

فِي بِضْعِ سِنِينَ ۗ لِلّٰهِ الْأَمْرُ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمِنْ بَعْدُ ۚ وَيَوْمَئِذٍ يَفْرَحُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤﴾

5 In Allāh's help.[1931] He helps whom He pleases, and He is the Mighty, the Merciful —

بِنَصْرِ اللّٰهِ ۚ يَنْصُرُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۖ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥﴾

6 (It is) Allāh's promise! Allāh will not fail in His promise, but most people know not.

وَعْدَ اللّٰهِ ۖ لَا يُخْلِفُ اللّٰهُ وَعْدَهُ وَلٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٦﴾

7 They know the outward of this world's life, but of the Hereafter they are heedless.

يَعْلَمُونَ ظَاهِرًا مِنَ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَهُمْ عَنِ الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ غٰفِلُونَ ﴿٧﴾

8 Do they not reflect within themselves? Allāh did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them but with truth, and (for) an appointed term. And surely most of the people are deniers of the meeting with their Lord.

أَوَلَمْ يَتَفَكَّرُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ ۗ مَا خَلَقَ اللّٰهُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَجَلٍ مُسَمًّى ۗ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنَ النَّاسِ بِلِقَائِ رَبِّهِمْ لَكٰفِرُونَ ﴿٨﴾

9 Have they not travelled in the earth and seen what was the end of those before them? They were stronger than these in prowess, and dug up the earth,[1932] and built on it

أَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عٰقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَانُوا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَأَثَارُوا الْأَرْضَ

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the words *on that day the believers will rejoice* makes it quite certain that the word is *yaghlibūn* — they will gain victory — as it was the victory of the Romans which could make the believers rejoice. There is no doubt that actual ignorance of the manner in which the revelation of the Qur'ān was propagated is the only excuse one can offer for such an absurd suggestion. Every portion revealed was committed to memory by large numbers and was repeated over and over in prayers in congregation, and the vowel-points *could not* be left undecided. Moreover, there is clear evidence that when this verse was revealed, Abū Bakr asserted in a public assembly that the Romans would defeat their enemies within three years, and Ubayy ibn Khalf, an unbeliever, denied this, and ten camels were betted on the issue. This coming to the Holy Prophet's knowledge, he told Abū Bakr that the time-limit of three years was not correct, for *biḍ'* signified *from three to nine* years. The time-limit was accordingly extended and the bet raised to a hundred camels (IJ). This further shows how sure were the companions and the Holy Prophet himself of the fulfilment of the prophecy. Betting, of course, was disallowed long afterwards in Madīnah.

1931 The help of Allāh is the help that was over and over again promised to the believers against the idolatrous Makkans. Thus we have here a clear prophecy of the victory of the Muslims over the Makkans within nine years from the pronouncement of the prophecy. It was fulfilled in the battle of Badr.

1932 The digging of the earth includes its ploughing for cultivation, its

more than these have built. And their messengers came to them with clear arguments. So it was not Allāh, Who wronged them, but they wronged themselves.

وَعَمَرُوهَا أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا عَمَرُوهَا وَجَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ۖ فَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٩﴾

10 Then evil was the end of those who did evil, because they rejected the messages of Allāh and mocked at them.

ثُمَّ كَانَ عَاقِبَةَ الَّذِينَ أَسَاءُوا السُّوأَىٰ أَن كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا بِهَا يَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

SECTION 2: **The two Parties**

11 Allāh originates the creation, then reproduces it, then to Him you will be returned.

اللَّهُ يَبْدَأُ الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12 And the day when the Hour comes, the guilty will despair.

وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُبْلِسُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 And they will have no intercessors from among their associate-gods, and they will deny their associate-gods.

وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُم مِّن شُرَكَائِهِمْ شُفَعَاءُ وَكَانُوا بِشُرَكَائِهِمْ كَافِرِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

14 And the day when the Hour comes, that day they will be separated one from the other.

وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَتَفَرَّقُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Then as to those who believed and did good, they will be made happy in a garden.

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَهُمْ فِي رَوْضَةٍ يُحْبَرُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

16 And as for those who disbelieved and rejected Our messages and the meeting of the Hereafter, they will be brought to chastisement.

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَلِقَاءِ الْآخِرَةِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ فِي الْعَذَابِ مُحْضَرُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 So glory be to Allāh when you enter the evening and when you enter the morning.

فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ حِينَ تُمْسُونَ وَحِينَ تُصْبِحُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

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digging for minerals and the making of aqueducts, as also the laying of the foundations of buildings.

18 And to Him be praise in the heavens and the earth, and in the afternoon, and when the sun declines.[1934]

وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَعَشِيًّا وَّحِيْنَ تُظْهِرُوْنَ ﴿١٨﴾

19 He brings forth the living from the dead and brings forth the dead from the living, and gives life to the earth after its death. And thus will you be brought forth.[1934a]

يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَيُحْيِ الْاَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۭ وَكَذٰلِكَ تُخْرَجُوْنَ ﴿١٩﴾

SECTION 3 : **Manifestations of Divine Power in Nature**

20 And of His signs is this, that He created you from dust, then lo! you are mortals (who) scatter.

وَمِنْ اٰيٰتِهٖٓ اَنْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ اِذَآ اَنْتُمْ بَشَرٌ تَنْتَشِرُوْنَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 And of His signs is this, that He created mates for you from yourselves that you might find quiet of mind in them, and He put between you love and compassion.[1935] Surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect.

وَمِنْ اٰيٰتِهٖٓ اَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ اَنْفُسِكُمْ اَزْوَاجًا لِّتَسْكُنُوْٓا اِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَّوَدَّةً وَّرَحْمَةً ۭ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَّتَفَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your tongues and colours. Surely there are signs in this for the learned.

وَمِنْ اٰيٰتِهٖ خَلْقُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافُ اَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَاَلْوَانِكُمْ ۭ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّلْعٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 And of His signs is your sleep by night and by day and your seeking of His bounty. Surely there are signs in this for a people who would hear.

وَمِنْ اٰيٰتِهٖ مَنَامُكُمْ بِالَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَابْتِغَاۗؤُكُمْ مِّنْ فَضْلِهٖ ۭ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَّسْمَعُوْنَ ﴿٢٣﴾

1934 The five times of prayer are clearly indicated in this and the previous verse, the evening prayer comprising both the prayer at sunset and the later evening prayer. The five times of prayer were observed at Makkah, and places at which the Muslims gathered for prayers are mentioned in reports relating to very early days of the Prophet's mission.

1934a This clearly points to the rising of a great nation from the Arābs, who were spiritually as well as intellectually dead.

1935 The close relation between the male and the female (i.e., husband and

24 And of His signs is this, that He shows you the lightning for fear and for hope, and sends down water from the cloud, then gives life therewith to the earth after its death. Surely there are signs in this for a people who understand.

25 And of His signs is this, that the heaven and the earth subsist by His command. Then when He calls you—from the earth—lo! you come forth.

26 And His is whosoever is in the heavens and the earth. All are obedient to Him.

27 And He it is, Who originates the creation, then reproduces it, and it is very easy to Him. And His is the most exalted state in the heavens and the earth; and He is the Mighty, the Wise.[1935a]

وَمِنْ اٰيٰتِهٖ يُرِيْكُمُ الْبَرْقَ خَوْفًا وَّ طَمَعًا وَّ يُنَزِّلُ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَيُحْيٖ بِهِ الْاَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ؕ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَّعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿۲۴﴾

وَمِنْ اٰيٰتِهٖۤ اَنْ تَقُوْمَ السَّمَآءُ وَالْاَرْضُ بِاَمْرِهٖ ؕ ثُمَّ اِذَا دَعَاكُمْ دَعْوَةً ۖ مِّنَ الْاَرْضِ ۖ اِذَاۤ اَنْتُمْ تَخْرُجُوْنَ ﴿۲۵﴾

وَلَهٗ مَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ؕ كُلٌّ لَّهٗ قٰنِتُوْنَ ﴿۲۶﴾

وَهُوَ الَّذِيْ يَبْدَؤُا الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيْدُهٗ وَهُوَ اَهْوَنُ عَلَيْهِ ؕ وَلَهُ الْمَثَلُ الْاَعْلٰى فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿۲۷﴾

SECTION 4: **Appeal to Human Nature**

28 He sets forth to you a parable relating to yourselves.[1936] Have you among those whom your right hands possess partners in that which We have provided you with, so that with respect to it you are alike — you fear them as you fear each other? Thus do We make the messages clear for a people who understand.

ضَرَبَ لَكُمْ مَّثَلًا مِّنْ اَنْفُسِكُمْ ؕ هَلْ لَّكُمْ مِّنْ مَّا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُكُمْ مِّنْ شُرَكَآءَ فِيْ مَا رَزَقْنٰكُمْ فَاَنْتُمْ فِيْهِ سَوَآءٌ تَخَافُوْنَهُمْ كَخِيْفَتِكُمْ اَنْفُسَكُمْ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْاٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَّعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿۲۸﴾

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wife) is expressed in words which indicate the closeness of the union to such an extent as to have misled many to suppose that the act of the physical creation of the female from the male is implied. But the Qur'ān explains itself when it refers to the ties of love and compassion, and to the quietness of mind which a married person finds in his mate. The verse gives us the Islamic ideal of marriage which serves the purpose not only of the increase of the human race but also that of the spiritual advancement of both the man and the woman by referring to the quietness of mind which they find in each other.

1935a *Mathal*, the word translated as *state* here, means really *ṣifat*, i.e., *description, condition, state* or *case*; and it is then used as meaning *a description by way of comparison* or *a similitude* (LL).

1936 If the master and the slave are not equal, how can inanimate objects,

29 Nay, those who are unjust follow their low desires without any knowledge; so who can guide him whom Allāh leaves in error? And they shall have no helpers.

بَلِ اتَّبَعَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوٓا أَهْوَآءَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۚ فَمَنْ يَهْدِى مَنْ أَضَلَّ اللّٰهُ ۖ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ نّٰصِرِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 So set thy face for religion, being upright, the nature made by Allāh in which He has created men. There is no altering Allāh's creation. That is the right religion — but most people know not —[1937]

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا ۖ فِطْرَتَ اللّٰهِ الَّتِى فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا ۖ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللّٰهِ ۖ ذٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ ۙ وَلٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 Turning to Him; and keep your duty to Him, and keep up prayer and be not of the polytheists,

مُنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ وَاتَّقُوهُ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 Of those who split up their religion and become parties; every sect rejoicing in that which is with it.

مِنَ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ وَكَانُوا شِيَعًا ۖ كُلُّ حِزْبٍۭ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 And when harm afflicts men, they call upon their Lord, turning to Him, then when He makes them taste of mercy from Him, lo! some of them begin to associate (others) with their Lord,

وَإِذَا مَسَّ النَّاسَ ضُرٌّ دَعَوْا رَبَّهُمْ مُّنِيبِينَ إِلَيْهِ ثُمَّ إِذَآ أَذَاقَهُمْ مِّنْهُ رَحْمَةً إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِّنْهُمْ بِرَبِّهِمْ يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 So as to be ungrateful for that which We have given them. So enjoy yourselves a while — you will soon come to know.

لِيَكْفُرُوا بِمَآ اٰتَيْنٰهُمْ ۖ فَتَمَتَّعُوا ۗ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

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such as stones, from among His creatures be equal to the Creator, Who is the Intelligent Cause and Controller of all?

1937 Islām according to this verse is the natural religion of man, or a religion to the truth of which human nature bears testimony. Its fundamental principles, the Unity and all-comprehensive providence of Allāh, the universality of Divine revelation, and the accountability for all actions in a life after death, are recognized by all religions and all nations, and their universal acceptance is a clear evidence that it is the very nature of man that bears testimony to their truth. Islām removes all limitations upon these three fundamental doctrines of the religion of humanity, and gives them as wide a significance as humanity itself. No other religion in the world has claimed to be the natural religion of man. There is a saying of the Holy Prophet to the same effect: "Every child that is born conforms to the true religion (literally, *human nature*), then his parents make him a Jew or a Christian or a Magian, as a beast is born entire in all its limbs (or without a defect); do you see one born maimed and mutilated?" Then he repeated (i.e., in support of what he said): "The nature made by Allāh in which He has created men; there is no altering Allāh's creation. That is the right religion" (B. 23:93). For the meaning of *fiṭrah*, see 2050. The other fundamental principle of the natural religion of man is referred to further on in vv. 38, 39.

35 Or, have We sent to them an authority so that it speaks of that which they associate with Him?[1938]

أَمْ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانًا فَهُوَ يَتَكَلَّمُ بِمَا كَانُوا بِهِ يُشْرِكُونَ ٣٥

36 And when We make people taste of mercy they rejoice in it, and if an evil befall them for what their hands have already wrought, lo! they despair.

وَإِذَا أَذَقْنَا النَّاسَ رَحْمَةً فَرِحُوا بِهَا ۖ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ إِذَا هُمْ يَقْنَطُونَ ٣٦

37 See they not that Allāh enlarges provision and straitens (it) for whom He pleases? Certainly there are signs in this for a people who believe.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ٣٧

38 So give to the near of kin his due, and to the needy and the wayfarer. This is best for those who desire Allāh's pleasure, and these it is who are successful.[1939]

فَآتِ ذَا الْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُ وَالْمِسْكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ لِّلَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ٣٨

39 And whatever you lay out at usury, so that it may increase in the property of men, it increases not with Allāh; and whatever you give in charity, desiring Allāh's pleasure — these will get manifold.[1940]

وَمَا آتَيْتُم مِّن رِّبًا لِّيَرْبُوَ فِي أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ فَلَا يَرْبُو عِندَ اللَّهِ ۖ وَمَا آتَيْتُم مِّن زَكَاةٍ تُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُضْعِفُونَ ٣٩

40 Allāh is He Who created you, then He sustains you, then He causes you to die, then brings you to life. Is there any of your associate-gods who does aught of it? Glory be to Him, and exalted be He above what they associate (with Him)!

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ۖ هَلْ مِن شُرَكَائِكُم مَّن يَفْعَلُ مِن ذَٰلِكُم مِّن شَيْءٍ ۚ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ٤٠

1938 No prophet can be shown to have received a revelation setting up creatures on an equal or co-operative plane with the Creator. Every such doctrine, besides being against the testimony of human nature and reason, stands condemned because of the absence of any revelation in its support.

1939 Charity to man is the practical outcome of the doctrine of the brotherhood of man, which is one of the two principles of the natural religion of man. As Islām has made the doctrine of the brotherhood of man a practical doctrine, it is always referred to in the Qur'ān in words enjoining charity on man for his brother-man.

1940 This verse lays stress upon the doctrine of charity to one's fellow-man. It says that some men there are who seek to increase their wealth by means of getting interest on money, i.e., they seek an increase of their wealth at the

SECTION 5 : A Transformation

41 Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea on account of that which men's hands have wrought, that He may make them taste a part of that which they have done, so that they may return.[1941]

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِى الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا
كَسَبَتْ اَيْدِى النَّاسِ لِيُذِيْقَهُمْ
بَعْضَ الَّذِىْ عَمِلُوْا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُوْنَ ﴿٤١﴾

42 Say : Travel in the land, then see what was the end of those before ! Most of them were polytheists.[1942]

قُلْ سِيْرُوْا فِى الْاَرْضِ فَانْظُرُوْا كَيْفَ
كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلُ ؕ
كَانَ اَكْثَرُهُمْ مُّشْرِكِيْنَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 Then set thyself, being upright, to the right religion before there come from Allāh the day which cannot be averted : on that day they will be separated.

فَاَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّيْنِ الْقَيِّمِ مِنْ
قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّاْتِىَ يَوْمٌ لَّا مَرَدَّ لَهٗ
مِنَ اللّٰهِ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَّصَّدَّعُوْنَ ﴿٤٣﴾

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expense of other men's property ; but that a Muslim should seek an increase of his wealth by giving it, for the sake of Allāh, to help his brother-man.

1941 History bears evidence to the truth of these words. Before the advent of the Holy Prophet corruption prevailed in all countries of the world. The *sea* may here signify the *islands.* Darkness prevailed in all countries of the world, affecting the beliefs of men as well as their deeds. Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Zoroastrianism had long ceased to have any healthy effect on the lives of their votaries, and the followers of these religions had not only ceased to practise virtue, but, worst of all, they had begun to look upon vice as virtue, and many of them attributed indecent and immoral practices to their sages and their gods. Christianity, which was then the youngest of the religions of the world, had also lost its purity. " The Christianity of the seventh century was itself decrepit and corrupt," is Muir's verdict. Such widespread corruption had never previously existed in the world's history. A recent writer, J. H. Denison, writes in " Emotion as the Basis of Civilization " : " In the fifth and sixth centuries, the civilized world stood on the verge of chaos. The old emotional cultures that had made civilization possible, since they had given to men a sense of unity and of reverence for their rulers, had broken down, and nothing had been found adequate to take their place. . . . It seemed then that the great civilization which it had taken four thousand years to construct was on the verge of disintegration, and that mankind was likely to return to that condition of barbarism where every tribe and sect was against the next and law and order were unknown. . . . Civilization like a gigantic tree whose foliage had over-reached the world . . . stood tottering . . . rotting to the core " (pp. 265-268). And then adds, speaking of Arabia : " It was among these people that the man was born who was to unite the whole known world of the east and south " (p. 269).

With the light of Islām, and through the torch of knowledge and civilization lit in Arabia, a new era dawned not only over Arabia, but also over other countries. Europe remained the longest in darkness, and it was only after the torch of knowledge had been lighted in Spain by the Muslims that both the Renaissance and the Reformation came.

1942 The doctrine of Unity had been forgotten by all nations ; even the Jews submitted to the decisions of their learned men with a submission which was only

44 Whoever disbelieves will be responsible for his disbelief; and whoever does good, such prepare (good) for their own souls,

مَنْ كَفَرَ فَعَلَيْهِ كُفْرُهٗ ۚ وَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِاَنْفُسِهِمْ يَمْهَدُوْنَ ﴿۴۴﴾

45 That He may reward out of His grace those who believe and do good. Surely He loves not the disbelievers.

لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ ؕ اِنَّهٗ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿۴۵﴾

46 And of His signs is this, that He sends forth the winds bearing good news, and that He may make you taste of His mercy, and that the ships may glide by His command, and that you may seek His grace, and that you may be grateful.[1943]

وَمِنْ اٰيٰتِهٖۤ اَنْ يُّرْسِلَ الرِّيٰحَ مُبَشِّرٰتٍ وَّلِيُذِيْقَكُمْ مِّنْ رَّحْمَتِهٖ وَلِتَجْرِيَ الْفُلْكُ بِاَمْرِهٖ وَلِتَبْتَغُوْا مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿۴۶﴾

47 And certainly We sent before thee messengers to their people, so they came to them with clear arguments, then We punished those who were guilty. And to help believers is ever incumbent on Us.

وَلَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ رُسُلًا اِلٰى قَوْمِهِمْ فَجَآءُوْهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ فَانْتَقَمْنَا مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اَجْرَمُوْا ؕ وَكَانَ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا نَصْرُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿۴۷﴾

48 Allāh is He Who sends forth the winds, so they raise a cloud, then He spreads it forth in the sky as He pleases, and He breaks it, so that you see the rain coming forth from inside it; then when He causes it to fall upon whom He pleases of His servants, lo! they rejoice —

اَللّٰهُ الَّذِيْ يُرْسِلُ الرِّيٰحَ فَتُثِيْرُ سَحَابًا فَيَبْسُطُهٗ فِي السَّمَآءِ كَيْفَ يَشَآءُ وَيَجْعَلُهٗ كِسَفًا فَتَرَى الْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خِلٰلِهٖ ۚ فَاِذَآ اَصَابَ بِهٖ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهٖۤ اِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُوْنَ ۚ ﴿۴۸﴾

49 Though they were before this, before it was sent down upon them, in sure despair.

وَاِنْ كَانُوْا مِنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يُّنَزَّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ قَبْلِهٖ لَمُبْلِسِيْنَ ﴿۴۹﴾

50 Look then at the signs of Allāh's mercy, how He gives life to the earth after its death. Surely He is the Quickener of the dead; and He is Possessor of power over all things.

فَانْظُرْ اِلٰۤى اٰثٰرِ رَحْمَتِ اللّٰهِ كَيْفَ يُحْيِ الْاَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ؕ اِنَّ ذٰلِكَ لَمُحْيِ الْمَوْتٰى ۚ وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿۵۰﴾

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due to God. That Christianity had long before forsaken the doctrine of Unity goes without saying.

1943 The verse calls attention to the change that was already coming over the peninsula; this was a clear indication of the mighty transformation that was ultimately to be brought about.

51 And if We send a wind and they see it yellow, they would after that certainly continue to disbelieve.[1944]

وَلَئِنْ أَرْسَلْنَا رِيحًا فَرَأَوْهُ مُصْفَرًّا لَّظَلُّوا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ يَكْفُرُونَ ٥١

52 So surely thou canst not make the dead to hear, nor canst thou make the deaf to hear the call, when they turn back retreating.

فَإِنَّكَ لَا تُسْمِعُ الْمَوْتَىٰ وَلَا تُسْمِعُ الصُّمَّ الدُّعَاءَ إِذَا وَلَّوْا مُدْبِرِينَ ٥٢

53 Nor canst thou guide the blind out of their error. Thou canst make none to hear but those who believe in Our messages, so they submit.

وَمَا أَنْتَ بِهٰدِ الْعُمْيِ عَنْ ضَلٰلَتِهِمْ ۖ إِنْ تُسْمِعُ إِلَّا مَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِاٰيٰتِنَا فَهُمْ مُّسْلِمُونَ ٥٣

SECTION 6 : **Overthrow of Opposition**

54 Allāh is He Who created you from a state of weakness, then He gave strength after weakness, then ordained weakness and hoary hair after strength.[1945] He creates what He pleases, and He is the Knowing, the Powerful.

اللّٰهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ ضَعْفٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ضَعْفٍ قُوَّةً ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ ضَعْفًا وَّشَيْبَةً ۚ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْقَدِيرُ ٥٤

55 And the day when the Hour comes, the guilty will swear : They did not tarry but an hour. Thus are they ever turned away.

وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُقْسِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ ۙ مَا لَبِثُوا غَيْرَ سَاعَةٍ ۚ كَذٰلِكَ كَانُوا يُؤْفَكُونَ ٥٥

56 And those who are given knowledge and faith will say : Certainly you tarried according to the ordinance of Allāh till the day of Resurrection — so this is the day of Resurrection — but you did not know.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَالْإِيمَانَ لَقَدْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِي كِتٰبِ اللّٰهِ إِلٰى يَوْمِ الْبَعْثِ ۫ فَهٰذَا يَوْمُ الْبَعْثِ وَلٰكِنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ٥٦

57 So that day their excuse will not profit those who were unjust, nor will they be granted goodwill.

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا يَنْفَعُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مَعْذِرَتُهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُونَ ٥٧

1944 *It*, in this verse, refers to the *seed-produce*, which is meant by the expression "gives life to the earth" in the previous verse ; the meaning is, the seed-produce may be rendered yellow or caused to wither away by a blast of the wind. The allusion is to the disasters which would strike a blow at the disbelievers' plans. It also refers to their persistence in disbelief, in spite of the afflictions which they experience.

1945 There is a deeper reference here to the law of the rise, growth and decay of nations.

58 And certainly We have set forth for men in this Qur'ān every kind of parable. And if thou bring them a sign, those who disbelieve would certainly say: You are naught but deceivers.

وَلَقَدْ ضَرَبْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِي هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنِ مِنْ كُلِّ مَثَلٍ ۚ وَلَئِنْ جِئْتَهُمْ بِاٰيَةٍ لَّيَقُوْلَنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اِنْ اَنْتُمْ اِلَّا مُبْطِلُوْنَ ﴿٥٨﴾

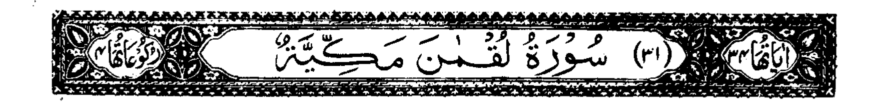
59 Thus does Allāh seal the hearts of those who know not.[1946]

كَذٰلِكَ يَطْبَعُ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 So be patient; surely the promise of Allāh is true; and let not those disquiet thee who have no certainty.

فَاصْبِرْ اِنَّ وَعْدَ اللّٰهِ حَقٌّ وَّلَا يَسْتَخِفَّنَّكَ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُوْقِنُوْنَ ﴿٦٠﴾

1946 Allāh's sealing the hearts thus really means their own persistence in disbelief and wickedness, as the preceding verse shows.



CHAPTER 31

LUQMĀN

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 4 *sections; 34 verses*)

The name of this chapter is taken from that of the sage to whose story it refers. *Luqmān* was an Ethiopian, and his mention here testifies to the breadth of the fundamental principles of Islām alluded to in the last chapter. The aim of this chapter is, like its sister chapters, to ensure the success of believers. It belongs, like its two predecessors, to the middle Makkan period

The first section asserts in unmistakable terms the success of the Muslims; the second refers to the advice of Luqmān to his son, which was now meant for the Muslims; the third speaks of the greatness of Divine power, which could bring about such an impossible thing as the triumph of the Muslims over their enemies; and the fourth foretells the doom of the mighty opponents.

SECTION 1 **Believers will be successful**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

1 I, Allāh, am the Best Knower.

الٓمّٓ

2 These are verses of the Book of Wisdom —

تِلْكَ اٰيٰتُ الْكِتٰبِ الْحَكِيْمِ

3 A guidance and a mercy for the doers of good,

هُدًى وَّ رَحْمَةً لِّلْمُحْسِنِيْنَ

4 Who keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and who are certain of the Hereafter.

الَّذِيْنَ يُقِيْمُوْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَ يُؤْتُوْنَ الزَّكٰوةَ وَهُمْ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوْقِنُوْنَ

5 These are on a guidance from their Lord, and these are they who are successful.

اُولٰٓئِكَ عَلٰى هُدًى مِّنْ رَّبِّهِمْ وَ اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ

6 And of men is he who takes instead frivolous discourse to lead astray from Allāh's path without knowledge, and to make it a mockery. For such is an abasing chastisement.[1948]

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَّشْتَرِيْ لَهْوَ الْحَدِيْثِ لِيُضِلَّ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ ۖ وَّ يَتَّخِذَهَا هُزُوًا ۭ اُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِيْنٌ

7 And when Our messages are recited to him, he turns back proudly, as if he had not heard them, as if there were deafness in his ears; so announce to him a painful chastisement.

وَاِذَا تُتْلٰى عَلَيْهِ اٰيٰتُنَا وَلّٰى مُسْتَكْبِرًا كَاَنْ لَّمْ يَسْمَعْهَا كَاَنَّ فِيْٓ اُذُنَيْهِ وَقْرًا ۚ فَبَشِّرْهُ بِعَذَابٍ اَلِيْمٍ

8 Those who believe and do good, for them are Gardens of bliss,

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ لَهُمْ جَنّٰتُ النَّعِيْمِ

9 To abide therein. A promise of Allāh in truth! And He is the Mighty, the Wise.

خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ۭ وَعْدَ اللّٰهِ حَقًّا ۭ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ

10 He created the heavens without pillars that you see, and cast mountains on the earth lest it should be convulsed

خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا وَاَلْقٰى فِي الْاَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ اَنْ تَمِيْدَ

1948 It is a mistake to think that a particular person is meant here. The concluding words of the verse show clearly that the statement is general and applies to all those who take the Qur'ān for a mockery.

with you,[1949] and He spread on it animals of every kind. And We send down water from the clouds, then cause to grow therein of every noble kind.

بِكُمْ وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ ۚ
وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَنْبَتْنَا
فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿١٠﴾

11 This is Allāh's creation; now show Me that which those besides Him have created. Nay, the unjust are in manifest error.

هَٰذَا خَلْقُ اللَّهِ فَأَرُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقَ
الَّذِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِ ۚ بَلِ الظَّالِمُونَ
فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿١١﴾

SECTION 2: **Luqmān's Advice to his Son**

12 And certainly We gave Luqmān wisdom,[1950] saying: Give thanks to Allāh. And whoever is thankful, is thankful for his own soul; and whoever denies, then surely Allāh is Self-Sufficient, Praised.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنِ اشْكُرْ
لِلَّهِ ۚ وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ ۖ
وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ ﴿١٢﴾

13 And when Luqmān said to his son, while he admonished him: O my son, ascribe no partner to Allāh. Surely ascribing partners (to Him) is a grievous iniquity.

وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ
يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ
لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٣﴾

14 And We have enjoined on man concerning his parents — his mother bears him with faintings upon faintings and his weaning takes two years— saying: Give thanks to Me and to thy parents. To Me is the eventual coming.[1951]

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ
أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالُهُ فِي
عَامَيْنِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ
إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٤﴾

15 And if they strive with thee to make thee associate with Me that of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not, and keep kindly company

وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا
لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا وَ

1949 See 1358.

1950 From what is stated of him, Luqmān seems to have been an Ethiopian. It is very probable that the Greek "Æsop" is a corruption of "Ethiopian" and is identical with Luqmān. The Qur'ān accepts many prophets besides those mentioned in the Bible.

1951 Verses 14 and 15 are parenthetical, enjoining the duty of obedience to parents, because it is a parent who is advising his son.

with them in this world,[1952] and follow the way of him who turns to Me; then to Me is your return, then I shall inform you of what you did.

صَاحِبْهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا وَّاتَّبِعْ
سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ
فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

16 O my son, even if it be the weight of a grain of mustard-seed, even though it be in a rock, or in the heaven or in the earth, Allāh will bring it forth. Surely Allāh is Knower of subtilities, Aware.

يٰبُنَيَّ إِنَّهَا إِنْ تَكُ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ
خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُنْ فِي صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ
أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَأْتِ بِهَا اللّٰهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ
لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٦﴾

17 O my son, keep up prayer and enjoin good and forbid evil, and bear patiently that which befalls thee. Surely this is an affair of great resolution.

يٰبُنَيَّ أَقِمِ الصَّلٰوةَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
وَانْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَاصْبِرْ عَلٰى مَا
أَصَابَكَ ۚ إِنَّ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴿١٧﴾

18 And turn not thy face away from people in contempt, nor go about in the land exultingly. Surely Allāh loves not any self-conceited boaster.

وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ
فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۚ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُحِبُّ
كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿١٨﴾

19 And pursue the right course in thy going about and lower thy voice. Surely the most hateful of voices is braying of asses.[1954]

وَاقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاغْضُضْ مِنْ
صَوْتِكَ ۚ إِنَّ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ
لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ ﴿١٩﴾

SECTION 3: **Greatness of Divine Power**

20 See you not that Allāh has made subservient to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, and granted to you His favours com-

أَلَمْ تَرَوْا أَنَّ اللّٰهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَّا
فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَسْبَغَ

1952 Notwithstanding the great stress that the Holy Qur'ān lays here and elsewhere on the duty of obedience to parents, it also warns against attaching undue importance to that duty when the same clashes with a still higher duty, viz., one's duty to one's Maker. In fact any duty, however great, must be sacrificed before a higher duty, and one's duty to one's Maker is the highest of all duties.

1954 Humility and meekness were taught by every prophet. Even an Ethiopian preached the meekness and humility which was preached by Jesus.

plete outwardly and inwardly? And among men is he who disputes concerning Allāh without knowledge or guidance or a Book giving light.[1955]

عَلَيْكُمْ نِعَمَهُ ظَاهِرَةً وَّبَاطِنَةً ۗ وَمِنَ
النَّاسِ مَنْ يُّجَادِلُ فِي اللّٰهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ
وَّلَا هُدًى وَّلَا كِتٰبٍ مُّنِيْرٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 And when it is said to them, Follow that which Allāh has revealed, they say: Nay, we follow that wherein we found our fathers. What! Though the devil calls them to the chastisement of the burning Fire!

وَاِذَا قِيْلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوْا مَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ
قَالُوْا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ
اٰبَآءَنَا ۗ اَوَلَوْ كَانَ الشَّيْطٰنُ يَدْعُوْهُمْ
اِلٰى عَذَابِ السَّعِيْرِ ﴿٢١﴾

22 And whoever submits himself to Allāh and does good (to others), he indeed takes hold of the firmest handle. And Allāh's is the end of affairs.

وَمَنْ يُّسْلِمْ وَجْهَهٗٓ اِلَى اللّٰهِ وَهُوَ
مُحْسِنٌ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ
الْوُثْقٰى ۗ وَاِلَى اللّٰهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْاُمُوْرِ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 And whoever disbelieves, let not his disbelief grieve thee. To Us is their return, then We shall inform them of what they did. Surely Allāh is Knower of what is in the breasts.

وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَلَا يَحْزُنْكَ كُفْرُهٗ ۗ اِلَيْنَا
مَرْجِعُهُمْ فَنُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا عَمِلُوْا ۗ اِنَّ
اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 We give them to enjoy a little, then We shall drive them to a severe chastisement.

نُمَتِّعُهُمْ قَلِيْلًا ثُمَّ نَضْطَرُّهُمْ اِلٰى
عَذَابٍ غَلِيْظٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And if thou ask them who created the heavens and the earth? they will say: Allāh. Say: Praise be to Allāh! Nay, most of them know not.

وَلَئِنْ سَاَلْتَهُمْ مَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ
وَالْاَرْضَ لَيَقُوْلُنَّ اللّٰهُ ۗ قُلِ الْحَمْدُ
لِلّٰهِ ۗ بَلْ اَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 To Allāh belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. Surely Allāh is the Self-Sufficient, the Praised.

لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۗ اِنَّ
اللّٰهَ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيْدُ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And if all the trees in the earth were pens, and the sea with seven more seas added to it (were ink), the words of Allāh would not be

وَلَوْ اَنَّ مَا فِي الْاَرْضِ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ
اَقْلَامٌ وَّالْبَحْرُ يَمُدُّهٗ مِنْ بَعْدِهٖ
سَبْعَةُ اَبْحُرٍ مَّا نَفِدَتْ كَلِمٰتُ

1955 The words are meant as well for the Muslims. So long as they adhered to the *Book giving light* they continued to advance in the world, and they will again lead the world when they place the *Book giving light* in the forefront.

exhausted. Surely Allāh is Mighty, Wise.[1956]

اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِیۡزٌ حَکِیۡمٌ ﴿۲۷﴾

28 Your creation or your raising is only like a single soul. Surely Allāh is Hearing, Seeing.

مَا خَلۡقُکُمۡ وَ لَا بَعۡثُکُمۡ اِلَّا کَنَفۡسٍ وَّاحِدَۃٍ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِیۡعٌۢ بَصِیۡرٌ ﴿۲۸﴾

29 Seest thou not that Allāh makes the night to enter into the day, and He makes the day to enter into the night, and He has made the sun and the moon subservient (to you) — each pursues its course till an appointed time — and that Allāh is Aware of what you do?

اَلَمۡ تَرَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ یُوۡلِجُ الَّیۡلَ فِی النَّهَارِ وَ یُوۡلِجُ النَّهَارَ فِی الَّیۡلِ وَ سَخَّرَ الشَّمۡسَ وَ الۡقَمَرَ ۫ کُلٌّ یَّجۡرِیۡۤ اِلٰۤی اَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّی وَّ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُوۡنَ خَبِیۡرٌ ﴿۲۹﴾

30 This is because Allāh is the Truth, and that which they call upon besides Him is falsehood, and that Allāh is the High, the Great.

ذٰلِکَ بِاَنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ الۡحَقُّ وَ اَنَّ مَا یَدۡعُوۡنَ مِنۡ دُوۡنِهِ الۡبَاطِلُ ۙ وَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ الۡعَلِیُّ الۡکَبِیۡرُ ﴿۳۰﴾

SECTION 4: **The Doom comes**

31 Seest thou not that the ships glide on the sea by Allāh's grace, that He may show you of His signs? Surely there are signs in this for every patient, endurer, grateful one.[1956a]

اَلَمۡ تَرَ اَنَّ الۡفُلۡکَ تَجۡرِیۡ فِی الۡبَحۡرِ بِنِعۡمَتِ اللّٰهِ لِیُرِیَکُمۡ مِّنۡ اٰیٰتِهٖ ؕ اِنَّ فِیۡ ذٰلِکَ لَاٰیٰتٍ لِّکُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَکُوۡرٍ ﴿۳۱﴾

32 And when a wave like awnings covers them, they call upon Allāh, being sincere to Him in obedience. But when He brings them safe to land, some of them follow the middle course. And none denies Our signs but every perfidious, ungrateful one.

وَ اِذَا غَشِیَهُمۡ مَّوۡجٌ کَالظُّلَلِ دَعَوُا اللّٰهَ مُخۡلِصِیۡنَ لَهُ الدِّیۡنَ ۬ۚ فَلَمَّا نَجّٰهُمۡ اِلَی الۡبَرِّ فَمِنۡهُمۡ مُّقۡتَصِدٌ ؕ وَ مَا یَجۡحَدُ بِاٰیٰتِنَاۤ اِلَّا کُلُّ خَتَّارٍ کَفُوۡرٍ ﴿۳۲﴾

1956 I'Ab thinks this verse and the two that follow belong to Madīnan revelation, but there is no indication in the text, nor any evidence, to show that they were not revealed at Makkah. A similar statement is contained in another early Makkan revelation; see 18:109. It is noteworthy that a man who himself could not use the pen and who lived in a country where pen and ink were at any rate scarce, expresses such an idea of the abundance of pens and ink. While containing a prophetic allusion to the abundant use of pen and ink in the world, the words are expressive of the unimaginable vastness of the Creation of God,

1956a, see next page.

33 O people, keep your duty to your Lord and dread the day when no father can avail his son in aught, nor the child will avail his father. Surely the promise of Allāh is true, so let not this world's life deceive you, nor let the arch-deceiver deceive you about Allāh.[1957]

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوْا رَبَّكُمْ وَاخْشَوْا يَوْمًا لَّا يَجْزِيْ وَالِدٌ عَنْ وَّلَدِهٖ وَلَا مَوْلُوْدٌ هُوَ جَازٍ عَنْ وَّالِدِهٖ شَيْـًٔا ۗ اِنَّ وَعْدَ اللّٰهِ حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُمْ بِاللّٰهِ الْغَرُوْرُ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 Surely Allāh is He with Whom is the knowledge of the Hour, and He sends down the rain, and He knows what is in the wombs. And no one knows what he will earn on the morrow. And no one knows in what land he will die. Surely Allāh is Knowing, Aware.[1958]

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عِنْدَهٗ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ ۚ وَيُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ ۚ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِى الْاَرْحَامِ ۗ وَمَا تَدْرِيْ نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا ۗ وَمَا تَدْرِيْ نَفْسٌۢ بِاَيِّ اَرْضٍ تَمُوْتُ ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌ خَبِيْرٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

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for everything created is a word of God in the sense that it is created by Divine commandment.

1956a The *signs for the patient endurer and the grateful one* no doubt contain a hint to the suffering but grateful Muslims, and to their being made a great nation.

1957 Gharūr, which literally means *the great deceiver,* stands for the *devil.*

1958 By *the Hour* is meant *the hour* of the fulfilment of prophecy and of the downfall of the opponents, as well as the Resurrection. The wonderful disclosure of knowledge relating to the future could not be made by a mere mortal, who cannot foretell the ordinary events of life happening before his eyes day and night. But there may also be a deeper reference to the transformation that was to be brought about in Arabia: the sending down of rain signifying the quickening of the spiritually dead; those that were in the wombs were ordained to be Muslims; the opponents of to-day would prove the supporters of to-morrow; and those who turned the Muslims out of their houses would themselves meet death, when away from their habitations, even as they did when they attacked Madīnah to crush the Muslims.

اٰيَاتُهَا ٣٠ (٣٢) سُوْرَةُ السَّجْدَةِ مَكِّيَّةٌ رُكُوْعَاتُهَا ٣

CHAPTER 32

Al-Sajdah : THE ADORATION

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH : 3 *sections ;* 30 *verses*)

The name of this chapter, *al-Sajdah,* or *the Adoration,* is taken from v. 15 where the faithful are spoken of as falling down in adoration when the Divine messages are recited to them. It contains not only a prophecy relating to the immediate triumph of Islām but also another relating to the distant future (v. 5). The first section foretells the establishment of Islām ; the second speaks of a punishment for the opponents in this very life ; and the third of the raising of the dead earth to life.

SECTION 1 **Islām will be established**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 I, Allāh, am the Best Knower.

الٓمّٓ ①

2 The revelation of the Book, there is no doubt in it, is from the Lord of the worlds.

تَنْزِيْلُ الْكِتٰبِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ مِنْ رَّبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ②

3 Or do they say : He has forged it ? Nay, it is the Truth from thy Lord that thou mayest warn a people to whom no warner has come before thee that they may walk aright.[1958a]

اَمْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ افْتَرٰىهُ ۚ بَلْ هُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ لِتُنْذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّآ اَتٰىهُمْ مِّنْ نَّذِيْرٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُوْنَ ③

4 Allāh is He Who created the heavens and the earth and what is between them in six periods, and He is established on the Throne of Power. You have not besides Him a guardian or an intercessor. Will you not then mind ?

اَللّٰهُ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِيْ سِتَّةِ اَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوٰى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ ؕ مَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِهٖ مِنْ وَّلِيٍّ وَّلَا شَفِيْعٍ ؕ اَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُوْنَ ④

1958a Makkah had not seen a prophet before the advent of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, who was the only Prophet raised among the descendants of Ishmael.

5 He orders the Affair from the heaven to the earth; then it will ascend to Him in a day the measure of which is a thousand years as you count.[1959]

يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ
ثُمَّ يَعْرُجُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ
أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ ۝٥

6 Such is the Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Mighty, the Merciful,

ذٰلِكَ عٰلِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ الْعَزِيزُ
الرَّحِيمُ ۝٦

7 Who made beautiful everything that He created, and He began the creation of man from dust.[1959a]

الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ
وَبَدَأَ خَلْقَ الْإِنْسَانِ مِنْ طِينٍ ۝٧

8 Then He made his progeny of an extract, of worthless water.

ثُمَّ جَعَلَ نَسْلَهُ مِنْ سُلٰلَةٍ مِّنْ
مَّآءٍ مَّهِينٍ ۝٨

9 Then He made him complete and breathed into him of His spirit,[1960] and gave you ears and eyes and hearts; little it is that you give thanks!

ثُمَّ سَوّٰىهُ وَنَفَخَ فِيهِ مِنْ رُّوحِهِ
وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَ
الْأَفْئِدَةَ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ۝٩

1959 *Al-Amr* or *the Affair* is the Affair of Islām, and its ordering or regulation from heaven to earth means that it comes from heaven and will be established firmly on earth. Then we are told that it will ascend to God in a day, the measure of which is a thousand years according to human reckoning, which means that it will receive a set-back for a thousand years. As regards the period of its firmness, we are told in a ḥadīth that it will retain its purity for three centuries: 'The best of the generations is my generation, then those who follow them, then those who follow them, then after them will come people who will pride themselves in abundance of wealth and love plumpness" (Tr. 31:39). According to another ḥadīth: "There will come a people in which there is no good" (KU. VI, 2068). The words of another are: "A crooked way — they are not of me nor am I of them" (KU. VI, 2073). That there is a prophecy here is shown by the next verse, which says, *such is the Knower of the unseen and the seen.* Thus we have here a prophecy relating to the future of Islām. This prophecy was made known at a time when there was not the least indication that Islām would be established in the earth; it was the middle of the Makkan period, when the cause of Islām was utterly hopeless. At that time the Prophet was told that Islām would be firmly established at first. That the cause would go on advancing for three centuries is made clear by the Prophet's saying. After that the cause of Islām would be chequered and it would have its set-backs, which would continue for a thousand years. The limitation of the period of chequering shows clearly that, after that, the advancement of Islām will again be as unhampered as it was in its early stages in the time of the Prophet and after him.

1959a See 23:12-14, where the various stages through which man passes in his creation are spoken of in detail, and 1716. The wonderful beauty of creation from the atom to the most brilliant star in the realm of matter, and from the smallest ant to the most developed form of life in man, could not have been known to an unlearned Arabian 1300 years ago, yet he sees, as stated here, that everything that was created was beautiful. This beauty in creation undoubtedly emanated from the same Source, from the Great Creator Who, according to the Holy Qur'ān, has the "most beautiful names" (17:110; 20:8; 59:24).

1960 This verse shows that the spirit of God is breathed into every man. This points to a mystical relation between human nature and Divine nature. The word *rūḥ* does not here mean the animal soul, because the animal soul is

10 And they say: When we are lost in the earth, shall we then be in a new creation? Nay, they are disbelievers in the meeting with their Lord.

وَقَالُوٓا ءَاِذَا ضَلَلۡنَا فِی الۡاَرۡضِ ءَاِنَّا
لَفِیۡ خَلۡقٍ جَدِیۡدٍ ۬ؕ بَلۡ هُمۡ بِلِقَآئِ
رَبِّهِمۡ كٰفِرُوۡنَ ﴿۱۰﴾

11 Say: The angel of death, who is given charge of you, will cause you to die, then to your Lord you will be returned.

قُلۡ یَتَوَفّٰىكُمۡ مَّلَكُ الۡمَوۡتِ الَّذِیۡ
وُكِّلَ بِكُمۡ ثُمَّ اِلٰی رَبِّكُمۡ تُرۡجَعُوۡنَ ﴿۱۱﴾ ع

SECTION 2: **Believers and Disbelievers — a Comparison**

12 And couldst thou but see when the guilty hang their heads before their Lord: Our Lord, we have seen and heard, so send us back, we will do good; we are (now) certain.

وَلَوۡ تَرٰۤی اِذِ الۡمُجۡرِمُوۡنَ نَاكِسُوۡا رُءُوۡسِهِمۡ
عِنۡدَ رَبِّهِمۡ ؕ رَبَّنَاۤ اَبۡصَرۡنَا وَسَمِعۡنَا
فَارۡجِعۡنَا نَعۡمَلۡ صَالِحًا اِنَّا مُوۡقِنُوۡنَ ﴿۱۲﴾

13 And if We had pleased, We could have given every soul its guidance, but the word from Me was just; I will certainly fill hell with the jinn and men together.[1960a]

وَلَوۡ شِئۡنَا لَاٰتَیۡنَا كُلَّ نَفۡسٍ هُدٰىهَا
وَلٰكِنۡ حَقَّ الۡقَوۡلُ مِنِّیۡ لَاَمۡلَـَٔنَّ
جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الۡجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ اَجۡمَعِیۡنَ ﴿۱۳﴾

14 So taste, because you forgot the meeting of this Day of yours; surely We forsake you; and taste the abiding chastisement for what you did.

فَذُوۡقُوۡا بِمَا نَسِیۡتُمۡ لِقَآءَ یَوۡمِكُمۡ هٰذَا ۚ
اِنَّا نَسِیۡنٰكُمۡ وَذُوۡقُوۡا عَذَابَ الۡخُلۡدِ
بِمَا كُنۡتُمۡ تَعۡمَلُوۡنَ ﴿۱۴﴾

15 Only they believe in Our messages who, when they are reminded of them, fall down prostrate and celebrate the praise of their Lord, and they are not proud.[1960b]

Prostration

اِنَّمَا یُؤۡمِنُ بِاٰیٰتِنَا الَّذِیۡنَ اِذَا ذُكِّرُوۡا
بِهَا خَرُّوۡا سُجَّدًا وَّسَبَّحُوۡا بِحَمۡدِ رَبِّهِمۡ
وَهُمۡ لَا یَسۡتَكۡبِرُوۡنَ ﴿۱۵﴾ السجدة

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common to man and the animal kingdom. It is something which distinguishes man from the animal world. It is due to this spirit Divine that he rules the creation and it is due to the same Divine spirit in him that he receives a new life after death — a life in which he lives in God and with God — the meeting with God or *liqā Allāh*, as it is called in v. 10.

1960a God's word, as repeated so often in the Holy Qur'ān, is that the right way has been pointed out to man but he is given the choice to accept or reject it, and that those who rejected that word and did not forsake evil ways would go to hell. The reference in *if We had pleased* is to the fact that man is not compelled to submit to the Divine law. His superiority lies in the fact that he has been given a choice. If he exercises that choice rightly, he attains to eminence; if he exercises it wrongly, he must taste of the evil consequences of his deeds.

1960b The recitation of this verse is followed by an actual prostration; see 978.

16 They forsake (their) beds, calling upon their Lord in fear and in hope, and spend out of what We have given them.[1960c]

تَتَجَافَىٰ جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ١٦

17 So no soul knows what refreshment of the eyes is hidden for them: a reward for what they did.[1961]

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ١٧

18 Is he then, who is a believer, like him who is a transgressor? They are not equal.

أَفَمَن كَانَ مُؤْمِنًا كَمَن كَانَ فَاسِقًا ۚ لَّا يَسْتَوُونَ ١٨

19 As for those who believe and do good deeds, for them are Gardens, a refuge — an entertainment for what they did.

أَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ الْمَأْوَىٰ نُزُلًا بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ١٩

20 And as for those who transgress, their refuge is the Fire. Whenever they desire to go forth from it, they are brought back into it, and it is said to them: Taste the chastisement of the Fire, which you called a lie.

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فَسَقُوا فَمَأْوَاهُمُ النَّارُ ۖ كُلَّمَا أَرَادُوا أَن يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا أُعِيدُوا فِيهَا وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ النَّارِ الَّذِي كُنتُم بِهِ تُكَذِّبُونَ ٢٠

21 And certainly We will make them taste the nearer punishment before the greater chastisement, that haply they may turn.[1962]

وَلَنُذِيقَنَّهُم مِّنَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَدْنَىٰ دُونَ الْعَذَابِ الْأَكْبَرِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ٢١

22 And who is more iniquitous than he who is reminded of the messages of his Lord, then he turns away from them? Surely We exact retribution from the guilty.

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّن ذُكِّرَ بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِ ثُمَّ أَعْرَضَ عَنْهَا ۚ إِنَّا مِنَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُنتَقِمُونَ ٢٢

1960c The literal significance of the original words for *they forsake* is *their sides draw away from,* showing that they are restless in their beds. These are the foundations of the culture of Islām, passing part of the night in remembering Allāh, and passing the day in earning wealth to spend in the way of Allāh for the benefit of humanity.

1961 This is a true description of what the blessings of paradise are: *No soul knows what is hidden for them.* These blessings are hidden from the physical eye of man, and therefore their description in words which convey to the mind an idea of the blessings of this life is metaphorical. Words cannot reveal to us the real nature of those blessings. The Holy Prophet's own comment on these words shows the truth of this statement, for he is reported to have said: "Allāh says, I have prepared for My righteous servants that which no eye has seen and no ear has heard, and which the heart of man cannot conceive" (B. 59:8).

1962 By the *near* chastisement is meant the earthly punishment, which might serve as a warning against the greater punishment of the Hereafter. The opponents

SECTION 3 : **Dead Earth will receive Life**

23 And We indeed gave Moses the Book — so doubt not the meeting with Him — and We made it a guide for the Children of Israel.[1963]

وَلَقَدْ اٰتَيْنَا مُوْسَى الْكِتٰبَ فَلَا تَكُنْ فِيْ مِرْيَةٍ مِّنْ لِّقَآئِهٖ وَجَعَلْنٰهُ هُدًى لِّبَنِيْٓ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ ۚ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 And We made from among them leaders to guide by Our command when they were patient. And they were certain of Our messages.

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ اَئِمَّةً يَّهْدُوْنَ بِاَمْرِنَا لَمَّا صَبَرُوْا ۣ وَكَانُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَا يُوْقِنُوْنَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 Surely thy Lord will judge between them on the day of Resurrection concerning that wherein they differed.

اِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ فِيْمَا كَانُوْا فِيْهِ يَخْتَلِفُوْنَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 Is it not clear to them, how many of the generations, in whose abodes they go about, We destroyed before them? Surely there are signs in this. Will they not then hear?

اَوَلَمْ يَهْدِ لَهُمْ كَمْ اَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِّنَ الْقُرُوْنِ يَمْشُوْنَ فِيْ مَسٰكِنِهِمْ ۭ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ ۭ اَفَلَا يَسْمَعُوْنَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 See they not that We drive the water to a land having no herbage, then We bring forth thereby seed-produce, of which their cattle and they themselves eat. Will they not then see?

اَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا اَنَّا نَسُوْقُ الْمَآءَ اِلَى الْاَرْضِ الْجُرُزِ فَنُخْرِجُ بِهٖ زَرْعًا تَاْكُلُ مِنْهُ اَنْعَامُهُمْ وَاَنْفُسُهُمْ ۭ اَفَلَا يُبْصِرُوْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 And they say: When will this victory come, if you are truthful?[1964]

وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ مَتٰى هٰذَا الْفَتْحُ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٢٨﴾

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of Truth are thus told that they must taste a punishment in this life, too, and the description of it given in the previous verse — *whenever they desire to go forth from it, they are brought back into it* — manifestly applies to modern world conditions, when materialism has taken hold of the minds of men. The wars at present raging in the world are the fire of this life, and, however much the warring nations may desire to get out of them, they are brought back into them.

1963 To bring about the meeting with God — to make men live in God — is the real aim of religion, and here it is pointed out that to make men attain this object a Book was given to Moses for the Israelites, as a Book is now given for the whole world. This object will be attained notwithstanding opposition, which will be brought to naught, as made clear in v. 26.

1964 The question makes it clear that the above verses speak of the triumph of Islām over all opposition, then and now, in metaphorical language; hence they ask, when will the victory come? The driving of the water to a dead land, *a land without herbage,* is a clear hint that the dead earth will receive life.

29 Say : On the day of victory the faith of those who (now) disbelieve will not profit them, nor will they be respited.

30 So turn away from them and wait, surely they too are waiting.

قُلْ يَوْمَ الْفَتْحِ لَا يَنْفَعُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اِيْمَانُهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنْظَرُوْنَ ﴿٢٩﴾

فَاَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَانْتَظِرْ اِنَّهُمْ مُّنْتَظِرُوْنَ ﴿٣٠﴾

آياتها ٧٣ (٣٣) سُورَةُ الأَحْزَابِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ ركوعاتها ٩

CHAPTER 33

Al-Aḥzāb : THE ALLIES

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH : 9 *sections* ; 73 *verses*)

This chapter goes under the name of *The Allies,* by which are meant the Quraish, confederated with other idolatrous tribes and the Jews. The opponents had now planned to exterminate the Muslims altogether, and mustering more than ten times the available Muslim force, they besieged Madīnah. The battle, therefore, occupying as it does a most prominent place in the early history of Islām, richly deserves the importance it has been accorded.

The battle of the Allies took place in Shawwāl of the fourth year of the Hijrah, and the revelation of this chapter therefore belongs to that year. Most of the other subjects treated herein, such as those relating to the Prophet's marriage with Zainab, and to his marriages in general, might be fixed a little later, but they cannot be placed beyond the seventh year of the Hijrah. The reason why this chapter occupies this place in the arrangement of the chapters of the Qur'ān is quite obvious. The last group of Makkan chapters preceding this announces a series of mighty prophecies foretelling the subsequent greatness of the Muslims, and here we are shown how the forces employed to crush Islām were made ineffective, thus paving the way for the Muslims to attain the promised greatness.

The first section deals with physical and spiritual relationship in reference to the spiritual relationship of the Prophet with the faithful. The powerful attack of the Quraish and their allies on the Muslims, spoken of in the second and third sections, was really a resort to brute force made with the object of annihilating Islām. Its mention is really meant to give a death-blow to the false propaganda that Islām was spread by the sword, the fact being that Islām spread in spite of the sword. The propaganda now carried on against Islām stands on two pillars of misrepresentation, the first relating to the sword and the second relating to the Prophet's domestic life, which propaganda depicts the Prophet as being a voluptuary. As a matter of fact, not only did the Prophet himself retain the utmost simplicity of life to his last days, no change coming over him though he had risen to be the ruler of the whole of Arabia, but he would not allow even his wives to depart from that high standard of simplicity. It was within his means to furnish his wives with every material comfort, but instead of pandering to their earthly desires, he informed them that if they required such provisions, he could not retain them in his household. This is the subject-matter of the fourth section. The fifth section deals with the Prophet's marriage with Zainab, and refutes the objections advanced against him on that score. The sixth generalizes on the objections raised against his domestic life. The seventh draws the attention of the Muslims to certain rules of conduct in their domestic relations. The eighth speaks of those who spread evil reports, and the ninth closes the chapter with an exhortation to the faithful.

SECTION 1 **Spiritual and Physical Relationship**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 O Prophet, keep thy duty to Allāh and obey not the disbelievers and the hypocrites.[1965] Surely Allāh is ever Knowing, Wise ;

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ اتَّقِ اللّٰهَ وَلَا تُطِعِ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ وَالْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ۝١

2 And follow that which is revealed to thee from thy Lord. Surely Allāh is ever Aware of what you do ;

وَّاتَّبِعْ مَا يُوْحٰٓى اِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرًا ۝٢

3 And trust in Allāh. And Allāh is enough as having charge (of affairs).

وَّتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللّٰهِ ؕ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ وَكِيْلًا ۝٣

4 Allāh has not made for any man two hearts within him ;[1966] nor has He made your wives whom you desert by Ẓihār, your mothers, nor has He made those whom you assert (to be your sons) your sons. These are the words of your mouths. And Allāh speaks the truth and He shows the way.[1967]

مَا جَعَلَ اللّٰهُ لِرَجُلٍ مِّنْ قَلْبَيْنِ فِيْ جَوْفِهٖ ۚ وَمَا جَعَلَ اَزْوَاجَكُمُ الّٰٓـِٔيْ تُظٰهِرُوْنَ مِنْهُنَّ اُمَّهٰتِكُمْ ۚ وَمَا جَعَلَ اَدْعِيَآءَكُمْ اَبْنَآءَكُمْ ؕ ذٰلِكُمْ قَوْلُكُمْ بِاَفْوَاهِكُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ يَقُوْلُ الْحَقَّ وَهُوَ يَهْدِى السَّبِيْلَ ۝٤

1965 The chapter was revealed at a time when the powerful and combined forces of the Arabian tribes threatened Madīnah from without and the hypocrites and the Jews assisted them from within to crush the Muslims. It was necessary at such a critical time that the Muslims, who are really addressed here through the Prophet, should not in any way be compliant to their deadly enemies. Or, the meaning is that the Holy Prophet should not be troubled by his critics, for their object was only to carp, and one course of action was as well calculated to give them occasion for carping as another.

1966 This passage does not relate to what follows but sums up what is said in the previous verse. The Prophet is there told not to be compliant to the disbelievers and the hypocrites, but to trust in Allāh alone, because the same heart cannot simultaneously entertain love for Allāh and love for His enemies.

1967 This passage abolishes two customs of the days of ignorance. The first of these is what is called *ẓihār* or *muẓāhirah.* The word is derived from *ẓahr,* meaning *back,* and *ẓihār* consisted in a man saying to his wife *thou art to me as the back of my mother* (LL). No sooner were the words pronounced than the relation between husband and wife ended as by a divorce, but the woman was not at liberty to leave the husband's house and marry elsewhere. She remained in the same house, as a deserted wife. The other custom was that of regarding the adopted son as if he were a real son. This passage abolishes both customs on the same ground ; a wife cannot be a real mother, nor a stranger a real son.

The subject of *ẓihār* is fully discussed in the first section of the 58th chapter.

5 Call them by (the names of) their fathers; this is more equitable with Allāh; but if you know not their fathers, then they are your brethren in faith and your friends. And there is no blame on you in that wherein you make a mistake, but (you are answerable for) that which your hearts purpose. And Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful.

اُدْعُوْهُمْ لِاٰبَآئِهِمْ هُوَ اَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ
اللّٰهِ ۚ فَاِنْ لَّمْ تَعْلَمُوْٓا اٰبَآءَهُمْ فَاِخْوَانُكُمْ
فِى الدِّيْنِ وَمَوَالِيْكُمْ ۗ وَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ
جُنَاحٌ فِيْمَآ اَخْطَاْتُمْ بِهٖ ۙ وَلٰكِنْ مَّا
تَعَمَّدَتْ قُلُوْبُكُمْ ۗ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ
غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ⑤

6 The Prophet is closer to the faithful than their own selves, and his wives are (as) their mothers.[1968] And the possessors of relationship are closer one to another in the ordinance of Allāh than (other) believers, and those who fled (their homes), except that you do some good to your friends.[1969] This is written in the Book.

اَلنَّبِىُّ اَوْلٰى بِالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ مِنْ اَنْفُسِهِمْ
وَاَزْوَاجُهٗٓ اُمَّهٰتُهُمْ ۗ وَاُولُوا الْاَرْحَامِ
بَعْضُهُمْ اَوْلٰى بِبَعْضٍ فِىْ كِتٰبِ اللّٰهِ
مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُهٰجِرِيْنَ اِلَّآ اَنْ
تَفْعَلُوْٓا اِلٰٓى اَوْلِيٰٓئِكُمْ مَّعْرُوْفًا ۗ كَانَ
ذٰلِكَ فِى الْكِتٰبِ مَسْطُوْرًا ⑥

7 And when We took a covenant from the prophets and from thee, and from Noah and Abraham and Moses and Jesus, son of Mary, and We took from them a solemn covenant,[1970]

وَاِذْ اَخَذْنَا مِنَ النَّبِيّٖنَ مِيْثَاقَهُمْ
وَمِنْكَ وَمِنْ نُّوْحٍ وَّاِبْرٰهِيْمَ وَمُوْسٰى
وَعِيْسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ۖ وَاَخَذْنَا مِنْهُمْ
مِّيْثَاقًا غَلِيْظًا ۙ⑦

8 That He may question the truthful of their truth, and He has prepared for the disbelievers a painful chastisement.

لِّيَسْـَٔلَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ عَنْ صِدْقِهِمْ ۚ وَ
اَعَدَّ لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ عَذَابًا اَلِيْمًا ⑧

1968 The Prophet was indeed much more than a father to the believers. He had raised them to the dignity of manhood from a state of savagery, consequently the tie of love which united them to him was stronger than the ordinary ties of love and friendship. The statement that his wives are their mothers has reference to the spiritual relationship, because they were helpful in bringing up the faithful spiritually; see 1989 and 1989a.

1969 When the Muslims first came to Madīnah, a brotherhood was established between those who fled and the helpers, one of the former becoming a brother of one of the latter, and each of the two thus united was entitled to a share of inheritance on the death of the other, according to an old Arab custom. The passage abolishes this custom, maintaining only the brotherhood of Islām in a wider sense, and allowing inheritance only to actual relatives. But a Muslim could assist his brother in Islām by a gift or by making a will in his favour. This is the significance of the words *except that you do some good to your friends.*

1970 The covenant referred to here is generally supposed to be in relation to the delivery of the message with which the prophets are entrusted. But see

SECTION 2: **The Allies' Attack on Madīnah**

9 O you who believe, call to mind the favour of Allāh to you when there came against you hosts,[1971] so We sent against them a strong wind[1972] and hosts that you saw not.[1973] And Allāh is ever Seer of what you do.

يايها الذين امنوا اذكروا نعمة الله عليكم اذ جاءتكم جنود فارسلنا عليهم ريحا وجنودا لم تروها وكان الله بما تعملون بصيرا (9)

10 When they came upon you from above you and from below you,[1974] and when the eyes turned dull and the hearts rose up to the throats, and you began to think diverse thoughts about Allāh.[1975]

اذ جاءوكم من فوقكم ومن اسفل منكم واذ زاغت الابصار وبلغت القلوب الحناجر وتظنون بالله الظنونا (10)

11 There were the believers tried and they were shaken with a severe shaking.

هنالك ابتلي المؤمنون وزلزلوا زلزالا شديدا (11)

3:80, where the making of a covenant with the prophets is spoken of, and that covenant is, with regard to the advent of the Holy Prophet, referred to in Acts 3:21 and elsewhere; for a full discussion on which see 458. The covenant spoken of as having been made with the Holy Prophet evidently refers to the Prophet's verifying all previous revelation. Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus are specially mentioned by name on account of their importance.

1971 The events narrated in this section and a part of the following relate to the siege of Madīnah by the combined forces of the Quraish and their allies — viz., the Ghaṭfān, the 'Ashja' and Murrah, the Fazārah, the Sulaim and the Banī Sa'd and Asad, aided by the Jewish tribe of the Banī Naḍīr and the Banī Quraiẓah, the latter of whom had made a treaty of alliance with the Muslims—the entire forces numbering from ten to twenty thousand according to different versions, while the Muslims were only about thirteen or fourteen hundred. The Prophet decided to remain within the town and a ditch was dug as a protective measure against the onrush of the powerful force. The battle continued for several days, the enemy eventually taking to flight on a stormy night without being able to inflict any loss upon the Muslims.

1972 The reference is to the great hurricane which caused the enemy to flee. Muir says: "Wearied and damped in spirit, the night set in upon them cold and tempestuous. Wind and rain beat mercilessly on the unprotected camp. The storm rose to a hurricane. Fires were extinguished, tents blown down, cooking-vessels and other equipage overthrown".

1973 The hosts which could not be seen were the angelic hosts which disheartened the enemy. The storm alone would not have made an army of 10,000 to flee in such disorder, were it not that they had already been disheartened by the futility of their attacks upon the besieged Muslims. The angelic assistance is promised in 3:124.

1974 The Ghaṭfān pitched on the east side of the town, on the higher part of the valley, and the Quraish on the west side, on the lower part of the valley.

1975, see next page.

12 And when the hypocrites and those in whose hearts was a disease began to say: Allāh and His Messenger did not promise us (victory) but only to deceive.[1976]

وَإِذْ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ مَا وَعَدَنَا اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا ﴿١٢﴾

13 And when a party of them said: O people of Yat͟hrib,[1977] you cannot make a stand, so go back.[1978] And a party of them asked permission of the Prophet, saying, Our houses are exposed. And they were not exposed. They only desired to run away.

وَإِذْ قَالَتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ يَا أَهْلَ يَثْرِبَ لَا مُقَامَ لَكُمْ فَارْجِعُوا ۚ وَيَسْتَأْذِنُ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمُ النَّبِيَّ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّ بُيُوتَنَا عَوْرَةٌ وَمَا هِيَ بِعَوْرَةٍ ۖ إِنْ يُرِيدُونَ إِلَّا فِرَارًا ﴿١٣﴾

14 And if an entry were made upon them from the outlying parts of it, then they were asked to wage war (against the Muslims), they would certainly have done it, and they would not have stayed in it but a little while.[1979]

وَلَوْ دُخِلَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ أَقْطَارِهَا ثُمَّ سُئِلُوا الْفِتْنَةَ لَآتَوْهَا وَمَا تَلَبَّثُوا بِهَا إِلَّا يَسِيرًا ﴿١٤﴾

15 And they had indeed made a covenant with Allāh before, (that) they would not turn (their) backs. And a covenant with Allāh must be answered for.

وَلَقَدْ كَانُوا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ قَبْلُ لَا يُوَلُّونَ الْأَدْبَارَ ۚ وَكَانَ عَهْدُ اللَّهِ مَسْئُولًا ﴿١٥﴾

16 Say: Flight will not profit you, if you flee from death or slaughter, and then you will not be allowed to enjoy yourselves but a little.

قُلْ لَنْ يَنْفَعَكُمُ الْفِرَارُ إِنْ فَرَرْتُمْ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ أَوِ الْقَتْلِ وَإِذًا لَا تُمَتَّعُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿١٦﴾

1975 Becoming dull of the eyes and the rising of the hearts to the throats indicates the Muslim fear, which was only natural when such a large army was advancing against a mere handful of men. The diverse thoughts signify the fears of the weak-hearted and the hypocrites that Allāh's promise would not prove true and that the enemy would destroy them. As regards the thoughts of the faithful, see v. 22.

1976 That the prophecies of the Holy Qur'ān regarding the ultimate triumph of Islām and the victory of the Muslims were not vague utterances, but clear and emphatic assertions, is shown by what the hypocrites are related to have said. There was an unmistakable promise of victory, but the circumstances were decidedly against the fulfilment of that promise, and hence the weak-hearted said that the promise of victory was given only to deceive them. It should be noted that the weak-hearted, who did not believe in the ultimate triumph of Islām, are here classed with the hypocrites.

1977 *Yat͟hrib* was the name by which Madīnah was known before the Prophet's flight to that city. On the Prophet's flight there, it received the name of *Madīnat al-Nabī* or the City of the Prophet, or simply Madīnah.

1978 That is, go back to idolatry to save your lives, or beat a retreat and return to your houses.

1979 These verses describe the condition of the hypocrites, who advanced

17 Say: Who is it that can protect you from Allāh, if He intends harm for you or He intends to show you mercy? And they will not find for themselves a guardian or a helper besides Allāh.

قُلْ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِيْ يَعْصِمُكُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ اِنْ اَرَادَ بِكُمْ سُوْٓءًا اَوْ اَرَادَ بِكُمْ رَحْمَةً ؕ وَلَا يَجِدُوْنَ لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلِيًّا وَّلَا نَصِيْرًا ﴿۱۷﴾

18 Allāh indeed knows those among you who hinder others and those who say to their brethren, Come to us. And they come not to the fight but a little,

قَدْ يَعْلَمُ اللّٰهُ الْمُعَوِّقِيْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَالْقَآئِلِيْنَ لِاِخْوَانِهِمْ هَلُمَّ اِلَيْنَا ۚ وَلَا يَاْتُوْنَ الْبَاْسَ اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا ﴿۱۸﴾

19 Being niggardly with respect to you. But when fear comes, thou wilt see them looking to thee, their eyes rolling like one swooning because of death. But when fear is gone they smite you with sharp tongues, being covetous of wealth. These have not believed, so Allāh makes their deeds naught. And that is easy for Allāh.

اَشِحَّةً عَلَيْكُمْ ۚۖ فَاِذَا جَآءَ الْخَوْفُ رَاَيْتَهُمْ يَنْظُرُوْنَ اِلَيْكَ تَدُوْرُ اَعْيُنُهُمْ كَالَّذِيْ يُغْشٰى عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ ۚ فَاِذَا ذَهَبَ الْخَوْفُ سَلَقُوْكُمْ بِاَلْسِنَةٍ حِدَادٍ اَشِحَّةً عَلَى الْخَيْرِ ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوْا فَاَحْبَطَ اللّٰهُ اَعْمَالَهُمْ ؕ وَكَانَ ذٰلِكَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ يَسِيْرًا ﴿۱۹﴾

20 They think the allies are not gone, and if the allies should come (again), they would fain be in the deserts with the desert Arabs, asking for news about you. And if they were among you, they would not fight save a little.

يَحْسَبُوْنَ الْاَحْزَابَ لَمْ يَذْهَبُوْا ۚ وَاِنْ يَّاْتِ الْاَحْزَابُ يَوَدُّوْا لَوْ اَنَّهُمْ بَادُوْنَ فِى الْاَعْرَابِ يَسْاَلُوْنَ عَنْ اَنْۢبَآئِكُمْ ؕ وَلَوْ كَانُوْا فِيْكُمْ مَّا قٰتَلُوْٓا اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا ﴿۲۰﴾

SECTION 3: **Allies' Flight: Quraiẓah punished**

21 Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allāh an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allāh and the Latter day, and remembers Allāh much.[1980]

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيْ رَسُوْلِ اللّٰهِ اُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللّٰهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْاٰخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللّٰهَ كَثِيْرًا ﴿۲۱﴾

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excuses for not fighting against the opponents of the Muslims. If an enemy had entered into the city from another side and invited them to join hands with him to fight against the Muslims, they would have been ready to fight. The concluding words show that they would have even left Madīnah to attack the Muslims and would not then have cared for the protection of their houses.

1980 This verse points to a most significant truth and a distinguishing characteristic of the Holy Prophet, viz., that he is the best exemplar and the highest model of virtue for the faithful under all circumstances. If he had not led armies,

22 And when the believers saw the allies, they said: This is what Allāh and His Messenger promised us, and Allāh and His Messenger spoke the truth. And it only added to their faith and submission.[1981]

وَلَمَّا رَاَ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ الْاَحْزَابَ ۙ قَالُوْا هٰذَا مَا وَعَدَنَا اللّٰهُ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ وَصَدَقَ اللّٰهُ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ ۫ وَمَا زَادَهُمْ اِلَّاۤ اِيْمَانًا وَّتَسْلِيْمًا ﴿۲۲﴾

23 Of the believers are men who are true to the covenant they made with Allāh; so of them is he who has accomplished his vow, and of them is he who yet waits, and they have not changed in the least —[1982]

مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوْا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللّٰهَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ قَضٰى نَحْبَهٗ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَّنْتَظِرُ ۖ وَمَا بَدَّلُوْا تَبْدِيْلًا ﴿۲۳﴾

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he could not have served as a model for a general leading armies into battle; if he had not fought personally, he could not have been an exemplar for a soldier laying down his life in the cause of truth, justice, and freedom; if he had not made laws for the guidance of his followers, he could never have been regarded as an outstanding example to a legislator; if he had not decided cases, he could not have served as a light to judges and magistrates; if he had not married, he would have left men unguided in practically half of their everyday duties and could not have shown how to be a kind and affectionate husband and a loving father; if he had not taken revenge on tyrants for the wrongs inflicted on innocent persons, if he had not overcome his persecuting enemies and forgiven them, if he had not overlooked the faults of those attached to him, he could not have been an excellent *exemplar* and a *perfect model*, as he is here pronounced to be. Indeed, it is the distinguishing characteristic of his life that he not only gave practical rules of guidance in all walks of life, but gave by his life a practical illustration of all those rules.

Two more points are worth noting here. In the first place, the Prophet's being an exemplar is a sufficient answer to all those who carp at him, because the very necessity of guiding men under varying mundane circumstances and conditions led him through all those circumstances. Secondly, the moral qualities which are latent within man remain in a dormant condition unless they are called into action. Hence no one can claim the possession of a high moral quality unless he has had occasion to display it, acquitting himself creditably.

The occasion on which the Prophet's being an exemplar for the faithful is pointed out is one on which he showed the greatest firmness in utmost danger, confidence in Divine assistance, and steadfastness in the hardest trials, and the believers are told that they must not lose heart, but follow the example of the Holy Prophet.

1981 The reference here is to the Divine promise that a time would come when the combined forces of Arabia would be put to flight. This promise was given long before, and at a time when the Holy Prophet and his few followers were being severely persecuted at Makkah. Here are the words of one prophecy: "A mighty host of the allies will here be put to flight" (38:11); "Soon will the hosts be routed and they will show their backs" (54:45), says another. So when the combined forces attacked Madīnah, the words of the prophecy were in the heart of every true Muslim. They rejoiced because they were certain that the combined forces of the enemy would be put to flight. It was only the hypocrites who had misgivings, as the last section shows. The battle had, in fact, inspired greater faith in the ultimate triumph of Islām, not only by bringing earlier prophecies to fulfilment but also because it was here that, when the Holy Prophet smashed a big stone with a hammer (a stone which had proved an obstacle in the digging of the ditch) and a flash of light followed, he announced the mighty prophecy that the flash of light had revealed to him the palaces of the Chosroes and the Caesars, and that he had been informed that his followers would be triumphant over both the empires (Ah. IV, p. 303).

1982 Some of the believers had become martyrs in the cause of truth; others yet waited, anxious to lay down their lives in the same cause.

24 That Allāh may reward the truthful for their truth, and chastise the hypocrites, if He please, or turn to them (mercifully). Surely Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful.[1982a]

لِّيَجْزِيَ اللَّهُ الصَّادِقِينَ بِصِدْقِهِمْ وَيُعَذِّبَ الْمُنَافِقِينَ إِنْ شَاءَ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And Allāh turned back the disbelievers in their rage — they gained no advantage. And Allāh sufficed the believers in fighting. And Allāh is ever Strong, Mighty.

وَرَدَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِغَيْظِهِمْ لَمْ يَنَالُوا خَيْرًا ۚ وَكَفَى اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الْقِتَالَ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ قَوِيًّا عَزِيزًا ﴿٢٥﴾

26 And He drove down those of the People of the Book who backed them from their fortresses and He cast awe into their hearts ; some you killed and you took captive some.[1983]

وَأَنْزَلَ الَّذِينَ ظَاهَرُوهُم مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مِن صَيَاصِيهِمْ وَقَذَفَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الرُّعْبَ فَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ وَتَأْسِرُونَ فَرِيقًا ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And He made you heirs to their land and their dwellings and their property, and (to) a land which you have not yet trodden. And Allāh is ever Possessor of power over all things.[1984]

وَأَوْرَثَكُمْ أَرْضَهُمْ وَدِيَارَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ وَأَرْضًا لَّمْ تَطَئُوهَا ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرًا ﴿٢٧﴾

1982a It is clearly stated here, as also in v. 17, that all the hypocrites would not be punished, but that Allāh would be merciful to them, punishing only such as deserved to be punished. Thus it happened that most of them became afterwards sincere converts to Islām.

1983 The Banī Quraiẓah were in alliance with the Holy Prophet, and when the enemy laid siege to Madīnah, they were bound to repel the attack ; see 126. Instead of this they sided with the investing army. Muir admits that "it was agreed that the Quraiẓah would assist the Quraish", and though he doubts whether "they entered on active hostilities", there is the surest testimony that they had made an agreement with the Quraish to attack the Muslims from within. Therefore, when the besieging army took to flight and the Quraiẓah returned to their fortress, it was besieged by the Holy Prophet, for to leave such an internal enemy unpunished would have been a source of ever-present danger to the safety of the Muslim community. They remained besieged for twenty-five days, and then expressed their willingness to surrender, on condition that they should submit to the sentence of punishment pronounced by Sa'd ibn Mu'ādh. Had they trusted the Prophet, he would probably have given them the same punishment as he gave to the Qainuqā', viz., emigration, but Sa'd was exasperated by their treachery and his judgment was that the fighting men should be put to death and the rest made captives (B. 56: 168). This was in accordance with the Jewish Law: "And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it. And when the Lord thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword. But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself" (Deut. 20: 12-14). Three hundred men suffered death under this sentence, and their lands fell into the hands of the Muslims.

1984 *The land which you have not yet trodden* refers to the foreign lands which are here promised to the Muslims and which they conquered later.

SECTION 4 : **Prophet's Domestic Simplicity**

28 O Prophet, say to thy wives: If you desire this world's life and its adornment, come, I will give you a provision and allow you to depart a goodly departing.[1985]

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِّاَزْوَاجِكَ اِنْ كُنْتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِيْنَتَهَا فَتَعَالَيْنَ اُمَتِّعْكُنَّ وَاُسَرِّحْكُنَّ سَرَاحًا جَمِيْلًا ﴿۲۸﴾

29 And if you desire Allāh and His Messenger and the abode of the Hereafter, then surely Allāh has prepared for the doers of good among you a mighty reward.

وَاِنْ كُنْتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ وَالدَّارَ الْاٰخِرَةَ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ اَعَدَّ لِلْمُحْسِنٰتِ مِنْكُنَّ اَجْرًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿۲۹﴾

30 O wives of the Prophet, whoever of you is guilty of manifestly improper conduct, the chastisement will be doubled for her. And this is easy for Allāh.[1986]

يٰنِسَآءَ النَّبِيِّ مَنْ يَّاْتِ مِنْكُنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ يُّضٰعَفْ لَهَا الْعَذَابُ ضِعْفَيْنِ ؕ وَكَانَ ذٰلِكَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ يَسِيْرًا ﴿۳۰﴾

1985 The introduction of the subject of the Holy Prophet's simplicity in domestic life is most fitting here. The Muslims were now growing powerful and wealthier. The victory at Badr, and the possession of the lands and property of the Quraiẓah, had increased their wealth. It was natural, in the circumstances, that the wives of the Prophet should desire to be furnished with better necessities of life than they had previously enjoyed. But just at this time we find a revelation enjoining the strictest simplicity upon them. These strictures could not emanate from an impostor, nor even from a man of the world whose power and wealth were increasing daily. If the Prophet had allowed his wives to share in the general prosperity of the community, there could not have been the least objection. But he received a revelation which deprived him and those most nearly related to him of those material benefits which others could easily acquire. The splendours of this world could be obtained, and were not forbidden to any Muslim, but such transitory vanities were not to be admitted into the household of God's Prophet. As he possessed the means, his wives would be allowed to depart with rich and ample gifts, if such was their desire. This passage also throws light on the object of the Prophet's marriages, for if his object were sensual enjoyment, he could not have been ready to sacrifice the ease and comforts attendant upon mere carnal desire to the retention of that Spartan simplicity enjoined upon his household.

1986 The word *fāḥishah* means *any evil exceeding the proper bounds, anything not agreeable with truth and with rule or measure,* or *anything unseemly* (LL). As already shown in 556, it includes *hatred and desertion of the husband, doing harm to the husband and his family.* It does not necessarily mean *adultery* or *lewdness.* Hence many commentators take the word *fāḥishah* here in its broadest sense as meaning anything which may give offence to the Prophet.

It should be noted that not only are the Prophet's wives denied the comforts of life which were available to other Muslim ladies, but any unseemly conduct on their part brought double the ordinary punishment. Could this be the work of an impostor ? In their case the punishment is increased because, being in the Prophet's house, they had a better chance to be guided aright and to pass their lives in the greatest purity. It should be noted that there is no actual occurrence of the least indecency on the part of any of the Prophet's wives.

PART XXII

31 And whoever of you is obedient to Allāh and His Messenger and does good, We shall give her a double reward, and We have prepared for her an honourable sustenance.[1987]

وَمَنْ يَّقْنُتْ مِنْكُنَّ لِلّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ وَتَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا نُّؤْتِهَآ اَجْرَهَا مَرَّتَيْنِ ۙ وَاَعْتَدْنَا لَهَا رِزْقًا كَرِيْمًا ﴿۳۱﴾

32 O wives of the Prophet, you are not like any other women. If you would keep your duty, be not soft in speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease yearn; and speak a word of goodness.[1988]

يٰنِسَآءَ النَّبِيِّ لَسْتُنَّ كَاَحَدٍ مِّنَ النِّسَآءِ اِنِ اتَّقَيْتُنَّ فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِيْ فِيْ قَلْبِهٖ مَرَضٌ وَّقُلْنَ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوْفًا ﴿۳۲﴾

33 And stay in your houses and display not your beauty like the displaying of the ignorance of yore; and keep up prayer, and pay the poor-rate, and obey Allāh and His Messenger. Allāh only desires to take away uncleanness from you, O people of the household, and to purify you a (thorough) purifying.[1989]

وَقَرْنَ فِيْ بُيُوْتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْاُوْلٰى وَاَقِمْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتِيْنَ الزَّكٰوةَ وَاَطِعْنَ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ ؕ اِنَّمَا يُرِيْدُ اللّٰهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ اَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيْرًا ﴿۳۳﴾

1987 The double reward spoken of here means only greater reward, as the words *honourable sustenance* show. The greater reward is due to their having denied themselves the ordinary comforts of life by remaining in the Prophet's house.

1988 Though the injunction is given in particular to the wives of the Prophet, it is really a rule of life for all Muslim women, and promotes purity of heart and chastity in the relations between the sexes. They are not forbidden to speak to men, but, as a safeguard against possible inclination of the heart to evil thoughts, they are told not to indulge in soft and amorous conversation with the opposite sex. The wives of the Prophet are here told that they were not like other women, as they had to come in contact with large numbers of people, who would come to them to learn the treasures of wisdom which they received from the Prophet. An allusion to this is contained in the concluding words of the verse, *and speak a word of goodness*.

1989 The means of purification are suggested in the previous verses: to observe the utmost simplicity of life, to avoid every indecency, and not to display their beauty to others. The uncleanness which Allāh will thus take away is the uncleanness of the desire for worldly riches. As the Prophet himself was an exemplar to the faithful, so was his household to be an example of simplicity and purity to Muslim women; hence they are called *mothers of the faithful*; see 1968.

It should also be noted that the Prophet's wives are here addressed as *ahl al-bait*, or *the people of the household*, they being primarily so, while his children and children's children may also be included. The use of the phrase *ahl al-bait* on the only two other occasions in the Holy Qur'ān is to signify the

34 And remember that which is recited in your houses of the messages of Allāh and the Wisdom. Surely Allāh is ever Knower of subtilities, Aware.[1989a]

وَ اذۡكُرۡنَ مَا یُتۡلٰی فِیۡ بُیُوۡتِكُنَّ مِنۡ اٰیٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَ الۡحِكۡمَةِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ لَطِیۡفًا خَبِیۡرًا ﴿۳۴﴾

SECTION 5 : **Prophet's Marriage with Zainab**

35 Surely the men who submit and the women who submit, and the believing men and the believing women, and the obeying men and the obeying women, and the truthful men and the truthful women, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women, and the charitable men and the charitable women, and the fasting men and the fasting women, and the men who guard their chastity and the women who guard, and the men who remember Allāh much and the women who remember — Allāh has prepared for them forgiveness and a mighty reward.[1989b]

اِنَّ الۡمُسۡلِمِیۡنَ وَ الۡمُسۡلِمٰتِ وَ الۡمُؤۡمِنِیۡنَ وَ الۡمُؤۡمِنٰتِ وَ الۡقٰنِتِیۡنَ وَ الۡقٰنِتٰتِ وَ الصّٰدِقِیۡنَ وَ الصّٰدِقٰتِ وَ الصّٰبِرِیۡنَ وَ الصّٰبِرٰتِ وَ الۡخٰشِعِیۡنَ وَ الۡخٰشِعٰتِ وَ الۡمُتَصَدِّقِیۡنَ وَ الۡمُتَصَدِّقٰتِ وَ الصَّآئِمِیۡنَ وَ الصّٰٓئِمٰتِ وَ الۡحٰفِظِیۡنَ فُرُوۡجَهُمۡ وَ الۡحٰفِظٰتِ وَ الذّٰكِرِیۡنَ اللّٰهَ كَثِیۡرًا وَّ الذّٰكِرٰتِ ۙ اَعَدَّ اللّٰهُ لَهُمۡ مَّغۡفِرَةً وَّ اَجۡرًا عَظِیۡمًا ﴿۳۵﴾

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wife, as in the case of Abraham's wife (11:73) and Amrān's wife or Moses' mother (28:12), and this use also shows that it is the wife, who is mistress of the house, that is indicated by the phrase *ahl al-bait*. Thus under this verse the Prophet's children could only claim a sanctity in which his wives also shared.

It is a fact that not only did the wives of the Prophet retain the utmost simplicity of life in his lifetime, but even after his death, when the Muslims grew a very wealthy nation and big stipends were paid to the Prophet's wives, they did not allow wealth to accumulate in their houses but distributed it to deserving people. Of 'Ā'ishah especially it is related that she was so generous in giving away what came to her that she would sometimes be left without the means for an evening meal.

1989a The wives of the Prophet were not only to serve as models of virtue to the faithful, men as well as women, but they were also required to teach the precepts of religion, of that which was recited in their houses of the messages of Allāh and of Wisdom, to the faithful. Hence they are told that they must remember not only the injunctions of the Holy Qur'ān — the messages of Allāh — but also the Wisdom which the Prophet taught by his practice and word, i.e., the Sunnah.

1989b This verse repeats ten times that women can attain every good quality to which men can have access and settles it conclusively that according to the Qur'ān women stand on the same spiritual level as men.

36 And it behoves not a believing man or a believing woman, when Allāh and His Messenger have decided an affair, to exercise a choice in their matter. And whoever disobeys Allāh and His Messenger, he surely strays off to manifest error.[1990]

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَّلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ
اِذَا قَضَى اللّٰهُ وَرَسُوْلُهٗٓ اَمْرًا اَنْ
يَّكُوْنَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ اَمْرِهِمْ ؕ
وَمَنْ يَّعْصِ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ فَقَدْ
ضَلَّ ضَلٰلًا مُّبِيْنًا ﴿۳۶﴾

37 And when thou saidst to him to whom Allāh had shown favour and to whom thou hadst shown a favour: Keep thy wife to thyself and keep thy duty to Allāh; and thou concealedst in thy heart what Allāh would bring to light, and thou fearedst men, and Allāh has a greater right that thou shouldst fear Him. So when Zaid dissolved her marriage-tie, We gave her to thee as a wife, so that there should be no difficulty for the believers about the wives of their adopted sons, when they have dissolved their marriage-tie. And Allāh's command is ever performed.[1991]

وَاِذْ تَقُوْلُ لِلَّذِيْٓ اَنْعَمَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَاَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِ اَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ زَوْجَكَ
وَاتَّقِ اللّٰهَ وَتُخْفِيْ فِيْ نَفْسِكَ مَا اللّٰهُ
مُبْدِيْهِ وَتَخْشَى النَّاسَ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ اَحَقُّ
اَنْ تَخْشٰىهُ ؕ فَلَمَّا قَضٰى زَيْدٌ مِّنْهَا
وَطَرًا زَوَّجْنٰكَهَا لِكَيْ لَا يَكُوْنَ عَلَى
الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ حَرَجٌ فِيْٓ اَزْوَاجِ اَدْعِيَآئِهِمْ
اِذَا قَضَوْا مِنْهُنَّ وَطَرًا ؕ وَكَانَ
اَمْرُ اللّٰهِ مَفْعُوْلًا ﴿۳۷﴾

1990 All commentators agree that this verse was revealed on the occasion when the Holy Prophet demanded Zainab, his cousin through his aunt, in marriage for Zaid, his adopted son. Both Zainab and her brother were averse to this match, because Zaid was a freedman, and it was in obedience to this revelation that their scruples were overcome and Zainab accepted Zaid for her husband (IJ, Rz, Kf, JB). The verse has no connection with the subsequent events, which brought about the divorce and Zainab's marriage with the Holy Prophet. It, moreover, shows that it was the Prophet himself who had arranged this marriage between Zainab and Zaid, and were it not in deference to his wishes, Zainab would never have consented to the alliance.

1991 This verse consists of two distinct and separate parts, the first dealing with Zaid's divorce of Zainab, and the second beginning with *so when Zaid,* etc., with the Holy Prophet's marriage with Zainab, and therefore a full explanation of the events in connection with this marriage is necessary. Zaid belonged to the tribe of Kalb, and was taken prisoner in childhood and sold as a slave at Makkah, where he was bought by Khadījah's brother, who gave him over to his sister, and she in her turn presented him to the Holy Prophet, who, as was his wont, liberated him. But Zaid was so much attached to the Holy Prophet, that when the Prophet gave him the option of accompanying his father to his home or of remaining with him, Zaid chose the latter course. On account of his great attachment, Zaid was

38 There is no harm for the Prophet in that which Allāh has ordained for him. Such has been the way of Allāh with those who have gone before. And the command of Allāh is a decree that is made absolute —

مَا كَانَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ مِنْ حَرَجٍ فِيمَا فَرَضَ اللّٰهُ لَهٗ ۚ سُنَّةَ اللّٰهِ فِي الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ ۚ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللّٰهِ قَدَرًا مَّقْدُورًا ﴿٣٨﴾

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called the son of Muḥammad, and he was one of the early converts to Islām. It is to these events that the opening words of the verse refer, when they speak of Zaid as being one to whom Allāh as well as the Prophet had shown favour.

Zainab was the daughter of the Prophet's own aunt, Umaimah, daughter of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib. She was one of the early converts to Islām, and the Holy Prophet proposed to her brother that she should be given in marriage to Zaid. Both brother and sister were averse to this match, and only yielded under pressure from the Holy Prophet, for which see the last note. It is related that they both desired that the Holy Prophet himself should marry Zainab. In fact, when marriage was first proposed to Zainab, she gave her assent under the impression that the Prophet wanted her for himself (Rz), but the Prophet insisted that she should accept Zaid (IJ).

The marriage was, however, not a happy one. Zainab was harsh of temper, and she never liked Zaid on account of the stigma of slavery, which attached to his name. Differences arose, and Zaid expressed a desire to the Holy Prophet of divorcing Zainab. The news was grieving for the Prophet, for it was he who had insisted upon the marriage, and he therefore advised Zaid not to divorce her. He feared that people would object that a marriage which had been arranged by the Prophet was unsuccessful. According to one interpretation, it is to this circumstance that the words refer, *and thou fearedst men, and Allāh had a greater right that thou shouldst fear Him*. According to this interpretation it is also to the same matter that the words *and thou concealedst in thy heart what Allāh would bring to light* refer, for the Prophet did not like that the disagreements between Zainab and Zaid should become generally known. The Prophet's injuction to Zaid not to divorce his wife is contained in unmistakable terms in the Holy Qur'ān. But it was all in vain, and Zaid at last divorced Zainab. According to another interpretation, however, the words *and thou concealedst in thy heart* to *thou shouldst fear Him*, are a continuation of the advice which the Prophet gave to Zaid not to divorce Zainab (Rz). This interpretation suits the context even better than the first interpretation, for as we are further on told in v. 39, the prophets fear none but God.

After Zainab was divorced the Holy Prophet took her in marriage, that being the wish of the lady and her relatives before her marriage with Zaid, and the Prophet was, now that the marriage arranged by him proved unsuccessful, morally bound to accept their wishes. Moreover, the Qur'ān had declared against an adopted son being regarded as if he were a real son, and now there was an opportunity where the Holy Prophet could by his own example deal a death-blow to that custom. This reason is plainly given in the second part of the verse: *We gave her to thee as a wife, so that there should be no difficulty for the believers about the wives of their adopted sons*. The Qur'ān does not give any other reason for the marriage.

This simple story is made the basis of a mean attack on the Holy Prophet. It is stated that the Prophet, having seen Zainab by chance through a half-open door, was fascinated by her beauty, and that Zaid, having come to know of this, divorced her, and then she became the Prophet's wife. That Muir and Arnold, not to mention more prejudiced writers, accept this, only shows how far religious prejudice may carry "criticism". It is admitted that Zainab was the daughter of the Prophet's real aunt; it is admitted that she was one of the early believers in

39 Those who deliver the messages of Allāh and fear Him, and fear none but Allāh. And Allāh is Sufficient to take account.

40 Muḥammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allāh and the Seal of the prophets. And Allāh is ever Knower of all things.[1994]

الَّذِينَ يُبَلِّغُونَ رِسٰلٰتِ اللّٰهِ وَيَخْشَوْنَهٗ وَلَا يَخْشَوْنَ اَحَدًا اِلَّا اللّٰهَ ۗ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ حَسِيْبًا ۝٣٩

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ اَبَآ اَحَدٍ مِّنْ رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلٰكِنْ رَّسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيّٖنَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمًا ۝٤٠

Islām who fled to Madīnah ; it is admitted that the Prophet himself had arranged the marriage between Zaid and Zainab ; and finally it is admitted that Zainab desired, as did also her brother, before she was married to Zaid, that she should be taken in marriage by the Holy Prophet. What was it then which prevented the Prophet from marrying her when she was a virgin? Had he not seen her before? He was so closely related to her that on the face of it such a supposition is absurd. Then there was no seclusion of women before Zainab's marriage with the Prophet, a fact the truth of which is attested by Muir himself. Having not only seen her when she was a virgin, but knowing her fully well on account of her close relationship to him and her early belief in Islām, while both she and her relatives were desirous that the Prophet should take her for a wife, what hindered the Prophet from marrying her? The story is so absurd that any man possessing ordinary common sense would unhesitatingly reject it.

1994 The word *khātam* means *a seal* or *the last part* or *portion* of a thing, the latter being the primary significance of the word *khātim*. It may further be noted that *khātam al-qaum* always means *the last of the people — ākhiru-hum* (T, LL). Though the Holy Prophet was admittedly the last of the prophets, and even history shows that no prophet appeared after him in the world, yet the Holy Qur'ān has adopted the word *khātam*, and not *khātim*, because a deeper significance is carried in the phrase *Seal of the prophets* than mere *finality*. In fact, it indicates *finality* combined with *perfection of prophethood*, along with *a continuance* among his followers of certain *blessings of prophethood*. He is *the Seal of the prophets* because with him the *object of prophethood, the manifestation of Divine will in laws which should guide humanity, was finally accomplished in the revelation of a perfect law in the Holy Qur'ān*, and he is also the *Seal of the prophets* because *certain favours bestowed on prophets were for ever to continue among his followers*. The office of the prophet was only necessary to guide men, either by giving them a law or by removing the imperfections of a previously existing law, or by giving certain new directions to meet the requirements of the times, because the circumstances of earlier human society did not allow the revelation of a perfect law which should suit the requirements of different generations or different places. Hence prophets were constantly raised. But through the Holy Prophet a perfect law was given, suiting the requirements of all ages and all countries, and this law was guarded against all corruption, and the office of the prophet was therefore no more required. But this did not mean that the Divine favours bestowed on His chosen servants were to be denied to the chosen ones among the Muslims. Men did not need a new law, because they had a perfect law with them, but they did stand in need of receiving Divine favours. The highest of these favours is Divine inspiration, and it is recognized by Islām that the Divine Being speaks to His chosen ones now as He spoke in the past, but such people are not *prophets* in the real sense of the word. According to a most reliable ḥadīth, the Prophet said "there will be in my community", i.e., among the Muslims, "men who will be spoken to (by God), though they will not be prophets" (B. 62 : 6). According to another version of the same ḥadīth, such people are given the name *muḥaddath* (B. 62 : 6).

SECTION 6: **The Prophet's Marriages**

41 O you who believe, remember Allāh with much remembrance,

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيْرًا ۙ﴿۴۱﴾

42 And glorify Him morning and evening.

وَّسَبِّحُوْهُ بُكْرَةً وَّاَصِيْلًا ﴿۴۲﴾

43 He it is Who sends blessings on you, and (so do) His angels, that He may bring you forth out of darkness into light. And He is ever Merciful to the believers.[1996]

هُوَ الَّذِيْ يُصَلِّيْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتُهٗ لِيُخْرِجَكُمْ مِّنَ الظُّلُمٰتِ اِلَى النُّوْرِ ؕ وَكَانَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ رَحِيْمًا ﴿۴۳﴾

44 Their salutation on the day they meet Him will be, Peace! and He has prepared for them an honourable reward.

تَحِيَّتُهُمْ يَوْمَ يَلْقَوْنَهٗ سَلٰمٌ ۚۖ وَاَعَدَّ لَهُمْ اَجْرًا كَرِيْمًا ﴿۴۴﴾

45 O Prophet, surely We have sent thee as a witness, and a bearer of good news and a warner,

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ اِنَّآ اَرْسَلْنٰكَ شَاهِدًا وَّمُبَشِّرًا وَّنَذِيْرًا ۙ﴿۴۵﴾

46 And as an inviter to Allāh by His permission, and as a light-giving sun.[1997]

وَّدَاعِيًا اِلَى اللّٰهِ بِاِذْنِهٖ وَسِرَاجًا مُّنِيْرًا ﴿۴۶﴾

47 And give the believers the good news that they will have great grace from Allāh.

وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ بِاَنَّ لَهُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ فَضْلًا كَبِيْرًا ﴿۴۷﴾

What is stated above is corroborated by a saying of the Holy Prophet: *Nothing has remained of prophethood except mubashsharāt*, i.e., *good news*. And being asked what was meant by *mubashsharāt*, or *good news*, he said: "True visions" (B. 91:5). According to another ḥadīth, he is reported to have said: "The vision of the believer is one of the forty-six parts of prophethood" (B. 91:4). Prophethood itself has gone, but one of its blessings remains, and will exist for ever among the followers of the Holy Prophet.

1996 This section deals with the marriages and divorces of the Prophet and fittingly opens with a statement showing how the Holy Prophet had made God the greatest force in the lives of a people who had never known God. Again it was by means of the transformation wrought by him that his companions were led out of the darkness of ignorance. Could it then be that the man who purified others was himself impure? Could a sensual man, a slave of his passions, turn a nation of idolatrous and ignorant men into a godly people? This argument is expanded and made lucid in the verses that follow.

1997 The words clearly imply that one who could give light to others and raise them from the depth of vice and immorality to the height of purity and perfection could not himself be in the darkness of impurity.

The Prophet is here spoken of first as one bearing witness to lost humanity, to men who had lost all idea of God-consciousness, that there is a God. More than that he was *a bearer of good news* to humanity that God still remembered mankind, and that He had sent His Prophet to make this fallen humanity rise to

48 And obey not the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and disregard their annoying talk,[1998] and rely on Allāh. And Allāh is enough as having charge (of affairs).

وَلَا تُطِعِ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ وَالْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ وَدَعْ اَذٰىهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللّٰهِ ؕ وَكَفٰى بِاللّٰهِ وَكِيْلًا ﴿۴۸﴾

49 O you who believe, when you marry believing women, then divorce them before you touch them, you have in their case no term which you should reckon.[1999] But make provision for them and set them free in a goodly manner.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْۤا اِذَا نَكَحْتُمُ الْمُؤْمِنٰتِ ثُمَّ طَلَّقْتُمُوْهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ تَمَسُّوْهُنَّ فَمَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ عِدَّةٍ تَعْتَدُّوْنَهَا ۚ فَمَتِّعُوْهُنَّ وَ سَرِّحُوْهُنَّ سَرَاحًا جَمِيْلًا ﴿۴۹﴾

50 O Prophet, We have made lawful to thee thy wives[2000] whom thou hast given their dowries, and those

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ اِنَّاۤ اَحْلَلْنَا لَكَ اَزْوَاجَكَ الّٰتِيْۤ اٰتَيْتَ اُجُوْرَهُنَّ وَ مَا مَلَكَتْ

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spiritual eminence by holding communion with Him, but at the same time he was *a warner*, too, and told them that, if they persisted in their evil ways, they would suffer evil consequences; thus he was *an Inviter* to Allāh and the *Sun of righteousness*.

1998 In the mention of *annoying talk* there is a clear reference to the carpings of his petty-minded critics, who try to misrepresent the greatest source of righteousness which the world has ever witnessed, as an evil. The Prophet is told to disregard this annoying talk, as the time would come when the question would be asked, as it is already being asked, how is it that the Prophet illumined the world and opened the flood-gates of light to a benighted world, if it was darkness that reigned supreme in his own mind?

1999 The reason for putting this ordinance here, in speaking of the Holy Prophet's marriages, seems to apply to the Holy Prophet's marriage with a woman named Asmā', daughter of Nu'mān Kindī. Before he went in to her she asked for a divorce, and the Prophet released her as she had desired. It is related that 'Umar decided against her being regarded as a wife of the Prophet.

2000 That his wives were lawful for the Prophet goes without saying. It appears that this revelation came after 4:3, which limits the number of wives a man can take under exceptional circumstances to four. The Prophet was, however, told that he should not divorce the excess number for this reason.

The marriages of the Holy Prophet have furnished his critics with the chief implement of attack on him, and the low-minded missionary has gone so far as to call him a voluptuary on that account, though he dare not apply that word to the husband of a hundred wives. Therefore I give below full particulars regarding the Prophet's marriages. His life as regards his marriages may be divided into four periods. Briefly these are: (1) A celibate life up to twenty-five. (2) A married state with one wife from 25 to 54. (3) Several marriages from 54 to 60. (4) No further marriage after 60. As regards the first period, the life of a celibate youth living in a warm country till 25, the testimony of a hostile writer like Sir William Muir is that "all authorities agree in ascribing to the youth of Muḥammad a modesty of deportment and purity of manners rare among the people of Mecca". In fact, in Arabia at the time profligacy was the order of the day and it was among people who prided themselves on loose sexual relations that the Prophet led a life of transcendent purity.

Then comes the second period from 25 to 54. His first marriage was contracted while he was twenty-five years of age, and the widow Khadījah whom he married was forty years old, i.e., fifteen years his senior. It was with her, and her

whom thy right hand possesses, out of those whom Allāh has given thee as prisoners of war, and the daughters of thy paternal uncle and the daughters of thy paternal aunts, and the daughters of thy maternal uncle and the daughters of thy maternal aunts who fled with thee; and a believing woman, if she gives herself to the Prophet, if the Prophet desires to marry her. (It is) especially for thee, not for the believers[2001] — We know what We have ordained for them concerning their wives and those whom their right hands possess in order that no blame may attach to thee. And Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful.

يَمِيْنُكَ مِمَّآ اَفَآءَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْكَ وَبَنٰتِ عَمِّكَ وَبَنٰتِ عَمّٰتِكَ وَبَنٰتِ خَالِكَ وَبَنٰتِ خٰلٰتِكَ الّٰتِىْ هَاجَرْنَ مَعَكَ وَامْرَاَةً مُّؤْمِنَةً اِنْ وَّهَبَتْ نَفْسَهَا لِلنَّبِىِّ اِنْ اَرَادَ النَّبِىُّ اَنْ يَّسْتَنْكِحَهَا خَالِصَةً لَّكَ مِنْ دُوْنِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا فَرَضْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِىْٓ اَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُهُمْ لِكَيْلَا يَكُوْنَ عَلَيْكَ حَرَجٌ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ۝

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alone, that he passed all the years of his youth and manhood until she died three years before the Hijrah, when he was already an old man of fifty. This circumstance alone is sufficient to give the lie to those carpers who call him a voluptuary. After her death, while still at Makkah, he married Saudah, a widow of advanced age. He also married 'Ā'ishah, his only virgin wife, while still at Makkah, but her marriage was consummated five years afterwards in the 2nd year of the Hijrah.

Then followed the flight to Madīnah, and subsequent to the Flight he had to fight many battles with his enemies, the Quraish, or such tribes as sided with the Quraish. The result of these battles was a great discrepancy between the number of males and females, and as his favourite followers fell in the field of battle fighting with his enemies, the care of their families devolved upon the Prophet and his surviving companions. In the battle of Badr fell Khunais, son of Ḥudhāfah, and the faithful 'Umar's daughter Ḥafṣah was left a widow. 'Umar offered her to 'Uthmān and Abū Bakr in turn, and she was at last married by the Holy Prophet in the third year of the Hijrah. 'Abd Allāh, son of Jaḥsh, fell a martyr at Uḥud, and his widow Zainab, daughter of Khuzaimah, was taken in marriage by the Prophet in the same year. In the next year Abū Salamah died, and his widow, Umm Salamah, was taken to wife by the Prophet. The events are narrated in the last section, leading to Zainab's divorce by Zaid; the Prophet married her in the fifth year of the Hijrah under circumstances already narrated. Umm Ḥabībah was one of his devoted followers who fled to Abyssinia with her husband, 'Ubaid Allāh, who there became a Christian, and when he died his widow found comfort in being taken as a wife by the Holy Prophet in the seventh year of the Hijrah.

Besides these widows of his faithful followers whom it fell to his lot to take under his protection, the Prophet took three widows of his enemies in marriage, and in each case this step led to the union and pacification of a whole tribe. These three, Juwairiyah, Maimūnah and Ṣafiyyah, he married in the years six and seven of the Hijrah. Regarding one of these, it is sufficient to note that, when the Prophet took Juwairiyah for a wife, over a hundred families of the tribe of the Banī Muṣṭaliq, to which tribe she belonged, were at once liberated by the Muslims.

The fourth period is that when war came to an end; a reference to this is contained in v. 52: "It is not allowed to thee to take wives after this".

Thus it will be seen that all the marriages of the Prophet were due either to feelings of compassion for the widows of his faithful followers or to put a stop to

2001, see next page.

51 Thou mayest put off whom thou pleasest of them, and take to thee whom thou pleasest. And whom thou desirest of those whom thou hadst separated provisionally, no blame attaches to thee. This is most proper so that their eyes may be cool and they may not grieve, and that they should be pleased, all of them, with what thou givest them.[2002] And Allāh knows what is in your hearts. And Allāh is ever Knowing, Forbearing.

تُرْجِي مَن تَشَاءُ مِنْهُنَّ وَتُؤْوِي إِلَيْكَ مَن تَشَاءُ ۖ وَمَنِ ابْتَغَيْتَ مِمَّنْ عَزَلْتَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكَ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَن تَقَرَّ أَعْيُنُهُنَّ وَلَا يَحْزَنَّ وَيَرْضَيْنَ بِمَا آتَيْتَهُنَّ كُلُّهُنَّ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَلِيمًا ﴿٥١﴾

52 It is not allowed to thee to take wives after this,[2003] nor to change them for other wives,[2004] though their beauty be pleasing to thee, except those whom thy right hand possesses.[2005] And Allāh is ever Watchful over all things.

لَا يَحِلُّ لَكَ النِّسَاءُ مِن بَعْدُ وَلَا أَن تَبَدَّلَ بِهِنَّ مِنْ أَزْوَاجٍ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ حُسْنُهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ رَقِيبًا ﴿٥٢﴾

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bloodshed and ensure union with some tribe. Compare also 535, where it is shown that the permission for polygamy was given under similar circumstances; in fact, many of the companions had to follow the example of the Prophet.

2001 As pointed out in the beginning of the last note, the Prophet was specially allowed to retain all his wives when the number allowed was brought down to four in the case of other believers. This was the only privilege allowed to the Prophet and it is to this that the words, *especially for thee,* refer. What God *ordained for the believers* is contained in 4:3, and on the revelation of that verse any Muslim who had more than four wives had to divorce the excess number.

2002 This verse must be read along with vv. 28 and 29, where a choice is given to the Prophet's wives to remain with him or to depart. A similar choice is given here to the Prophet. And when his wives preferred to lead simple lives with him rather than seek worldly goods by leaving him, the Prophet was no less considerate for their feelings; for notwithstanding the choice given to him to retain such of his wives as he liked, he did not exercise this choice to the disadvantage of any one of them, but retained them all, as they had chosen to remain with him. A reference is, indeed, contained to vv. 28 and 29 in the words *that they should be pleased, all of them, with what thou givest them,* which indicate that this was altogether a new arrangement in which both parties were given free choice and both sacrificed all other considerations to the sanctity of the marriage-tie.

2003 When the Prophet's wives chose to remain with him, limitation was placed upon the Holy Prophet, viz., that he should not take any other wife. The Prophet did not contract any marriage after the seventh year of the Hijrah, when this verse was revealed.

2004 This is another limitation, viz., that it was not after this allowed to the Prophet to divorce any one of those who had chosen to remain with him.

2005 By *those whom thy right hand possesses* are indicated the wives of the Prophet whom he had lawfully married.

SECTION 7 : **Rules of Conduct in Domestic Relations**

53 O you who believe, enter not the houses of the Prophet unless permission is given to you for a meal, not waiting for its cooking being finished — but when you are invited, enter, and when you have taken food, disperse — not seeking to listen to talk. Surely this gives the Prophet trouble, but he forbears from you, and Allāh forbears not from the truth. And when you ask of them any goods, ask of them from behind a curtain.[2006] This is purer for your hearts and their hearts. And it behoves you not to give trouble to the Messenger of Allāh, nor to marry his wives after him ever.[2007] Surely this is grievous in the sight of Allāh.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا لَا تَدۡخُلُوۡا بُيُوۡتَ
النَّبِىِّ اِلَّاۤ اَنۡ يُّؤۡذَنَ لَـكُمۡ اِلٰى طَعَامٍ
غَيۡرَ نٰظِرِيۡنَ اِنٰٮهُ ۙ وَلٰـكِنۡ اِذَا دُعِيۡتُمۡ
فَادۡخُلُوۡا فَاِذَا طَعِمۡتُمۡ فَانۡتَشِرُوۡا وَلَا
مُسۡتَاۡنِسِيۡنَ لِحَدِيۡثٍ ؕ اِنَّ ذٰلِكُمۡ كَانَ
يُؤۡذِى النَّبِىَّ فَيَسۡتَحۡىٖ مِنۡكُمۡ وَاللّٰهُ
لَا يَسۡتَحۡىٖ مِنَ الۡحَـقِّ ؕ وَاِذَا سَاَلۡتُمُوۡهُنَّ
مَتَاعًا فَسۡـَٔـلُوۡهُنَّ مِنۡ وَّرَآءِ حِجَابٍ ؕ
ذٰلِكُمۡ اَطۡهَرُ لِقُلُوۡبِكُمۡ وَقُلُوۡبِهِنَّ ؕ وَمَا
كَانَ لَـكُمۡ اَنۡ تُؤۡذُوۡا رَسُوۡلَ اللّٰهِ وَلَاۤ
اَنۡ تَنۡكِحُوۡۤا اَزۡوَاجَهٗ مِنۡۢ بَعۡدِهٖۤ اَبَدًا ؕ
اِنَّ ذٰلِكُمۡ كَانَ عِنۡدَ اللّٰهِ عَظِيۡمًا ﴿۵۳﴾

54 If you do a thing openly or do it in secret, then surely Allāh is ever Knower of all things.

اِنۡ تُبۡدُوۡا شَيۡـئًا اَوۡ تُخۡفُوۡهُ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ
كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَىۡءٍ عَلِيۡمًا ﴿۵۴﴾

2006 Bigoted critics discover personal motives even in these beautiful rules of conduct. It must be borne in mind that any rule of conduct to be observed in relation to the Holy Prophet is really a rule that must be observed in all social relations. The Qur'ān teaches not only high morals, but also good manners, for it is meant for all men. In this verse it disparages the custom of giving trouble to the owner of a house who invites his friends to a dinner by coming before the appointed time or staying after dinner to indulge in idle talk. This is a rule which the Muslims were desired to observe towards one another as well as towards the Holy Prophet. Similarly, the rule relating to strangers speaking to women from behind a curtain applies equally to all, and is not to be observed only towards the Prophet's wives. Every stranger is not free to enter another Muslim's house and disturb the privacy of those residing in it.

2007 The respect due to the Prophet is alone a sufficient reason for the injunction, but a little consideration will show that the absence of the injunction would have led to difficulties. One of the objects which the Prophet's marriages served was the faithful communication of incidents that play an important part in the life of a man, but whose knowledge is only limited to a man's family circle. The remarriage of any of the Prophet's widows would have surely impaired this object to a great degree, as it would have had a possible effect upon the independence of opinion of the lady who entered into marital obligations with another man.

55 There is no blame on them in respect of their fathers, nor their sons, nor their brothers, nor their brothers' sons, nor their sisters' sons, nor their own women, nor of what their right hands possess — and (ye women) keep your duty to Allāh. Surely Allāh is ever Witness over all things.

لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِنَّ فِيْٓ اٰبَآئِهِنَّ وَلَآ اَبْنَآئِهِنَّ
وَلَآ اِخْوَانِهِنَّ وَلَآ اَبْنَآءِ اِخْوَانِهِنَّ وَلَآ
اَبْنَآءِ اَخَوٰتِهِنَّ وَلَا نِسَآئِهِنَّ وَلَا
مَا مَلَكَتْ اَيْمَانُهُنَّ ۚ وَاتَّقِيْنَ اللّٰهَ ؕ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيْدًا ﴿۵۵﴾

56 Surely Allāh and His angels bless the Prophet. O you who believe, call for blessings on him and salute him with a (becoming) salutation.[2009]

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتَهٗ يُصَلُّوْنَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ ؕ
يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا صَلُّوْا عَلَيْهِ
وَسَلِّمُوْا تَسْلِيْمًا ﴿۵۶﴾

57 Surely those who annoy[2010] Allāh and His Messenger, Allāh has cursed them in this world and the Hereafter, and He has prepared for them an abasing chastisement.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يُؤْذُوْنَ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ
لَعَنَهُمُ اللّٰهُ فِى الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ وَاَعَدَّ
لَهُمْ عَذَابًا مُّهِيْنًا ﴿۵۷﴾

58 And those who annoy believing men and believing women undeservedly, they bear the guilt of slander and manifest sin.

وَالَّذِيْنَ يُؤْذُوْنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتِ
بِغَيْرِ مَا اكْتَسَبُوْا فَقَدِ احْتَمَلُوْا
بُهْتَانًا وَّاِثْمًا مُّبِيْنًا ﴿۵۸﴾

SECTION 8 : **Those who spread Evil Reports**

59 O Prophet, tell thy wives and thy daughters and the women of believers to let down upon them their over-garments. This is more proper, so that they may be known, and not be given trouble. And Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful.[2011]

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِّاَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنٰتِكَ
وَنِسَآءِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ يُدْنِيْنَ عَلَيْهِنَّ
مِنْ جَلَابِيْبِهِنَّ ؕ ذٰلِكَ اَدْنٰٓى اَنْ
يُّعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ
غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿۵۹﴾

2009 The invocation of Divine blessings on the Holy Prophet is mentioned in connection with the false imputations against him as regards his marital relations, the implication being that all such imputations would be brought to naught by the blessings which Allāh would shower on him, showing that he is pure and holds communion with the fountain-head of purity.

2010 The word *yu'dhūn* occurring here is from the root *adha*, which occurs in v. 48 in this chapter and in 3:185, and means the annoying talk of the dis- believers and the hypocrites in the form of false imputations against the Holy

2011, see next page.

60 If the hypocrites and those in whose hearts is a disease and the agitators in Madīnah desist not, We shall certainly urge thee on against them, then they shall not be thy neighbours in it but for a little while—

لَئِن لَّمْ يَنتَهِ الْمُنٰفِقُوْنَ وَالَّذِيْنَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ وَّالْمُرْجِفُوْنَ فِي الْمَدِيْنَةِ لَنُغْرِيَنَّكَ بِهِمْ ثُمَّ لَا يُجَاوِرُوْنَكَ فِيْهَآ إِلَّا قَلِيْلًا ﴿٦٠﴾

61 Accursed, wherever they are found they will be seized and slain.[2012]

مَّلْعُوْنِيْنَ ۚ أَيْنَمَا ثُقِفُوْٓا أُخِذُوْا وَقُتِّلُوْا تَقْتِيْلًا ﴿٦١﴾

62 That was the way of Allāh concerning those who have gone before; and thou wilt find no change in the way of Allāh.

سُنَّةَ اللّٰهِ فِي الَّذِيْنَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ ۚ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللّٰهِ تَبْدِيْلًا ﴿٦٢﴾

63 Men ask thee about the Hour. Say: The Knowledge of it is only with Allāh. And what will make thee comprehend that the Hour may be nigh?[2014]

يَسْـَٔلُكَ النَّاسُ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ ۭ قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ۭ وَمَا يُدْرِيْكَ لَعَلَّ السَّاعَةَ تَكُوْنُ قَرِيْبًا ﴿٦٣﴾

64 Surely Allāh has cursed the disbelievers and prepared for them a burning Fire,

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَعَنَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ سَعِيْرًا ﴿٦٤﴾

65 To abide therein for a long time; they will find no protector nor helper.

خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَآ أَبَدًا ۚ لَا يَجِدُوْنَ وَلِيًّا وَّلَا نَصِيْرًا ﴿٦٥﴾

66 On the day when their leaders are turned back into the Fire, they say: O would that we had obeyed Allāh and obeyed the Messenger!

يَوْمَ تُقَلَّبُ وُجُوْهُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ يَقُوْلُوْنَ يٰلَيْتَنَآ أَطَعْنَا اللّٰهَ وَأَطَعْنَا الرَّسُوْلَا ﴿٦٦﴾

67 And they say: Our Lord, we only obeyed our leaders and our great men, so they led us astray from the path.

وَقَالُوْا رَبَّنَآ إِنَّآ أَطَعْنَا سَادَتَنَا وَكُبَرَآءَنَا فَأَضَلُّوْنَا السَّبِيْلَا ﴿٦٧﴾

Prophet. This sense of the word is made clear in the next verse, where the same word is used about the believers, and is explained in the concluding words of the verse as indicating *a false accusation against them.*

2011 The injunction to wear an over-garment is here given with the object that free women may be distinguished from slaves, so that they may not be annoyed and followed by men inclined to evil, who would come to know by this mark of distinction that these were pure and chaste women who would not tolerate insult or ill-treatment.

2012 This verse and the one that follows relate to hypocrites as well as to certain Jews who spread evil reports concerning the Muslims. Before the Prophet died, Madīnah was cleared of these mischievous elements.

2014 By the *Hour* is meant the *hour of their doom,* as prophesied in the previous verses.

68 Our Lord, give them a double chastisement and curse them with a great curse.

رَبَّنَآ اٰتِهِمْ ضِعْفَيْنِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ وَالْعَنْهُمْ لَعْنًا كَبِيْرًا ﴿٦٨﴾

SECTION 9 : **An Exhortation to the Faithful**

69 O you who believe, be not like those who maligned Moses, but Allāh cleared him of what they said. And he was worthy of regard with Allāh.[2015]

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَكُوْنُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ اٰذَوْا مُوْسٰى فَبَرَّاَهُ اللّٰهُ مِمَّا قَالُوْا ؕ وَكَانَ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ وَجِيْهًا ﴿٦٩﴾

70 O you who believe, keep your duty to Allāh and speak straight words :

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَقُوْلُوْا قَوْلًا سَدِيْدًا ﴿٧٠﴾

71 He will put your deeds into a right state for you, and forgive you your sins. And whoever obeys Allāh and His Messenger, he indeed achieves a mighty success.

يُّصْلِحْ لَكُمْ اَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوْبَكُمْ ؕ وَمَنْ يُّطِعِ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيْمًا ﴿٧١﴾

72 Surely We offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to be unfaithful to it and feared from it, and man has turned unfaithful to it. Surely he is ever unjust, ignorant —[2016]

اِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْاَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَاَبَيْنَ اَنْ يَّحْمِلْنَهَا وَاَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْاِنْسَانُ ؕ اِنَّهٗ كَانَ ظَلُوْمًا جَهُوْلًا ﴿٧٢﴾

73 That Allāh may chastise the hypocritical men and the hypocritical women and the polytheistic men and the polytheistic women, and Allāh will turn (mercifully) to the believing men and the believing women. And Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful.

لِّيُعَذِّبَ اللّٰهُ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ وَالْمُنٰفِقٰتِ وَالْمُشْرِكِيْنَ وَالْمُشْرِكٰتِ وَيَتُوْبَ اللّٰهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتِ ؕ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿٧٣﴾

2015 For a false imputation against Moses by his own people, and even his own sister, see Num. 12. As this chapter deals with false imputations, the case of a false imputation against the prophet in whose likeness the Holy Prophet came is cited, and attention is drawn to the fate of those who had taken part in the accusation. The false accusations against the Holy Prophet are all forged by his opponents.

2016 *Ḥamala-l-amānata* means *he was unfaithful to the trust* (LL). T explains *yaḥmilna-hā* as meaning *they were unfaithful to it,* and *ḥamala-ha-l-insānu* as meaning *man was unfaithful to it. Not bearing the trust* signifies *that they paid it back, and everyone who is unfaithful to a trust is said to have borne it* (T). The meaning is that nature is true to its laws which bring about its evolution, but man is not true to the laws on which depends his real happiness.



CHAPTER 34

Al-Saba' : THE SABA'

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 6 *sections;* 54 *verses*)

The title of this chapter is taken from that of a city of the same name, i.e., *Saba',* which was situated in Yaman and was destroyed by a flood. The warning given in this chapter applies to all nations that are made great and prosperous but fall into luxurious habits. Ease engenders evil, which brings decay and ruin. Hence it was a warning to the Quraish, no doubt, but it is equally a warning to all nations who are made masters of the earth but fall into the ways of ease and luxury and suffer the consequences.

The first section asserts the truth of the judgment, a judgment the truth of which is not witnessed only in the life after death, but is clearly seen working in this very life. This judgment overtakes individuals as well as nations, and two instances are cited in the second section of how prosperous nations are swept out of existence when they fall into evil ways. Judgment will therefore overtake the Quraish; and their false deities, we are told in the third section, will not avail them in the least. An encounter will be brought about between the two parties, resulting in a victory for the Muslims. The fourth section describes the plight of the leaders of evil, the leaders and the followers blaming each other. The fifth states that their very deities will then be unable to help them, and that they will be punished, as deniers of Truth have always been punished. The last section asserts that Truth will prosper and falsehood vanish before it.

With this chapter is introduced another group of six Makkan chapters, which in all probability belong to the middle Makkan period. This, the first chapter of this group, begins with *al-ḥamdu li-llāh, praise be to Allāh!* while the last chapter of this group, the 39th, ends with exactly the same words, and thus Allāh is praised for bringing about the triumph of Truth, which is the subject-matter of these chapters.

SECTION 1 **Judgment is certain**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 Praise be to Allāh! Whose is whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, and to Him be praise in the Hereafter! And He is the Wise, the Aware.

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِىْ لَهٗ مَا فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِى الْاَرْضِ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ فِى الْاٰخِرَةِ ۭ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيْمُ الْخَبِيْرُ ۝١

2 He knows that which goes down into the earth and that which comes out of it, and that which comes down from heaven and that which goes up to it. And He is the Merciful, the Forgiving.

يَعْلَمُ مَا يَلِجُ فِى الْاَرْضِ وَمَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا وَمَا يَنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاۗءِ وَمَا يَعْرُجُ فِيْهَا ۭ وَهُوَ الرَّحِيْمُ الْغَفُوْرُ ۝٢

3 And those who disbelieve say: The Hour will never come to us. Say: Yea, by my Lord, the Knower of the unseen! it will certainly come to you. Not an atom's weight escapes Him in the heavens or in the earth, nor is there less than that nor greater, but (all) is in a clear book,[2018]

وَقَالَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا لَا تَاْتِيْنَا السَّاعَةُ ۭ قُلْ بَلٰى وَرَبِّىْ لَتَاْتِيَنَّكُمْ ۙ عٰلِمِ الْغَيْبِ ۚ لَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْهُ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ فِى السَّمٰوٰتِ وَلَا فِى الْاَرْضِ وَلَآ اَصْغَرُ مِنْ ذٰلِكَ وَلَآ اَكْبَرُ اِلَّا فِىْ كِتٰبٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ۝٣

4 That He may reward those who believe and do good. For them is forgiveness and an honourable sustenance.

لِّيَجْزِيَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ ۭ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ لَهُمْ مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَّرِزْقٌ كَرِيْمٌ ۝٤

5 And those who strive hard in opposing Our Messages, for them is a painful chastisement of an evil kind.

وَالَّذِيْنَ سَعَوْ فِيْٓ اٰيٰتِنَا مُعٰجِزِيْنَ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مِّنْ رِّجْزٍ اَلِيْمٌ ۝٥

6 And those who have been given knowledge see that what is revealed to them from thy Lord, is the Truth,

وَيَرَى الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْعِلْمَ الَّذِيْٓ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ هُوَ الْحَقَّ ۙ وَيَهْدِيْٓ

2018 The verse states the immutable law that every deed is followed by a consequence, and nothing should be looked upon as too small to produce an effect. The two verses that follow are an illustration of this law: good meets with a good reward and evil with an evil punishment. It should be noted that the Qur'ān here speaks of an *atom* and also of something less than an atom. As *less than an atom* could only be a part of an atom, evidently the suggestion here is that an atom could be broken into pieces.

and it guides into the path of the Mighty, the Praised.

إِلَىٰ صِرَاطِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ ⑥

7 And those who disbelieve say: Shall we show to you a man who informs you that, when you are scattered the utmost scattering, you will then be in a new creation?

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَلْ نَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَىٰ رَجُلٍ يُنَبِّئُكُمْ إِذَا مُزِّقْتُمْ كُلَّ مُمَزَّقٍ إِنَّكُمْ لَفِي خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ⑦

8 Has he forged a lie against Allāh or is there madness in him? Nay, those who believe not in the Hereafter are in torment and in far error.

أَفْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَمْ بِهِ جِنَّةٌ بَلِ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ فِي الْعَذَابِ وَالضَّلَالِ الْبَعِيدِ ⑧

9 See they not what is before them and what is behind them of the heaven and the earth? If We please, We can make them low in the land or bring down upon them a portion of heaven. Surely there is a sign in this for every servant turning (to Allāh).[2021]

أَفَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنْ نَشَأْ نَخْسِفْ بِهِمُ الْأَرْضَ أَوْ نُسْقِطْ عَلَيْهِمْ كِسَفًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِكُلِّ عَبْدٍ مُنِيبٍ ⑨

SECTION 2 : **Favours followed by Retribution**

10 And certainly We gave David abundance from Us: O mountains, repeat praises with him,[2022] and the birds, and We made the iron pliant to him,[2023]

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ مِنَّا فَضْلًا يَا جِبَالُ أَوِّبِي مَعَهُ وَالطَّيْرَ وَأَلَنَّا لَهُ الْحَدِيدَ ⑩

2021 This is the ever-recurring argument of the Holy Qur'ān. The disbelievers deny the last Resurrection, the life after death, the sublime principle of the accountability of human actions, which forms the only basis of high morals, and they are told that, as a proof of the truth of the Resurrection, they will be brought low in this very life for standing in the way of the advancement of Truth. It is compared with the coming of a portion from heaven because they would not be able to avert it.

2022 *Awwaba* literally signifies *he returned* (LL), and applied to a company of men, *it journeyed by day* (LL), and metonymically *āba* or *awwaba* signifies *he returned from disobedience to obedience* or *repeated the praises of God.* By the mountains repeating the praises of Allāh, some understand the praising of Allāh in the sense in which all inanimate objects are spoken of in the Holy Qur'ān as glorifying God, while others think that the mountains' echoing David's loud praises is meant. But the mention of birds, the attendants of a victorious army (see 1387), and iron along with it shows that the reference is to the conquests of David; and the singing of praises by the mountains therefore carries the significance of those residing on mountains yielding to David. Or the *jibāl* may here signify *mighty men* (see 1604), who are thus commanded to march along with him to conquer the enemy.

2023, see next page.

11 Saying: Make ample (coats of mail), and assign a time to the making of coats of mail and do ye good. Surely I am Seer of what you do.[2024]

أَنِ اعْمَلْ سٰبِغٰتٍ وَّ قَدِّرْ فِي السَّرْدِ وَ اعْمَلُوْا صَالِحًا ۖ اِنِّيْ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ﴿۱۱﴾

12 And (We made) the wind (subservient) to Solomon; it made a month's journey in the morning and a month's journey in the evening;[2025] and We made a fountain of molten brass to flow for him.[2026] And of the jinn there were those who worked before him by the command of his Lord. And whoever turned aside from Our command from among them, We made him taste of the chastisement of burning.[2027]

وَلِسُلَيْمٰنَ الرِّيْحَ غُدُوُّهَا شَهْرٌ وَّ رَوَاحُهَا شَهْرٌ ۚ وَ اَسَلْنَا لَهٗ عَيْنَ الْقِطْرِ ؕ وَ مِنَ الْجِنِّ مَنْ يَّعْمَلُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ بِاِذْنِ رَبِّهٖ ؕ وَ مَنْ يَّزِغْ مِنْهُمْ عَنْ اَمْرِنَا نُذِقْهُ مِنْ عَذَابِ السَّعِيْرِ ﴿۱۲﴾

2023 The making of the iron pliant to him signifies the extensive use of iron by him in his battles, and so do the coats of mail in the next verse.

2024 The subject of the previous verse is continued. David is enjoined to prepare himself and his army for severe battles, hence the necessity of coats of mail to save life. Some think that the commandment signifies that David should not take anything from the treasury for his own livelihood, and that he should earn his livelihood by an industry, such as the making of coats of mail (Kf). *Sābighāt* is the plural of *sābighah*, which is an adjective meaning *ample* or *vast*, and is here considered as standing for the noun which it qualifies, for you say *dir'-un sābighat-un* meaning *an ample coat of mail*. But you also say *ni'mat-un sābighat-un*, i.e., a complete benefit (LL), and the order given here may imply the doing of perfect deeds. *Sard* means *coats of mail* or *their rings* (LL), and *qaddara* signifies *he made it according to a measure* or *proportioned it*, and also *he assigned a particular time for it* (LL). Rz favours the latter interpretation, i.e., David is commanded not to employ his whole time in such occupations, for the real object is to do good.

2025 See 1646. The significance is that Solomon's ships were made to traverse a month's journey in a day by favourable winds. For Solomon's navy, see I Kings 9:26. But it should be noted that *rīḥ* means also *power* or *dominance* or *conquest* (LL), and therefore the meaning may be that Solomon's kingdom was so large that it was a month's journey to the East and a month's journey to the West.

2026 "Also he made a molten sea of ten cubits from brim to brim" (2 Chron. 4:2).

2027 These jinn were no other than the strangers whom Solomon subjected to his rule and forced into service. See 2 Chron. 2:2-18: "And he set threescore and ten thousand of them to be bearers of burdens, and fourscore thousand to be hewers in the mountains". Note that the jinn of this verse are the *shayāṭīn* of 38:37 — "(We subjected to Solomon) the devils, every builder and diver" — where the shayāṭīn or devils are explained by the Qur'ān itself to be no others than the builders and divers whom Solomon had forced into labour. In the first volume, Tabrezī in his commentary on *Ḥimāsah* remarks: "Abū 'Ulā says the Arabs speak of the jinn frequently, likening a man who is clever in executing affairs to the jinnī and the shaiṭān or devil, and hence they say *his jinn is gone*, when they mean that he became weak and abased". This explanation, along with that which the Qur'ān itself affords, settles the question of the jinn and the devils employed by Solomon.

13 They made for him what he pleased, of synagogues and images, and bowls (large) as watering-troughs and fixed cooking-pots.[2028] Give thanks, O people of David! And very few of My servants are grateful.

يَعْمَلُونَ لَهُ مَا يَشَآءُ مِنْ مَّحَارِيبَ وَتَمَاثِيلَ وَجِفَانٍ كَالْجَوَابِ وَقُدُورٍ رّٰسِيٰتٍ ۚ اِعْمَلُوْٓا اٰلَ دَاوٗدَ شُكْرًا ۚ وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّكُوْرُ ﴿١٣﴾

14 But when We decreed death for him, naught showed them his death but a creature of the earth that ate away his staff. So when it fell down, the jinn saw clearly that, if they had known the unseen, they would not have tarried in humiliating torment.[2029]

فَلَمَّا قَضَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ الْمَوْتَ مَا دَلَّهُمْ عَلٰى مَوْتِهٖٓ اِلَّا دَآبَّةُ الْاَرْضِ تَاْكُلُ مِنْسَاَتَهٗ ۚ فَلَمَّا خَرَّ تَبَيَّنَتِ الْجِنُّ اَنْ لَّوْ كَانُوْا يَعْلَمُوْنَ الْغَيْبَ مَا لَبِثُوْا فِي الْعَذَابِ الْمُهِيْنِ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Certainly there was a sign for Saba' in their abode — two gardens on the right and the left. Eat of the sustenance of your Lord and give thanks to Him. A good land and a Forgiving Lord!

لَقَدْ كَانَ لِسَبَاٍ فِيْ مَسْكَنِهِمْ اٰيَةٌ ۚ جَنَّتٰنِ عَنْ يَّمِيْنٍ وَّشِمَالٍ ۬ كُلُوْا مِنْ رِّزْقِ رَبِّكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوْا لَهٗ ۚ بَلْدَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ وَّرَبٌّ غَفُوْرٌ ﴿١٥﴾

16 But they turned aside, so We sent upon them a violent torrent, and in place of their two gardens We gave them two gardens yielding bitter fruit and (growing) tamarisk and a few lote-trees.[2030]

فَاَعْرَضُوْا فَاَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَيْلَ الْعَرِمِ وَبَدَّلْنٰهُمْ بِجَنَّتَيْهِمْ جَنَّتَيْنِ ذَوَاتَيْ اُكُلٍ خَمْطٍ وَّاَثْلٍ وَّشَيْءٍ مِّنْ سِدْرٍ قَلِيْلٍ ﴿١٦﴾

2028 For the graving of cherubims on the walls, see 2 Chron. 3:7; for the casting of oxen, 2 Chron. 4:3; for the making of lavers, pots, basins, etc., 2 Chron. 4:11, 14.

2029 The reference in *the creature of the earth that ate away his staff* is to his son's weak rule, under whom the kingdom of Solomon went to pieces. It appears that Solomon's successor, Rehoboam, led a life of luxury and ease, and instead of acting on the advice of the older men, he yielded to the pleasure-seeking wishes of his companions (I Kings 12:13), and it is to his luxurious habits and easy mode of life that the Holy Qur'ān refers when it calls him *a creature of the earth*. The eating away of his staff signifies the disruption of the kingdom. The jinn, as already remarked, mean the rebellious tribes who had been reduced to subjection by Solomon, and who remained in subjection to the Israelites for a time, until the kingdom was shattered. This instance, as well as the one following, contains a warning for the Muslims as to the result of falling into luxury and ease, by which, however, they benefited little; the ultimate fate of the respective kingdoms of the Umayyads and Abbasides was the same as that of Solomon's kingdom. See also 2141.

2030 Saba' was "a city of Yaman, also called *Ma'ārab*; it was about three days' journey from Ṣan'ā'. The bursting of the dyke of Ma'ārab and the destruction of the city by a flood are historical facts, and happened in about the first or second century of our era" (Palmer).

17 With this We requited them because they were ungrateful; and We punish none but the ingrate.

ذٰلِكَ جَزَيْنٰهُمْ بِمَا كَفَرُوْا ؕ وَهَلْ نُجْزِيٓ اِلَّا الْكَفُوْرَ ﴿۱۷﴾

18 And We made between them and the towns which We had blessed, (other) towns easy to be seen,[2031] and We apportioned the journey therein: Travel through them nights and days, secure.

وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ الْقُرَى الَّتِيْ بٰرَكْنَا فِيْهَا قُرًى ظَاهِرَةً وَّقَدَّرْنَا فِيْهَا السَّيْرَ ؕ سِيْرُوْا فِيْهَا لَيَالِيَ وَاَيَّامًا اٰمِنِيْنَ ﴿۱۸﴾

19 But they said: Our Lord, make longer stages between our journeys.[2032] And they wronged themselves; so We made them stories and scattered them a total scattering. Surely there are signs in this for every patient, grateful one.

فَقَالُوْا رَبَّنَا بٰعِدْ بَيْنَ اَسْفَارِنَا وَظَلَمُوْٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ فَجَعَلْنٰهُمْ اَحَادِيْثَ وَمَزَّقْنٰهُمْ كُلَّ مُمَزَّقٍ ؕ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُوْرٍ ﴿۱۹﴾

20 And the devil indeed found true his conjecture concerning them, so they follow him, except a party of the believers.

وَلَقَدْ صَدَّقَ عَلَيْهِمْ اِبْلِيْسُ ظَنَّهٗ فَاتَّبَعُوْهُ اِلَّا فَرِيْقًا مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿۲۰﴾

21 And he has no authority over them, but that We may know him who believes in the Hereafter from him who is in doubt concerning it. And thy Lord is the Preserver of all things.

وَمَا كَانَ لَهٗ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ سُلْطٰنٍ اِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يُّؤْمِنُ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ مِمَّنْ هُوَ مِنْهَا فِيْ شَكٍّ ؕ وَرَبُّكَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ حَفِيْظٌ ﴿۲۱﴾

SECTION 3: **A Victory for the Muslims**

22 Say: Call upon those whom you assert besides Allāh; they control not the weight of an atom in the heavens

قُلِ ادْعُوا الَّذِيْنَ زَعَمْتُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ ۚ لَا يَمْلِكُوْنَ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ فِي

It is usual to speak of two gardens, for large cultivated areas were bounded by a garden on each side.

2031 The cities were so close to each other that one could be seen from the other, or they were conspicuous from the road. It is an indication of the great prosperity of the country. The blessed towns are the towns of Syria, with which they carried on trade.

2032 It is not necessary that they should have thus prayed in words. It is a description of their actual condition, i.e., they were not grateful for the blessings and fell into evil ways, which resulted in punishment overtaking them.

Speaking of the trade of Yaman with Syria, Muir says: "The commerce assumed great dimensions and enriched the nation . . . and, which is remarkable, the number of stages from Hadramaut to Ayla, given . . . as seventy, exactly corresponds with the number at the present day". The reference in the previous verse to the appointment of the journey might be to these stages.

السَّمٰوٰتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَهُمْ فِيهِمَا مِنْ شِرْكٍ وَّمَا لَهُ مِنْهُمْ مِّنْ ظَهِيرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

or in the earth, nor have they any partnership in either, nor has He a helper among them.[2033]

وَلَا تَنْفَعُ الشَّفَاعَةُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا لِمَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ حَتّٰى إِذَا فُزِّعَ عَنْ قُلُوبِهِمْ قَالُوا مَاذَا قَالَ رَبُّكُمْ قَالُوا الْحَقَّ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿٢٣﴾

23 And intercession avails naught with Him, save of him whom He permits. Until when fear is removed from their hearts, they say: What is it that your Lord said? They say: The Truth. And He is the Most High, the Great.

قُلْ مَنْ يَّرْزُقُكُمْ مِّنَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ قُلِ اللّٰهُ وَإِنَّا أَوْ إِيَّاكُمْ لَعَلٰى هُدًى أَوْ فِي ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

24 Say: Who gives you sustenance from the heavens and the earth? Say: Allāh. And surely we or you are on a right way or in manifest error.[2034]

قُلْ لَّا تُسْـَٔلُونَ عَمَّا أَجْرَمْنَا وَلَا نُسْـَٔلُ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

25 Say: You will not be asked of what we are guilty, nor shall we be asked of what you do.

قُلْ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا رَبُّنَا ثُمَّ يَفْتَحُ بَيْنَنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَهُوَ الْفَتَّاحُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٢٦﴾

26 Say: Our Lord will gather us together, then He will judge between us with truth. And He is the Best Judge, the Knower.[2035]

قُلْ أَرُونِيَ الَّذِينَ أَلْحَقْتُمْ بِهِ شُرَكَآءَ كَلَّا بَلْ هُوَ اللّٰهُ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٢٧﴾

27 Say: Show me those whom you join with Him as associates. By no means (can you)! Nay, He is Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise.

وَمَآ أَرْسَلْنٰكَ إِلَّا كَآفَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَّنَذِيرًا وَّلٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

28 And We have not sent thee but as a bearer of good news and as a warner to all mankind, but most men know not.[2036]

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتٰى هٰذَا الْوَعْدُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

29 And they say: When will this promise be (fulfilled), if you are truthful?

2033 It refers to the helplessness of the supposed gods to assist their votaries when distress overtakes them.

2034 The meaning is that as surely as you are in manifest error, so surely are we on a right way.

2035 This is a prophecy which was fulfilled in the first decisive battle which clearly decided the issue between the Muslims and their opponents. The question in v. 29 further on — when will this promise be fulfilled? — makes it quite clear.

2036 The Prophet is repeatedly spoken of as having been sent as a messenger to all people, in the earliest as well as the later revelations. He is called "A warner to the nations" (25:1), "A mercy for the nations" (21:107), and so on.

30 Say : You have the appointment of a day[2037] which you cannot postpone by an hour, nor hasten on.

قُلْ لَّكُمْ مِّيعَادُ يَوْمٍ لَّا تَسْتَأْخِرُونَ عَنْهُ سَاعَةً وَّلَا تَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

SECTION 4 : **The Leaders of Evil**

31 And those who disbelieve say : We believe not in this Qur'ān, nor in that which is before it.[2038] And if thou couldst see when the wrongdoers are made to stand before their Lord, throwing back the blame one to another! Those who were reckoned weak say to those who were proud : Had it not been for you, we would have been believers.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ نُّؤْمِنَ بِهٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنِ وَلَا بِالَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ ۗ وَلَوْ تَرٰى إِذِ الظّٰلِمُونَ مَوْقُوفُونَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ يَرْجِعُ بَعْضُهُمْ إِلٰى بَعْضِ الْقَوْلَ ۚ يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا لَوْلَا أَنْتُمْ لَكُنَّا مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 Those who were proud say to those who were deemed weak : Did we turn you away from the guidance after it had come to you ? Nay, you (yourselves) were guilty.

قَالَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا أَنَحْنُ صَدَدْنٰكُمْ عَنِ الْهُدٰى بَعْدَ إِذْ جَاءَكُمْ بَلْ كُنْتُمْ مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 And those who were deemed weak say to those who were proud : Nay, (it was your) planning by night and day when you told us to disbelieve in Allāh and to set up likes with Him. And they will manifest regret when they see the chastisement. And We put shackles on the necks of those who disbelieve. They will not be requited but for what they did.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا بَلْ مَكْرُ الَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ إِذْ تَأْمُرُونَنَا أَنْ نَّكْفُرَ بِاللّٰهِ وَنَجْعَلَ لَهُ أَنْدَادًا ۗ وَأَسَرُّوا النَّدَامَةَ لَمَّا رَأَوُا الْعَذَابَ ۗ وَجَعَلْنَا الْأَغْلٰلَ فِي أَعْنَاقِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۗ هَلْ يُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 And We never sent a warner to a town but those who led easy lives in it said : We are disbelievers in that with which you are sent.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّنْ نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَا ۙ إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ كٰفِرُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾

In one place, his being sent to men is qualified by the word *jamī-'an* (7 : 158), which means *all*. Here it is qualified by the word *kāffah*, which means *all without an exception*. This word is derived from *kaff*, which means *preventing* or *withholding*, the implication being that it includes *all and does not prevent* or *withhold* any one, or *all without an exception*.

2037 The first encounter between the Muslims and their enemies took place in the battle of Badr, after the first year of the Flight had passed away. Elsewhere

2038, see next page.

35 And they say: We have more wealth and children, and we cannot be punished.

وَقَالُوا نَحْنُ أَكْثَرُ أَمْوَالًا وَأَوْلَادًا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 Say: Surely my Lord amplifies and straitens provision for whom He pleases, but most men know not.[2039]

قُلْ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

SECTION 5: **Wealth does not stand for Greatness**

37 And it is not your wealth, nor your children, that bring you near to to Us in rank; but whoever believes and does good, for such is a double reward for what they do, and they are secure in the highest places.[2040]

وَمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ بِالَّتِي تُقَرِّبُكُمْ عِنْدَنَا زُلْفَىٰ إِلَّا مَنْ آمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ جَزَاءُ الضِّعْفِ بِمَا عَمِلُوا وَهُمْ فِي الْغُرُفَاتِ آمِنُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 And those who strive in opposing Our messages, they will be brought to the chastisement.

وَالَّذِينَ يَسْعَوْنَ فِي آيَاتِنَا مُعَاجِزِينَ أُولَٰئِكَ فِي الْعَذَابِ مُحْضَرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 Say: Surely my Lord amplifies provision for whom He pleases of His servants and straitens (it) for him. And whatsoever you spend, He increases it in reward,[2041] and He is the Best of Providers.

قُلْ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَقْدِرُ لَهُ ۚ وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُ ۖ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 And on the day when He will gather them all together, then will He say to the angels: Did these worship you?

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ يَقُولُ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ أَهَٰؤُلَاءِ إِيَّاكُمْ كَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٤٠﴾

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the same question is answered by the words: "Maybe part of that which you hasten on has drawn nigh to you" (27:72). But see 1861, where it is shown that the promised encounter and the enemy's defeat was to come after the Prophet's Flight from Makkah.

2038 They reject not only the Qur'ān but also previous revelation, because it contains prophecies about the appearance of the Holy Prophet.

2039 This expression is always used to signify that Allāh will give ample means of subsistence to the weaker party and strengthen them against the wealthy transgressors.

2040 Not only in the highest places in paradise, but also in the highest places in this life — a truth which finds abundant illustration in the lives of the early Muslims.

2041 *Akhlafa* is used in the sense of *exceeding* or *surpassing so as to leave another thing behind* (from *khalf*, meaning *behind*) (LL). Hence *yukhlifu-hū* here signifies that Allāh gives him such a great reward as to leave behind what he had spent in His way.

41 They will say: Glory be to Thee! Thou art our Protecting Friend, not they; nay, they worshipped the jinn; most of them were believers in them.[2042]

قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ أَنْتَ وَلِيُّنَا مِنْ دُونِهِمْ ۚ بَلْ كَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ الْجِنَّ ۚ أَكْثَرُهُمْ بِهِمْ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

42 So on that day you will not control profit nor harm for one another. And We will say to those who were iniquitous: Taste the chastisement of the Fire, which you called a lie.

فَالْيَوْمَ لَا يَمْلِكُ بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا ۗ وَنَقُولُ لِلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ النَّارِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 And when Our clear messages are recited to them, they say: This is naught but a man who desires to turn you away from that which your fathers worshipped. And they say: This is naught but a forged lie! And those who disbelieve say of the Truth when it comes to them: This is only clear enchantment!

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالُوا مَا هَٰذَا إِلَّا رَجُلٌ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَصُدَّكُمْ عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُكُمْ ۚ وَقَالُوا مَا هَٰذَا إِلَّا إِفْكٌ مُفْتَرًى ۗ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ إِنْ هَٰذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 And We have not given them any Books which they read, nor did We send to them before thee a warner.[2043]

وَمَا آتَيْنَاهُمْ مِنْ كُتُبٍ يَدْرُسُونَهَا ۖ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ قَبْلَكَ مِنْ نَذِيرٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 And those before them rejected (the truth), and these have not yet attained a tenth of that which We gave them,[2044] but they gave the lie to My messengers. How (terrible) was then My disapproval!

وَكَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ وَمَا بَلَغُوا مِعْشَارَ مَا آتَيْنَاهُمْ فَكَذَّبُوا رُسُلِي ۖ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿٤٥﴾

SECTION 6: **Truth will prosper**

46 Say: I exhort you only to one thing, that you rise up for Allāh's sake by twos and singly, then ponder! There is no madness in your companion. He is only a warner to you before a severe chastisement.

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَعِظُكُمْ بِوَاحِدَةٍ ۖ أَنْ تَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ مَثْنَىٰ وَفُرَادَىٰ ثُمَّ تَتَفَكَّرُوا ۚ مَا بِصَاحِبِكُمْ مِنْ جِنَّةٍ ۚ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ لَكُمْ بَيْنَ يَدَيْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ ﴿٤٦﴾

2042 Compare this with the last section, and it will be clear that the very persons mentioned there as the proud ones are spoken of here as the jinn.

2043 That is, no Book was ever given nor any warner ever raised that taught polytheism; or the meaning may be that, whereas warners appeared all about Arabia, Makkah had not yet seen one.

2044 That is, in power or in material prosperity the Quraish could not stand comparison with many of the early nations.

47 Say: Whatever reward I ask of you, that is only for yourselves. My reward is only with Allāh, and He is a Witness over all things.

قُلْ مَا سَأَلْتُكُمْ مِّنْ أَجْرٍ فَهُوَ لَكُمْ ط إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى اللّٰهِ ج وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 Say: Surely my Lord casts the Truth, the great Knower of the unseen.

قُلْ إِنَّ رَبِّيْ يَقْذِفُ بِالْحَقِّ ج عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 Say: The Truth has come, and falsehood neither originates, nor reproduces.[2045]

قُلْ جَآءَ الْحَقُّ وَمَا يُبْدِئُ الْبَاطِلُ وَمَا يُعِيدُ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 Say: If I err, I err only to my own loss; and if I go aright, it is because of what my Lord reveals to me. Surely He is Hearing, Nigh.

قُلْ إِنْ ضَلَلْتُ فَإِنَّمَآ أَضِلُّ عَلٰى نَفْسِيْ ج وَإِنِ اهْتَدَيْتُ فَبِمَا يُوحِيٓ إِلَيَّ رَبِّيْ ط إِنَّهٗ سَمِيعٌ قَرِيبٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 And couldst thou see when they become terrified, but (then) there will be no escape and they will be seized from a near place;[2046]

وَلَوْ تَرٰىٓ إِذْ فَزِعُوا فَلَا فَوْتَ وَأُخِذُوا مِنْ مَّكَانٍ قَرِيبٍ ﴿٥١﴾

52 And they will say: We believe in it. And how can they attain (to faith) from a distant place?[2047]

وَّقَالُوٓا اٰمَنَّا بِهٖ ج وَأَنّٰى لَهُمُ التَّنَاوُشُ مِنْ مَّكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 And they indeed disbelieved in it before, and they utter conjectures with regard to the unseen from a distant place.[2048]

وَّقَدْ كَفَرُوا بِهٖ مِنْ قَبْلُ ج وَيَقْذِفُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ مِنْ مَّكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 And a barrier is placed between them and that which they desire,[2049] as was done with their partisans before. Surely they are in a disquieting doubt.

وَحِيلَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ مَا يَشْتَهُونَ كَمَا فُعِلَ بِأَشْيَاعِهِمْ مِّنْ قَبْلُ ط إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا فِيْ شَكٍّ مُّرِيبٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

2045 The Truth may stand for Unity and falsehood for polytheism, the significance being that idol-worship will never again find access to Makkah. Compare 17:81: "Say: The Truth has come and falsehood vanished, and falsehood is ever a vanishing thing".

2046 In this world, they were seized upon at Badr and again at Makkah.

2047 For death shall then have removed them into the other world.

2048 Their conjectures that the Prophet will not be successful have no value, as they have no access to the unseen.

2049 Indeed, no punishment is greater than failure to attain that which a man desires most eagerly. This is the hell of this life.



CHAPTER 35

Al-Fāṭir : THE ORIGINATOR

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 5 *sections;* 45 *verses*)

The title of this chapter, *Al-Fāṭir,* is taken from the Divine attribute mentioned in its opening verse. *The Originator* of the heavens and the earth sweeps away the old order and generates a new one, because, if truth must prosper, a new generation must be raised to propagate that truth. The chapter is also known as *Al-Malā'ikah* or The Angels, because of the mention, in its opening verse, of angels who make men attain the nearness of God. For the date of revelation and relation to the previous chapter, see introductory note on last chapter.

The first section speaks of Divine favours to man, and the second reasserts the promise that truth will prevail. The third section refers to the rising of a new generation, which will take the place of the old generation that proved itself unfit to promote the cause of truth and justice in the world. The section that follows promises peace, safety, success, and abundance to the believers, while the last section reiterates the law that punishment is due to evil deeds.

SECTION 1 **Divine Favours**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Praise be to Allāh, the Originator of the heavens and the earth, the Maker of the angels, messengers flying on wings, two, and three, and four.[2050] He increases in creation what He pleases.[2050a] Surely Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ فَاطِرِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ جَاعِلِ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ رُسُلًا اُولِيْٓ اَجْنِحَةٍ مَّثْنٰى وَثُلٰثَ وَرُبٰعَ ؕ يَزِيْدُ فِي الْخَلْقِ مَا يَشَآءُ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ①

2050 God is here mentioned by his name *Fāṭir,* from *faṭara,* which means he *clove* or *split,* also he *originated* or *brought a thing into existence newly* or *for the first time, it not having existed before* (LL). There may be reference to the creation of primeval matter in the original significance of *cleaving* or *splitting.* Derived from the same root is *fiṭrah,* which means *nature* or *constitution* or *natural* or *original quality* in which all men are said to have been made — the nature made by Allāh in which He has made men (30:30) — and which has therefore been translated as the *faculty of knowing God with which He has created mankind*

2050a, see next page.

2 Whatever Allāh grants to men of (His) mercy, there is none to withhold it, and what He withholds, none can grant thereafter. And He is the Mighty, the Wise.

مَا يَفْتَحِ اللّٰهُ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ رَّحْمَةٍ فَلَا مُمْسِكَ لَهَا ۚ وَمَا يُمْسِكْ ۙ فَلَا مُرْسِلَ لَهٗ مِنْۢ بَعْدِهٖ ۭ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿٢﴾

3 O Men, call to mind the favour of Allāh to you. Is there any Creator besides Allāh who provides for you from the heaven and the earth? There is no God but He. How are you then turned away?

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اذْكُرُوْا نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ ۭ هَلْ مِنْ خَالِقٍ غَيْرُ اللّٰهِ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۭ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۡ فَاَنّٰى تُؤْفَكُوْنَ ﴿٣﴾

4 And if they reject thee — truly messengers before thee were rejected. And to Allāh are all affairs returned.

وَاِنْ يُّكَذِّبُوْكَ فَقَدْ كُذِّبَتْ رُسُلٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ ۭ وَاِلَى اللّٰهِ تُرْجَعُ الْاُمُوْرُ ﴿٤﴾

5 O men, surely the promise of Allāh is true, so let not the life of this world deceive you. And let not the arch-deceiver deceive you about Allāh.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اِنَّ وَعْدَ اللّٰهِ حَقٌّ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا ۫ وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُمْ بِاللّٰهِ الْغَرُوْرُ ﴿٥﴾

6 Surely the devil is your enemy, so take him for an enemy. He only invites his party to be companions of the burning Fire.

اِنَّ الشَّيْطٰنَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوْهُ عَدُوًّا ۭ اِنَّمَا يَدْعُوْا حِزْبَهٗ لِيَكُوْنُوْا مِنْ اَصْحٰبِ السَّعِيْرِ ۭ ﴿٦﴾

7 Those who disbelieve, for them is a severe chastisement. And those who believe and do good, for them is forgiveness and a great reward.

اَلَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيْدٌ ۥ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ لَهُمْ مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَّاَجْرٌ كَبِيْرٌ ﴿٧﴾

(LL). So there may be reference to this *fitrah* in the use of the word *Fāṭir*, the *fitrah* or *nature of man* having a close relation with the *Fāṭir* or the Maker of that *fitrah*.

The representation of angels as possessing wings is met with in sacred history, but the *janāḥ* or *wing of an angel* by no means indicates the fore-limbs of a bird, which fit it for flight. It is a symbol of power enabling these immaterial beings to execute their functions, and in Arabic the word *janāḥ* stands for *power*, as you say *huwa maqṣūṣ al-janāḥ* (lit., *he has the wing clipped*), meaning *he is one who lacks strength* or *power* or *ability*, or *he is impotent* (T, LL). Angels are here spoken of as having two, three or four wings. Is there a reference here to the *rak'ahs* of prayer which are two, three or four in number? The morning prayer consists of two *rak'ahs*, the *maghrib* of three and the two afternoon prayers, and the *'Ishā'* of four *rak'ahs*. In prayer man holds communion with God and is raised to spiritual eminence; he as it were flies to God, is on his wings, and the angels are the agents which make him fly to God, their wings thus standing for the *rak'ahs* of prayer.

2050a The increase in creation may refer in a general sense to the new creation which is going on momentarily in this universe, or there may be a reference here to the increase in the number of the elect which was to be brought about through

SECTION 2 : **Truth will prevail**

8 Is he whose evil deed is made fair-seeming to him so that he considers it good? — Now surely Allāh leaves in error whom He pleases and guides aright whom He pleases, so let not thy soul waste away in grief for them. Surely Allāh is Knower of what they do.

أَفَمَنْ زُيِّنَ لَهُ سُوٓءُ عَمَلِهِ فَرَاٰهُ
حَسَنًا ۖ فَإِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَ
يَهْدِيْ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۖ فَلَا تَذْهَبْ نَفْسُكَ
عَلَيْهِمْ حَسَرٰتٍ ۖ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌ بِمَا
يَصْنَعُوْنَ ⑧

9 And Allāh is He Who sends the winds, so they raise a cloud, then We drive it on to a dead land, and therewith give life to the earth after its death. Even so is the quickening.[2050b]

وَاللّٰهُ الَّذِيْٓ أَرْسَلَ الرِّيٰحَ فَتُثِيْرُ
سَحَابًا فَسُقْنٰهُ إِلٰى بَلَدٍ مَّيِّتٍ فَأَحْيَيْنَا
بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۖ كَذٰلِكَ النُّشُوْرُ ⑨

10 Whoever desires might, then to Allāh belongs the might wholly. To Him do ascend the goodly words, and the goodly deed — He exalts it. And those who plan evil—for them is a severe chastisement. And their plan will perish.[2051]

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيْدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلّٰهِ الْعِزَّةُ
جَمِيْعًا ۖ إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ
وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ ۖ وَالَّذِيْنَ
يَمْكُرُوْنَ السَّيِّاٰتِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيْدٌ ۖ
وَمَكْرُ أُولٰٓئِكَ هُوَ يَبُوْرُ ⑩

11 And Allāh created you from dust, then from the life-germ, then He made you pairs. And no female bears, nor brings forth, except with His knowledge. And no one living long is granted a long life, nor is aught diminished of one's life, but it is all in a book. Surely this is easy to Allāh.[2052]

وَاللّٰهُ خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ
ثُمَّ جَعَلَكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ۖ وَمَا تَحْمِلُ مِنْ
أُنْثٰى وَلَا تَضَعُ إِلَّا بِعِلْمِهِ ۖ وَمَا يُعَمَّرُ
مِنْ مُّعَمَّرٍ وَّلَا يُنْقَصُ مِنْ عُمُرِهٖٓ
إِلَّا فِيْ كِتٰبٍ ۖ إِنَّ ذٰلِكَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ يَسِيْرٌ ⑪

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the Prophet. Or still again, the meaning may be that the power of angels is not limited to two, three or four wings, for there are angels of mighty power like Gabriel, who is spoken of as having six hundred wings.

2050b The quickening here is clearly the quickening to spiritual life.

2051 The ultimate triumph of truth and the destruction of falsehood could not be expressed in clearer words. Good words ascend to God, i.e., prosper and bear fruit, and good deeds are exalted, while the evil plans to destroy Truth perish.

2052 There is a hint that the seed of truth is sown and generates in a similar manner.

12 And the two seas are not alike: the one sweet, very sweet, pleasant to drink; and the other salt, bitter. Yet from both you eat fresh flesh and bring forth ornaments which you wear. And thou seest the ships cleave through it, that you may seek of His bounty and that you may give thanks.

وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْبَحْرٰنِ ۖ هٰذَا عَذْبٌ فُرَاتٌ سَآئِغٌ شَرَابُهٗ وَهٰذَا مِلْحٌ اُجَاجٌ ؕ وَمِنْ كُلٍّ تَاْكُلُوْنَ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا وَّتَسْتَخْرِجُوْنَ حِلْيَةً تَلْبَسُوْنَهَا ۚ وَتَرَى الْفُلْكَ فِيْهِ مَوَاخِرَ لِتَبْتَغُوْا مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿۱۲﴾

13 He causes the night to enter in upon the day, and causes the day to enter in upon the night, and He has made subservient the sun and the moon, each one moves to an appointed time. This is Allāh, your Lord; His is the kingdom. And those whom you call upon besides Him own not a straw.[2053]

يُوْلِجُ الَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُوْلِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي الَّيْلِ ۙ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ ۖ كُلٌّ يَّجْرِيْ لِاَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ؕ ذٰلِكُمُ اللّٰهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ ؕ وَالَّذِيْنَ تَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِهٖ مَا يَمْلِكُوْنَ مِنْ قِطْمِيْرٍ ﴿۱۳﴾

14 If you call on them, they hear not your call; and if they heard, they could not answer you. And on the day of Resurrection they will deny your associating them (with Allāh). And none can inform thee like the All-Aware One.

اِنْ تَدْعُوْهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُوْا دُعَآءَكُمْ ۚ وَلَوْ سَمِعُوْا مَا اسْتَجَابُوْا لَكُمْ ؕ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ يَكْفُرُوْنَ بِشِرْكِكُمْ ؕ وَلَا يُنَبِّئُكَ مِثْلُ خَبِيْرٍ ﴿۱۴﴾

SECTION 3: A New Generation will be raised

15 O men, it is you that have need of Allāh, and Allāh is the Self-Sufficient, the Praised One.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَآءُ اِلَى اللّٰهِ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيْدُ ﴿۱۵﴾

16 If He please, He will remove you and bring a new creation.

اِنْ يَّشَاْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ وَيَاْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيْدٍ ۚ ﴿۱۶﴾

17 And this is not hard to Allāh.

وَمَا ذٰلِكَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ بِعَزِيْزٍ ﴿۱۷﴾

18 And no burdened soul can bear another's burden. And if one weighed

وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِّزْرَ اُخْرٰى ؕ وَاِنْ

2053 The Arabic word *qiṭmīr* stands for the white point in the back of a date-stone.

down by a burden calls another to carry his load, naught of it will be carried, even though he be near of kin. Thou warnest only those who fear their Lord in secret and keep up prayer. And whoever purifies himself, purifies himself only for his own good. And to Allāh is the eventual coming.

تَدْعُ مُثْقَلَةٌ إِلَىٰ حِمْلِهَا لَا يُحْمَلْ مِنْهُ شَيْءٌ وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ ۗ إِنَّمَا تُنْذِرُ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَيْبِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ ۚ وَمَنْ تَزَكَّىٰ فَإِنَّمَا يَتَزَكَّىٰ لِنَفْسِهِ ۚ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿١٨﴾

19 And the blind and the seeing are not alike,

وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ ﴿١٩﴾

20 Nor the darkness and the light,

وَلَا الظُّلُمَاتُ وَلَا النُّورُ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Nor the shade and the heat.

وَلَا الظِّلُّ وَلَا الْحَرُورُ ﴿٢١﴾

22 Neither are the living and the dead alike. Surely Allāh makes whom He pleases hear, and thou canst not make those hear who are in the graves.[2054a]

وَمَا يَسْتَوِي الْأَحْيَاءُ وَلَا الْأَمْوَاتُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسْمِعُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۖ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِمُسْمِعٍ مَنْ فِي الْقُبُورِ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 Thou art naught but a warner.

إِنْ أَنْتَ إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Surely We have sent thee with the Truth as a bearer of good news and a warner. And there is not a people but a warner has gone among them.[2055]

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا ۚ وَإِنْ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And if they reject thee, those before them also rejected — their messengers came to them with clear arguments, and with scriptures, and with the illuminating Book.[2055a]

وَإِنْ يُكَذِّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَبِالزُّبُرِ وَبِالْكِتَابِ الْمُنِيرِ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 Then I seized those who disbelieved, so how (terrible) was My disapproval!

ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۖ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿٢٦﴾

2054a Note how spiritual truths are conveyed in words relating to physical life. *Those in the graves* are the very men who were actively engaged in opposition to the Prophet. The seeing are those who have their eyes opened spiritually, the light is the spiritual light, the living are those alive in spirit, and so on.

2055 This broad doctrine that a prophet was raised among every nation is taught repeatedly in the Qur'ān, and, curiously enough, it is met with in the earlier revelation at Makkah as well as the later revelation at Madīnah. This great truth, which had remained hidden for thousands of years from the wisest men of the world, had shone upon the mind of an unlearned Arabian, who did not

2055a, see next page.

SECTION 4 : **The Elect**

27 Seest thou not that Allāh sends down water from the clouds, then We bring forth therewith fruits of various hues? And in the mountains are streaks, white and red, of various hues and (others) intensely black.

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَنزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ ثَمَرَاتٍ مُّخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهَا ۚ وَمِنَ الْجِبَالِ جُدَدٌ بِيضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهَا وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودٌ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 And of men and beasts and cattle there are various colours likewise. Those of His servants only who are possessed of knowledge fear Allāh. Surely Allāh is Mighty, Forgiving.

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ وَالدَّوَابِّ وَالْأَنْعَامِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ كَذَٰلِكَ ۗ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 Surely those who recite the Book of Allāh and keep up prayer and spend out of what We have given them, secretly and openly, hope for a gain which perishes not —[2056]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَتْلُونَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً يَرْجُونَ تِجَارَةً لَّن تَبُورَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 That He may pay them back fully their rewards and give them more out of His grace. Surely He is Forgiving, Multiplier of reward.

لِيُوَفِّيَهُمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدَهُم مِّن فَضْلِهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And that which We have revealed to thee of the Book, that is the truth, verifying that which is before it.[2057] Surely Allāh is Aware, Seer of His servants.

وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ هُوَ الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِعِبَادِهِ لَخَبِيرٌ بَصِيرٌ ﴿٣١﴾

32 Then We have given the Book as inheritance to those whom We have chosen from among Our servants: so of them is he who wrongs himself, and of them is he who takes a middle course, and of them is he who is foremost in deeds of goodness by Allāh's

ثُمَّ أَوْرَثْنَا الْكِتَابَ الَّذِينَ اصْطَفَيْنَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ۖ فَمِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِ وَمِنْهُم مُّقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ

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even know what nations then existed and what scriptures they possessed. This broad doctrine alone could form the basis of the universality of a Divine message to the whole of mankind. Only he who had the breadth of mind to recognize truth in all could unite all men.

2055a See 527.

2056 *Tijārah* literally signifies ***a buying and selling for gain,*** hence I render the word here as meaning *gain*.

2057 Note that as the Holy Qur'ān recognizes that prophets were raised in every nation, so it claims that previous revelation contains prophecies which have

permission.[2058] That is the great grace.

بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 Gardens of perpetuity, which they enter — they are made to wear therein bracelets of gold and pearls, and their dress therein is silk.[2059]

جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ يَدْخُلُونَهَا يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَلُؤْلُؤًا ۖ وَلِبَاسُهُمْ فِيهَا حَرِيرٌ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 And they say. Praise be to Allāh, Who has removed grief from us! Surely our Lord is Forgiving, Multiplier of reward,[2060]

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا الْحَزَنَ ۖ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا لَغَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 Who out of His grace has made us alight in a house abiding for ever; therein toil touches us not nor does fatigue afflict us therein.[2061]

الَّذِي أَحَلَّنَا دَارَ الْمُقَامَةِ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ لَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا نَصَبٌ وَلَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا لُغُوبٌ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 And those who disbelieve, for them is Fire of hell; it is not finished with them so that they should die, nor is chastisement thereof lightened to them. Thus We deal retribution on every ungrateful one.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ لَا يُقْضَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ فَيَمُوتُوا وَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِهَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي كُلَّ كَفُورٍ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 And therein they cry for succour: Our Lord, take us out! we will do good deeds other than those which we used to do! Did We not give you a life long enough, for him to be mindful who would mind? And

وَهُمْ يَصْطَرِخُونَ فِيهَا ۚ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ ۚ أَوَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُمْ مَا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَنْ

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been fulfilled in the advent of the Holy Prophet. This is an early Makkan revelation.

2058 After speaking of the revelation of the Qur'ān to the Prophet, we are told that the Holy Book was now being given as an inheritance to a *chosen* people, i.e., the Muslim community, who are chosen to carry this great message to the whole world. But the chosen people are not all alike. Among the elect are some people who wrong themselves — they do not fulfil Divine commandments. There are others among them who follow a middle course; they are not wrongdoers but they are not very active in the doing of good. There are others still, who are foremost in the doing of good, who are elsewhere called *muqarrabūn* (56:11), those who have attained to nearness to God. It is thus made clear that when a community is spoken of as being *a chosen community,* all members of it are not alike. It is chosen because of those who are foremost in the doing of good, whose example the others should try to follow.

2059 The promise refers to this life as well as to the next. See 1685, where it is shown that the Caliph 'Umar made Surāqah wear Kisrā's bracelets of gold.

2060 Here is drawn a true picture of paradise: *Who has removed grief from us.* This shows that freedom from grief and anxiety is the real bliss of paradise. The repeated promise to the righteous that they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve expresses the same truth, and shows that paradise begins in this life.

2061 Note this further description of a spiritual paradise: *where toil and fatigue no more afflict a man.* It is all peace and satisfaction and the highest bliss.

there came to you the warner. So taste; because for the iniquitous there is no helper.

تَذَكَّرَ وَجَآءَكُمُ النَّذِيۡرُ ؕ فَذُوۡقُوۡا
فَمَا لِلظّٰلِمِيۡنَ مِنۡ نَّصِيۡرٍ ﴿۳۷﴾

SECTION 5 : **Punishment due to Evil Deeds**

38 Surely Allāh is the Knower of the unseen in the heavens and the earth. Surely He is Knower of what is in the hearts.

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عٰلِمُ غَيۡبِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالۡاَرۡضِ ؕ
اِنَّهٗ عَلِيۡمٌۢ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوۡرِ ﴿۳۸﴾

39 He it is Who made you successors in the earth. So whoever disbelieves, his disbelief is against himself. And their disbelief increases the disbelievers with their Lord in naught but hatred; and their disbelief increases the disbelievers in naught but loss.

هُوَ الَّذِيۡ جَعَلَكُمۡ خَلٰٓئِفَ فِي الۡاَرۡضِ ؕ
فَمَنۡ كَفَرَ فَعَلَيۡهِ كُفۡرُهٗ ؕ وَلَا يَزِيۡدُ
الۡكٰفِرِيۡنَ كُفۡرُهُمۡ عِنۡدَ رَبِّهِمۡ اِلَّا مَقۡتًا ۚ
وَلَا يَزِيۡدُ الۡكٰفِرِيۡنَ كُفۡرُهُمۡ اِلَّا خَسَارًا ﴿۳۹﴾

40 Say: Have you seen your associates which you call upon besides Allāh? Show me what they have created of the earth! Or have they any share in the heavens? Or, have We given them a Book so that they follow a clear argument thereof? Nay, the wrongdoers hold out promises one to another only to deceive.

قُلۡ اَرَءَيۡتُمۡ شُرَكَآءَكُمُ الَّذِيۡنَ تَدۡعُوۡنَ
مِنۡ دُوۡنِ اللّٰهِ ؕ اَرُوۡنِيۡ مَاذَا خَلَقُوۡا مِنَ
الۡاَرۡضِ اَمۡ لَهُمۡ شِرۡكٌ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ ۚ
اَمۡ اٰتَيۡنٰهُمۡ كِتٰبًا فَهُمۡ عَلٰى بَيِّنَتٍ مِّنۡهُ ۚ
بَلۡ اِنۡ يَّعِدُ الظّٰلِمُوۡنَ بَعۡضُهُمۡ بَعۡضًا
اِلَّا غُرُوۡرًا ﴿۴۰﴾

41 Surely Allāh upholds the heavens and the earth lest they come to naught. And if they come to naught, none can uphold them after Him. Surely He is ever Forbearing, Forgiving.

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُمۡسِكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالۡاَرۡضَ
اَنۡ تَزُوۡلَا ۚ وَلَئِنۡ زَالَتَاۤ اِنۡ
اَمۡسَكَهُمَا مِنۡ اَحَدٍ مِّنۡۢ بَعۡدِهٖ ؕ اِنَّهٗ
كَانَ حَلِيۡمًا غَفُوۡرًا ﴿۴۱﴾

42 And they swore by Allāh, their strongest oaths, that, if a warner came to them, they would be better guided than any of the nations. But when a warner came to them, it increased them in naught but aversion,[2062]

وَاَقۡسَمُوۡا بِاللّٰهِ جَهۡدَ اَيۡمَانِهِمۡ لَئِنۡ
جَآءَهُمۡ نَذِيۡرٌ لَّيَكُوۡنُنَّ اَهۡدٰى مِنۡ
اِحۡدَى الۡاُمَمِ ۚ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمۡ نَذِيۡرٌ
مَّا زَادَهُمۡ اِلَّا نُفُوۡرَا ۙ ﴿۴۲﴾

2062 There were Jews and Christians in Arabia who were as corrupt as the idolaters of Arabia. The Arabs, therefore, said that, if a prophet came to them as prophets came to other people, they would follow him, and set an example of goodness.

43 Behaving proudly in the land and planning evil. And the evil plan besets none save the authors of it. So they wait for naught but the way of the ancients. But thou wilt find no alteration in the course of Allāh; and thou wilt find no change in the course of Allāh.

اسْتِكْبَارًا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَكْرَ السَّيِّئِ ۚ
وَلَا يَحِيقُ الْمَكْرُ السَّيِّئُ إِلَّا بِأَهْلِهِ ۚ
فَهَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا سُنَّتَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ۚ
فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا ۖ
وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّتِ اللَّهِ تَحْوِيلًا ﴿٤٣﴾

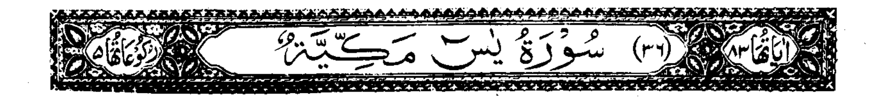
44 Have they not travelled in the land and seen what was the end of those before them — and they were stronger than those in power? And Allāh is not such that anything in the heavens or the earth can escape Him. Surely He is ever Knowing, Powerful.

أَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا
كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ
وَكَانُوا أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً ۚ وَمَا كَانَ
اللَّهُ لِيُعْجِزَهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ
وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَلِيمًا قَدِيرًا ﴿٤٤﴾

45 And were Allāh to punish men for what they earn, He would not leave on the back of it any creature,[2063] but He respites them till an appointed term; so when their doom comes, then surely Allāh is ever Seer of His servants.

وَلَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بِمَا كَسَبُوا
مَا تَرَكَ عَلَىٰ ظَهْرِهَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ وَلَٰكِنْ
يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُسَمًّى ۖ فَإِذَا جَاءَ
أَجَلُهُمْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِ بَصِيرًا ﴿٤٥﴾

2063 Similar words occur in 16:61: "And if Allāh were to destroy men for their iniquity, He would not leave thereon a single creature". Evidently by *dābbah* or *creature* here are meant people bent low on earth, people ignorant of the higher or spiritual values of life, or the iniquitous; see 1863 and 2029.



CHAPTER 36

YĀ SĪN

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 5 *sections;* 83 *verses*)

The title of this chapter is taken from the initial letters *Yā Sīn*, in which the Holy Prophet is addressed. The object is to show that man can attain to perfection, and thus achieve the real object of his life, through contact with the *perfect man*, Muḥammad. It is called the heart of the Qur'ān (Tr. 43:6) owing to the importance of its subject-matter. For the date of revelation and its place in the arrangement of the Holy Qur'ān, see introductory note to ch. 34.

This chapter upholds the truth of the Holy Qur'ān, and the first section shows that, though there would be strong opposition to it in the beginning, it would in the end give life to a dead humanity. The second speaks in parable of its portrayal in earlier revelation. The third draws attention to certain signs of its truth in nature — how life follows death and how light follows darkness — thus giving an indication that the same law is working in the spiritual world. The fourth shows that its acceptors and rejectors will be dealt with distinctly, so that their reward and requital will be evidence of the truth of the Qur'ān. The fifth and concluding section draws attention to the Resurrection or the life after death, as this alone can make a man feel responsibility for his actions and bring about his real transformation and attainment of perfection.

SECTION 1 **Truth of the Qur'ān**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

1 O man,[2064]

يٰسٓ (١)

2 By the Qur'ān, full of wisdom!

وَالْقُرْاٰنِ الْحَكِيْمِ (٢)

3 Surely thou art one of the messengers,

اِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ (٣)

4 On a right way.

عَلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ (٤)

5 A revelation of the Mighty, the Merciful,

تَنْزِيْلَ الْعَزِيْزِ الرَّحِيْمِ (٥)

6 That thou mayest warn a people whose fathers were not warned, so they are heedless.[2065]

لِتُنْذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّاۤ اُنْذِرَ اٰبَآؤُهُمْ فَهُمْ غٰفِلُوْنَ (٦)

7 The word has indeed proved true of most of them, so they believe not.[2066]

لَقَدْ حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ عَلٰۤى اَكْثَرِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ (٧)

8 Surely We have placed on their necks chains reaching up to the chins, so they have their heads raised aloft.[2067]

اِنَّا جَعَلْنَا فِيْۤ اَعْنَاقِهِمْ اَغْلٰلًا فَهِيَ اِلَى الْاَذْقَانِ فَهُمْ مُّقْمَحُوْنَ (٨)

9 And We have set a barrier before them and a barrier behind them, thus We have covered them, so that they see not.[2068]

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْۢ بَيْنِ اَيْدِيْهِمْ سَدًّا وَّمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ سَدًّا فَاَغْشَيْنٰهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُوْنَ (٩)

2064 According to I'Ab, the meaning of *Yā Sīn* in the dialect of *Ṭayy* is *yā insānu*, i.e., *O man*, or *O perfect man*. Thus *yā*, meaning *O*, is retained in full, while the word *insān* (*man*) is represented by *Sīn*. There is almost a consensus of opinion that the reference in this abbreviation is to the Holy Prophet himself.

2065 The first warning of the Prophet was for the Makkans, but he was a warner for all nations as well; see 25:1.

2066 Sale's suggestion, that the *word* here signifies *a sentence of damnation pronounced at Adam's fall*, is a Christian interpretation of a Muslim doctrine. The *word which proved true* is that Truth is always opposed first but it wins in the end.

2067 This is a description of the proud attitude of the disbelievers towards the Prophet's preaching. As to the result being attributed to Allāh, see 44. The chains of pride and stubbornness are really the things which prevent them from listening to and accepting the message of the Prophet.

2068 These were the barriers of their own stubbornness. The barriers before them prevented them from looking forward to the eminence to which they could rise by following the Truth, and those behind them prevented them from looking back to the history of nations which were destroyed on account of their rejection of the Truth.

10 And it is alike to them whether thou warn them or warn them not — they believe not.

وَسَوَآءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ءَاَنْذَرْتَهُمْ اَمْ لَمْ تُنْذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿١٠﴾

11 Thou canst warn him only who follows the Reminder and fears the Beneficent in secret ; so give him good news of forgiveness and a generous reward.

اِنَّمَا تُنْذِرُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ الذِّكْرَ وَخَشِيَ الرَّحْمٰنَ بِالْغَيْبِ ۚ فَبَشِّرْهُ بِمَغْفِرَةٍ وَّاَجْرٍ كَرِيْمٍ ﴿١١﴾

12 Surely We give life to the dead, and We write down that which they send before and their footprints, and We record everything in a clear writing.[2069]

اِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِ الْمَوْتٰى وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوْا وَاٰثَارَهُمْ ۗ وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ اَحْصَيْنٰهُ فِيْٓ اِمَامٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿١٢﴾

SECTION 2 : **Confirmation of the Truth**

13 And set out to them a parable of the people of the town, when apostles came to it.

وَاضْرِبْ لَهُمْ مَّثَلًا اَصْحٰبَ الْقَرْيَةِ ۘ اِذْ جَآءَهَا الْمُرْسَلُوْنَ ﴿١٣﴾

14 When We sent to them two, they rejected them both ; then We strengthened (them) with a third, so they said : Surely we are sent to you.[2070]

اِذْ اَرْسَلْنَآ اِلَيْهِمُ اثْنَيْنِ فَكَذَّبُوْهُمَا فَعَزَّزْنَا بِثَالِثٍ فَقَالُوْٓا اِنَّآ اِلَيْكُمْ مُّرْسَلُوْنَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 They said :[2071] You are only mortals like ourselves, nor has the Beneficent revealed anything — you only lie.[2072]

قَالُوْا مَآ اَنْتُمْ اِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا ۙ وَمَآ اَنْزَلَ الرَّحْمٰنُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۙ اِنْ اَنْتُمْ اِلَّا تَكْذِبُوْنَ ﴿١٥﴾

2069 *What they send before* are their deeds, and *their footprints* are the marks they leave behind for others to follow.

2070 It should be noted that this is called a parable in the previous verse ; therefore it is an error to name a particular town and three messengers who went together thereto. The parable is set forth only to point out the truth of the Holy Prophet. The two messengers sent before are Moses and Jesus, both of whom clearly prophesied the advent of the Holy Prophet, and the third, with whom they are strengthened, is no other than the Holy Prophet himself, the fulfilment of prophecy in whose person without doubt strengthened the truth of previous revelation. The conversion of Arabia and its reclamation from idolatry had been tried both by the followers of Moses and Jesus, and both had failed, and a third messenger was now sent.

2071 The message of the prophets to their people is the general message of all prophets, and the reply of the people is the general reply of the people, which is in consonance with the parable.

2072 Note that the people here deny all revelation. The Arabs rejected previous revelation as well as the revelation of the Holy Prophet.

16 They said: Our Lord knows that we are surely sent to you.

قالوا ربنا يعلم إنا إليكم لمرسلون ﴿١٦﴾

17 And our duty is only a clear deliverance (of the message).

وما علينا إلا البلغ المبين ﴿١٧﴾

18 They said: Surely we augur evil from you.[2073] If you desist not, we will surely stone you, and a painful chastisement from us will certainly afflict you.

قالوا إنا تطيرنا بكم لئن لم تنتهوا لنرجمنكم وليمسنكم منا عذاب أليم ﴿١٨﴾

19 They said: Your evil fortune is with you. What! If you are reminded![2074] Nay, you are an extravagant people.

قالوا طائركم معكم أئن ذكرتم بل أنتم قوم مسرفون ﴿١٩﴾

20 And from the remote part of the city there came a man running.[2075] He said: O my people, follow the apostles.

وجاء من أقصا المدينة رجل يسعى قال يقوم اتبعوا المرسلين ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Follow him who asks of you no reward, and they are on the right course.

اتبعوا من لا يسئلكم أجرا وهم مهتدون ﴿٢١﴾

PART XXIII

22 And what reason have I that I should not serve Him Who created me and to Whom you will be brought back.

وما لي لا أعبد الذي فطرني وإليه ترجعون ﴿٢٢﴾

23 Shall I take besides Him gods whose intercession, if the Beneficent should desire to afflict me with harm, will avail me naught, nor can they deliver me?

ءأتخذ من دونه آلهة إن يردن الرحمن بضر لا تغن عني شفاعتهم شيئا ولا ينقذون ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Then I shall surely be in clear error.

إني إذا لفي ضلل مبين ﴿٢٤﴾

2073 Distress in one form or other always overtakes a people when a prophet appears among them. The law is elsewhere stated in the Holy Qur'ān thus: "And certainly We sent messengers to nations before thee, then We seized them with distress and affliction that they might humble themselves" (6:42). It is to this distress that the rejectors of apostles refer.

2074 They are told that distress is not due to the Prophet's advent, but is the result of their own evil deeds, and the Prophet does no more than remind them and warn them of the consequences of their evil deeds.

2075 This man represents the believer in the Truth. Every prophet has testimony borne to his truth by one from among the people themselves. Thus

25 Surely I believe in your Lord, so hear me.

إِنِّيٓ ءَامَنتُ بِرَبِّكُمۡ فَٱسۡمَعُونِ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 It was said: Enter the Garden.[2076] He said: Would that my people knew,

قِيلَ ٱدۡخُلِ ٱلۡجَنَّةَۖ قَالَ يَٰلَيۡتَ قَوۡمِي يَعۡلَمُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 How my Lord has forgiven me and made me of the honoured ones!

بِمَا غَفَرَ لِي رَبِّي وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ ٱلۡمُكۡرَمِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 And We sent not down upon his people after him any host from heaven, nor do We ever send.[2077]

وَمَآ أَنزَلۡنَا عَلَىٰ قَوۡمِهِۦ مِنۢ بَعۡدِهِۦ مِن جُندٖ مِّنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ وَمَا كُنَّا مُنزِلِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 It was naught but a single cry, and lo! they were still.[2078]

إِن كَانَتۡ إِلَّا صَيۡحَةٗ وَٰحِدَةٗ فَإِذَا هُمۡ خَٰمِدُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 Alas for the servants! Never does a messenger come to them but they mock him.

يَٰحَسۡرَةً عَلَى ٱلۡعِبَادِۚ مَا يَأۡتِيهِم مِّن رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا كَانُواْ بِهِۦ يَسۡتَهۡزِءُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 See they not how many generations We destroyed before them, that they return not to them?[2079]

أَلَمۡ يَرَوۡاْ كَمۡ أَهۡلَكۡنَا قَبۡلَهُم مِّنَ ٱلۡقُرُونِ أَنَّهُمۡ إِلَيۡهِمۡ لَا يَرۡجِعُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 And all — surely all — will be brought before Us.

وَإِن كُلّٞ لَّمَّا جَمِيعٞ لَّدَيۡنَا مُحۡضَرُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

SECTION 3: **Signs of the Truth**

33 And a sign to them is the dead earth: We give life to it and bring forth from it grain so they eat of it.[2080]

وَءَايَةٞ لَّهُمُ ٱلۡأَرۡضُ ٱلۡمَيۡتَةُ أَحۡيَيۡنَٰهَا وَأَخۡرَجۡنَا مِنۡهَا حَبّٗا فَمِنۡهُ يَأۡكُلُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

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the Holy Qur'ān speaks of a believer from among the people of Pharaoh (40:28), and Joseph of Arimathaea believed in and helped Jesus. The Holy Prophet Muhammad had such a follower in Abū Bakr, who was the first to believe, while the others rejected.

2076 It is a promise to the believer that he will enjoy bliss and be successful. The next verse shows that he is made to possess honour in this world.

2077 This removes a misconception with regard to the coming of punishment. Hosts are not sent down from above to chastise the wicked, but causes are brought into existence on this very earth.

2078 Compare v. 49, where the *ṣaiḥah*, or *single cry*, is the punishment with which the Holy Prophet's opponents are threatened. *The single cry* signifies only a sudden punishment

2079 The words may also mean that many generations were destroyed before them because they did not turn to the messengers.

2080 Quickening of the dead earth is again and again compared to the transformation which was to be brought about by the Holy Qur'ān. How dead the earth, and particularly Arabia, was at the advent of the Holy Prophet, it is impossible to describe within the limits of a footnote. If, then, the physical world showed the working of the Divine law that life is restored to the earth after its death, why should not the same law work in the spiritual world?

34 And We make therein gardens of date-palms and grapes and We make springs to flow forth therein,

وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا جَنّٰتٍ مِّنْ نَّخِيلٍ وَّاَعْنَابٍ وَّفَجَّرْنَا فِيهَا مِنَ الْعُيُوْنِ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 That they may eat of the fruit thereof, and their hands made it not. Will they not then give thanks?

لِيَاْكُلُوْا مِنْ ثَمَرِهٖ وَمَا عَمِلَتْهُ اَيْدِيْهِمْ اَفَلَا يَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 Glory be to Him Who created pairs of all things, of what the earth grows, and of their kind and of what they know not![2081]

سُبْحٰنَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ الْاَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا مِمَّا تُنْۢبِتُ الْاَرْضُ وَمِنْ اَنْفُسِهِمْ وَمِمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 And a sign to them is the night: We draw forth from it the day, then lo! they are in darkness;[2082]

وَاٰيَةٌ لَّهُمُ الَّيْلُ نَسْلَخُ مِنْهُ النَّهَارَ فَاِذَا هُمْ مُّظْلِمُوْنَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 And the sun moves on to its destination. That is the ordinance of the Mighty, the Knower.[2083]

وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِيْ لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَّهَا ذٰلِكَ تَقْدِيْرُ الْعَزِيْزِ الْعَلِيْمِ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 And the moon, We have ordained for it stages till it becomes again as an old dry palm-branch.[2084]

وَالْقَمَرَ قَدَّرْنٰهُ مَنَازِلَ حَتّٰى عَادَ كَالْعُرْجُوْنِ الْقَدِيْمِ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 Neither is it for the sun to overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day. And all float on in an orbit.[2085]

لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنْۢبَغِيْ لَهَآ اَنْ تُدْرِكَ الْقَمَرَ وَلَا الَّيْلُ سَابِقُ النَّهَارِ وَكُلٌّ فِيْ فَلَكٍ يَّسْبَحُوْنَ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 And a sign to them is that We bear their offspring in the laden ship,

وَاٰيَةٌ لَّهُمْ اَنَّا حَمَلْنَا ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ فِي الْفُلْكِ الْمَشْحُوْنِ ﴿٤١﴾

42 And We have created for them the like thereof, whereon they ride.[2085a]

وَخَلَقْنَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ مِّثْلِهٖ مَا يَرْكَبُوْنَ ﴿٤٢﴾

2081 This verse establishes a great scientific truth that pairs exist in all creation, even in the vegetable kingdom and in things which had not yet come to the knowledge of man. The Arabs certainly did not know this, but modern research corroborates this truth.

2082 The night of ignorance must now pass away; for as in the physical world night follows day and day follows night, so in the spiritual world light is followed by the darkness of ignorance and the latter again gives place to light.

2083 This statement refers to the sun's revolution in space, a truth discovered only recently.

2084 These words only picture the apparent resemblance of the moon in its slenderness and curvature to an old dry palm-branch. Even such is the case of truth, which seems at first to be insignificant, but soon shines forth like a full moon. There is a clear reference in the word *'āda (it becomes again)* that the light of Islām will receive a set-back and again shine in full resplendence.

2085 Even truth and falsehood have their courses. As night must disappear with the rise of the day, so falsehood must vanish before the light of Truth. The

2085a, see next page.

43 And if We please, We may drown them, then there is no succour for them, nor can they be rescued—[2086]

وَإِنْ نَّشَأْ نُغْرِقْهُمْ فَلَا صَرِيخَ لَهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يُنْقَذُوْنَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 But by mercy from Us and for enjoyment till a time.

إِلَّا رَحْمَةً مِّنَّا وَمَتَاعًا إِلَىٰ حِيْنٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 And when it is said to them: Guard against that which is before you and that which is behind you, that mercy may be shown to you.[2087]

وَإِذَا قِيْلَ لَهُمُ اتَّقُوْا مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيْكُمْ وَمَا خَلْفَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُوْنَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 And there comes to them no message of the messages of their Lord but they turn away from it.

وَمَا تَأْتِيْهِمْ مِّنْ آيَةٍ مِّنْ آيٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا كَانُوْا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِيْنَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And when it is said to them: Spend out of that which Allāh has given you, those who disbelieve say to those who believe: Shall we feed him whom, if Allāh please, He could feed? You are in naught but clear error.[2088]

وَإِذَا قِيْلَ لَهُمْ أَنْفِقُوْا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللّٰهُ قَالَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا لِلَّذِيْنَ آمَنُوْا أَنُطْعِمُ مَنْ لَّوْ يَشَاءُ اللّٰهُ أَطْعَمَهُ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا فِيْ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And they say: When will this promise come to pass, if you are truthful?

وَيَقُوْلُوْنَ مَتٰى هٰذَا الْوَعْدُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 They await but a single cry, which will overtake them while they contend.

مَا يَنْظُرُوْنَ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَّاحِدَةً تَأْخُذُهُمْ وَهُمْ يَخِصِّمُوْنَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 So they will not be able to make a bequest, nor will they return to their families.[2089]

فَلَا يَسْتَطِيْعُوْنَ تَوْصِيَةً وَّلَا إِلٰى أَهْلِهِمْ يَرْجِعُوْنَ ﴿٥٠﴾

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flotation of the heavenly bodies in their orbits is a statement beyond the ken of an Arabian of 1300 years ago. The Holy Qur'ān is a book for the spiritual guidance of man, but it discloses a large number of scientific truths which were not known to man at the revelation of the Book.

2085a The ships that bear man on the seas are spoken of in v. 41. These were known to man at the time of the revelation of the Qur'ān. But this verse speaks of other ships, *the like thereof*. These are the ships that bear man in the air, the airships and the aeroplanes of to-day. They are spoken of as being created by God, because it is through the knowledge and means that God has given man that he is able to acquire mastery of the air and make these ships.

2086 This is a warning of the impending punishment. Drowning in the sea signifies their destruction, wherever it may take place. The word chosen to describe the punishment is one which shows the utter helplessness of the sufferers.

2087 *What is before you* signifies the punishment which must overtake them in this life, and *what is behind you* means the consequences of evil, which they would witness in the Hereafter.

2088 So they turned neither to submission to Allāh, nor to sympathy for their fellow-beings.

2089 This is a prophetical description of the battle of Badr. The Quraish attacked Madīnah to annihilate Islām but the leaders of evil were themselves

SECTION 4 : **Reward and Punishment**

51 And the trumpet is blown, when lo ! from their graves they will hasten on to their Lord.

وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَإِذَا هُمْ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَنْسِلُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

52 They will say : O woe to us ! Who has raised us up from our sleeping-place ?[2090] This is what the Beneficent promised and the messengers told the truth.

قَالُوا يَا وَيْلَنَا مَنْ بَعَثَنَا مِنْ مَرْقَدِنَا ۜ هَٰذَا مَا وَعَدَ الرَّحْمَٰنُ وَصَدَقَ الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 It is but a single cry, when lo ! they are all brought before Us.

إِنْ كَانَتْ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ جَمِيعٌ لَدَيْنَا مُحْضَرُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 So this day no soul is wronged in aught ; and you are not rewarded aught but for what you did.

فَالْيَوْمَ لَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَلَا تُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 Surely the owners of the Garden are on that day in a happy occupation.

إِنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ الْيَوْمَ فِي شُغُلٍ فَاكِهُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

56 They and their wives are in shades, reclining on raised couches.

هُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُمْ فِي ظِلَالٍ عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ مُتَّكِئُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 They have fruits therein, and they have whatever they desire.

لَهُمْ فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَلَهُمْ مَا يَدَّعُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 Peace ! A word from a Merciful Lord.[2091]

سَلَامٌ قَوْلًا مِنْ رَبٍّ رَحِيمٍ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 And withdraw to-day, O guilty ones !

وَامْتَازُوا الْيَوْمَ أَيُّهَا الْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 Did I not charge you, O children of Adam, that you serve not the devil ? Surely he is your open enemy.

أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَا بَنِي آدَمَ أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا الشَّيْطَانَ ۖ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ ﴿٦٠﴾

61 And that you serve Me. This is the right way.

وَأَنِ اعْبُدُونِي ۚ هَٰذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٦١﴾

62 And certainly he led astray numerous people from among you. Could you not then understand ?

وَلَقَدْ أَضَلَّ مِنْكُمْ جِبِلًّا كَثِيرًا ۖ أَفَلَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٢﴾

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finished there, and could neither make a bequest, nor did they return to their families.

2090 The grave is called a sleeping-place even for the disbelievers, because, as compared with the severer punishment of hell, the grave would be to them a sleeping-place. It should be noted that *the grave* signifies the *condition after life is ended in this world.*

2091 Here we have another picture of the Muslim paradise. After describing the various blessings, it sums them up in a single word, *peace.*

63 This is the hell which you were promised.

هٰذِهٖ جَهَنَّمُ الَّتِيْ كُنْتُمْ تُوْعَدُوْنَ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 Enter it this day because you disbelieved.

اِصْلَوْهَا الْيَوْمَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُوْنَ ﴿٦٤﴾

65 That day We shall seal their mouths, and their hands will speak to Us, and their feet will bear witness as to what they earned.

اَلْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلٰٓى اَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَآ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ اَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْسِبُوْنَ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 And if We pleased, We would put out their eyes, then they would strive to get first to the way, but how should they see ?[2093]

وَلَوْ نَشَآءُ لَطَمَسْنَا عَلٰٓى اَعْيُنِهِمْ فَاسْتَبَقُوا الصِّرَاطَ فَاَنّٰى يُبْصِرُوْنَ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 And if We pleased, We would transform them in their place, then they would not be able to go on, or turn back.[2094]

وَلَوْ نَشَآءُ لَمَسَخْنٰهُمْ عَلٰى مَكَانَتِهِمْ فَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوْا مُضِيًّا وَّلَا يَرْجِعُوْنَ ﴿٦٧﴾

SECTION 5 : **The Resurrection**

68 And whomsoever We cause to live long, We reduce to an abject state in creation. Do they not understand ?[2095]

وَمَنْ نُّعَمِّرْهُ نُنَكِّسْهُ فِي الْخَلْقِ ۭ اَفَلَا يَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 And We have not taught him poetry, nor is it meet for him.[2096] This is naught but a Reminder and a plain Qur'ān,

وَمَا عَلَّمْنٰهُ الشِّعْرَ وَمَا يَنْۢبَغِيْ لَهٗ ۭ اِنْ هُوَ اِلَّا ذِكْرٌ وَّقُرْاٰنٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 To warn him who would have life, and (that) the word may prove true against the disbelievers.

لِّيُنْذِرَ مَنْ كَانَ حَيًّا وَّيَحِقَّ الْقَوْلُ عَلَى الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٧٠﴾

2093 It is a punishment for the reprobate. They shut their eyes to the truth with such persistence that their eyes become blind ; they no longer see, even if they would.

2094 *Maskh* indicates changing from a good to a bad state. Thus *masakha-hū* signifies *he transformed him into a more foul or more ugly shape* (LL) ; and *masakha al-nāqata* means *he rendered the she-camel lean and wounded her back by fatigue and use* (LL). Hence the meaning of transforming them in their place is taking away their power and rendering them weak and turning them into an evil plight.

2095 It is a general law of nature that every living thing must deteriorate ; the application here is to individuals as well as nations.

2096, see next page.

71 See they not that We have created cattle for them, out of what Our hands have wrought, so they are their masters?

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا خَلَقْنَا لَهُمْ مِّمَّا عَمِلَتْ أَيْدِينَا أَنْعَامًا فَهُمْ لَهَا مٰلِكُوْنَ ﴿٧١﴾

72 And We have subjected them to them, so some of them they ride, and some they eat.

وَذَلَّلْنٰهَا لَهُمْ فَمِنْهَا رَكُوْبُهُمْ وَمِنْهَا يَأْكُلُوْنَ ﴿٧٢﴾

73 And therein they have advantages and drinks. Will they not then give thanks?

وَلَهُمْ فِيْهَا مَنَافِعُ وَمَشَارِبُ ط أَفَلَا يَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 And they take gods besides Allāh that they may be helped.

وَاتَّخَذُوْا مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ اٰلِهَةً لَّعَلَّهُمْ يُنْصَرُوْنَ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 They are not able to help them, and they are a host brought up before them.[2097]

لَا يَسْتَطِيْعُوْنَ نَصْرَهُمْ وَهُمْ لَهُمْ جُنْدٌ مُّحْضَرُوْنَ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 So let not their speech grieve thee. Surely We know what they do in secret and what they do openly.

فَلَا يَحْزُنْكَ قَوْلُهُمْ إِنَّا نَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّوْنَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُوْنَ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 Does not man see that We have created him from the small life-germ? Then lo! he is an open disputant.

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنٰهُ مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيْمٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿٧٧﴾

78 And he strikes out a likeness for Us[2098] and forgets his own creation. Says he: Who will give life to the bones, when they are rotten?

وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَّنَسِيَ خَلْقَهُ ط قَالَ مَنْ يُّحْيِ الْعِظَامَ وَهِيَ رَمِيْمٌ ﴿٧٨﴾

79 Say: He will give life to them, Who brought them into existence at first, and He is Knower of all creation,

قُلْ يُحْيِيْهَا الَّذِيْ أَنْشَأَهَا أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ ط وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿٧٩﴾

80 Who produced fire for you out of the green tree, so that with it you kindle.[2098a]

الَّذِيْ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِّنَ الشَّجَرِ الْأَخْضَرِ نَارًا فَإِذَا أَنْتُمْ مِّنْهُ تُوْقِدُوْنَ ﴿٨٠﴾

2096 Its negation as poetry is meant to convey the seriousness of the subjects that the Holy Qur'ān deals with.

2097 The guilty leaders will be brought up for punishment before their followers and they will not be able to help them. Or, the worshippers of false deities will be brought up for punishment in the presence of those deities and they will not be able to help them.

2098 The striking out of a likeness signifies the setting up of gods with Allāh.

2098a The reference is to the phenomenon of resinous trees catching fire through friction of their branches caused by wind. Even thus a new life results from man's contact with the *Perfect Man*, whom God has sent, and this new life is the basis of a life after death.

81 Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like of them ?[2098b] Yea ! And He is the Creator (of all), the Knower.

أَوَلَيْسَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِقٰدِرٍ عَلٰٓى أَنْ يَّخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُمْ ۚ بَلٰى ۚ وَهُوَ الْخَلّٰقُ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿٨١﴾

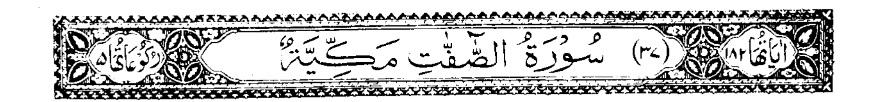
82 His command, when He intends anything, is only to say to it, Be, and it is.

إِنَّمَآ أَمْرُهٗٓ إِذَآ أَرَادَ شَيْـًٔا أَنْ يَّقُوْلَ لَهٗ كُنْ فَيَكُوْنُ ﴿٨٢﴾

83 So glory be to Him in Whose hand is the kingdom of all things ! and to Him you will be returned.

فَسُبْحٰنَ الَّذِيْ بِيَدِهٖ مَلَكُوْتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَّإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُوْنَ ﴿٨٣﴾

2098b The original is *mithla-hum,* where the personal pronoun *hum* (*them*) refers to men, not to heaven and earth. In the Resurrection, therefore, men will be the like of what they are here, not exactly the same bodies of clay. Elsewhere, after mentioning that man wonders at the new creation, it is said: " We know indeed what the earth diminishes of them, and with Us is a writing that preserves " (50:4). The body may become dust; but what man does of good or evil is preserved, and it is according to this good or evil that he receives a new body. The idea of Resurrection is carried to perfection in Islām, and the Resurrection is meant to give a new life to all. Ultimately the spirit of man is returned to the Spirit Divine, and that is again and again called the meeting with God.



CHAPTER 37

Al-Ṣāffāt : THOSE RANGING IN RANKS

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 5 *sections*; 182 *verses*)

The title of this chapter, *Those ranging in Ranks,* is taken from its opening words, which give a description of the faithful. It is in all likelihood an earlier revelation than the other chapters of this group ; see introductory note to chapter 34.

The chapter announces in the first section a clear prophecy of the ultimate prevalence of Unity, and asserts the truth of the judgment in the second ; calls attention to the preachings of Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elias, Lot and Jonah in the third, fourth and fifth sections ; and concludes with a clear prediction of the triumph of the Holy Prophet.

SECTION 1 **Unity will prevail**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

1 By those ranging in ranks,[2099]

وَ الصّٰٓفّٰتِ صَفًّا ۙ﴿۱﴾

2 And those who restrain holding in restraint,

فَالزّٰجِرٰتِ زَجْرًا ۙ﴿۲﴾

2099 The *wāw,* which means *and,* is in such places generally rendered as *by,* and signifies *an oath.* It must, however, be borne in mind that the oath in such cases simply draws attention to a certain testimony. Ordinarily, when a person swears by Allāh, he really calls Allāh to witness that he speaks the truth. The real object in taking an oath is to make an assertion more convincing. But in the Qur'ān, when such a form is adopted, the conviction is produced not by mere allegation, as in the case of an ordinary oath, but by some clear argument which upholds the truth of the assertion made. Sometimes attention is called in these oaths to obvious laws of nature, as the change of night and day, etc., to infer spiritual laws from them, and on other occasions the oath reveals a kind of prophecy, so that the fulfilment of the prophecy makes the truth of the preaching of the Prophet to be obvious. The latter is the case here.

The description given in the first three verses applies to the believers. The first verse shows them as *ranging themselves in ranks,* or praying to God standing in ranks, which the Muslims do five times daily in their prayers in congregation, and may prophetically refer to their subsequent ranging themselves in ranks in the field of battle against their enemies. The second verse describes them as *holding in restraint* their passions, so that a people who were ruled by their passions or their sensual desires were so entirely changed that they became complete masters of their passions. The words, however, may also contain a prophetical reference to their holding in restraint a powerful enemy bent upon their extirpation. These two descriptions are followed by another in the third verse which makes it clear that only the Muslims are described here: *those who recite the Reminder.* It is a special characteristic of the Muslims that they

3 And those who recite the Reminder,	فَالتّٰلِيٰتِ ذِكْرًا ﴿۳﴾
4 Surely your God is One.	اِنَّ اِلٰهَكُمْ لَوَاحِدٌ ﴿۴﴾
5 The Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, and the Lord of the eastern lands.[2100]	رَبُّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَرَبُّ الْمَشَارِقِ ﴿۵﴾
6 Surely We have adorned the lower heaven with an adornment, the stars,	اِنَّا زَيَّنَّا السَّمَآءَ الدُّنْيَا بِزِيْنَةِ ِۨالْكَوَاكِبِ ﴿۶﴾
7 And (there is) a safeguard against every rebellious devil.[2101]	وَحِفْظًا مِّنْ كُلِّ شَيْطٰنٍ مَّارِدٍ ﴿۷﴾
8 They cannot listen to the exalted assembly and they are reproached from every side,[2102]	لَا يَسَّمَّعُوْنَ اِلَى الْمَلَاِ الْاَعْلٰى وَيُقْذَفُوْنَ مِنْ كُلِّ جَانِبٍ ﴿۸﴾
9 Driven off;[2103] and for them is a perpetual chastisement,	دُحُوْرًا وَّلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ وَّاصِبٌ ﴿۹﴾

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recite the Holy Qur'ān in their prayers, so much so that even their armies in the field of battle are regular in their prayers and recite the Holy Qur'ān in their prayers. And the great Truth that is thus established is Divine Unity — *surely your God is One.*

It may also be noted that, though the commentators have suggested that the description in the first three verses may apply to angels, they also state that the description is applicable to the Muslim armies fighting against the enemies of Islām (Rz).

2100 The reference to the eastern lands in *Rabb al-mashāriq* is a prophecy of the early spread of Islām in the East, while Islām's conquests in the West seem to have been reserved for a later age. *Mashāriq* is the plural of *mashriq,* which means *the rising-place of the sun,* and is, like its English equivalent *east,* applicable to an *eastern land.*

2101 The Prophet's preaching was confronted by a twofold opposition among the Arabs — the secular classes and the priestly class, i.e., the diviners and the soothsayers, the class known as *kāhin.* It is these soothsayers who are called the rebellious devils, because they thought that they could invoke spirits and answer questions put to them relating to the future. This phase of opposition was equally swept away by the forceful tide of Islamic truth, and the profession of the *kāhin* disappeared from Arabia as Islām advanced; see LA under the word *kāhin.* The mention of heaven and stars in the previous verse refers to the popular superstition that the diviners and soothsayers obtained their knowledge of the future from the stars. The safeguard against every rebellious devil indicates that they have no access to Divine secrets; see further 2365 and 2582.

2102 The reference here is to the conjectures of the soothsayers regarding the future, by which they maintained their ascendancy over the masses. It is pointed out that they have no access whatever to the source of prophecy. The exalted assembly signifies those angels to whom Divine revelation is first made known. If the other significance of the word *yuqdhafūn* (*thrown at* or *pelted*) is adopted, the reference may be to the secular opponents of the Prophet, who, it is here foretold, would be thrown at from every side, so that success could not attend any of their efforts.

2103 This verse and those preceding it describe the state of the soothsayers at the advent of the Prophet. Before the advent of the Holy Prophet, the soothsayers

10 Except him who snatches away but once, then there follows him a brightly shining flame.[2104]

إِلَّا مَنْ خَطِفَ الْخَطْفَةَ فَأَتْبَعَهُ شِهَابٌ ثَاقِبٌ ﴿١٠﴾

11 So ask them whether they are stronger in creation or those (others) whom We have created. Surely We created them of firm clay.[2105]

فَاسْتَفْتِهِمْ أَهُمْ أَشَدُّ خَلْقًا أَمْ مَنْ خَلَقْنَا ۚ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُمْ مِنْ طِينٍ لَازِبٍ ﴿١١﴾

12 Nay, thou wonderest, while they mock,

بَلْ عَجِبْتَ وَيَسْخَرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 And when they are reminded, they mind not,

وَإِذَا ذُكِّرُوا لَا يَذْكُرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

14 And when they see a sign, they seek to scoff,

وَإِذَا رَأَوْا آيَةً يَسْتَسْخِرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 And say: This is nothing but clear enchantment.

وَقَالُوا إِنْ هَٰذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾

16 When we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we then be raised,

أَإِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَإِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 Or our fathers of yore?

أَوَآبَاؤُنَا الْأَوَّلُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Say: Yea, and you will be humiliated.[2106]

قُلْ نَعَمْ وَأَنْتُمْ دَاخِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

19 So it will be but one cry, when lo! they will see.

فَإِنَّمَا هِيَ زَجْرَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ فَإِذَا هُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 And they will say: O woe to us! This is the day of Requital.

وَقَالُوا يَا وَيْلَنَا هَٰذَا يَوْمُ الدِّينِ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 This is the day of Judgment, which you called a lie.

هَٰذَا يَوْمُ الْفَصْلِ الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

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may have been able to mislead the people to a certain extent by their guesses regarding future events, but after his advent they were reproached on every side, and ultimately the profession of the *kāhin* disappeared from Arabia, as shown in the last footnote. Or, the reference may be to the overthrow of ordinary opposition.

2104 Khaṭifa signifies *he carried off* or *snatched away,* and khaṭfat signifies *a single act of carrying off* or *snatching away.* The meaning is that, if a soothsayer gets but one opportunity, there soon follows a flame that pierces through the darkness; in other words, dispels the darkness to which the soothsayer leads men. It should be noted that *shihāb* means only *a flame* (see LL, and compare 27:7, where Moses goes to bring a *shihāb*), and *thāqib* means *that pierces through the darkness* or *brightly shining* (LL).

2105 *Lāzib* is derived from *lazaba,* meaning *it was* or *remained fixed, settled, firm,* or *constant* (LL); hence *lāzib* signifies *firm* (LL). Those created of firm clay are the spiritually perfect men, the Prophet and his followers. The verse points to the opposition of the soothsayers to the Prophet, and warns the former that the Prophet will be triumphant, because he is made perfect by Allāh's hand.

2106 That is, you will not only be raised after death to taste of your evil

SECTION 2 : **The Judgment**

22 Gather together those who did wrong and their associates, and what they worshipped[2107]

احْشُرُوا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا وَأَزْوَاجَهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا يَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 Besides Allāh, then lead them to the way to hell.

مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَاهْدُوهُمْ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطِ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 And stop them, for they shall be questioned :

وَقِفُوهُمْ إِنَّهُمْ مَسْئُولُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 What is the matter with you that you help not one another ?

مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَنَاصَرُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 Nay, on that day they will be submissive.

بَلْ هُمُ الْيَوْمَ مُسْتَسْلِمُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And some of them will turn to others mutually questioning —

وَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 Saying : Surely you used to come to us from the right side.

قَالُوا إِنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَأْتُونَنَا عَنِ الْيَمِينِ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 They will say : Nay, you (yourselves) were not believers.

قَالُوا بَلْ لَمْ تَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 And we had no authority over you, but you were an inordinate people.

وَمَا كَانَ لَنَا عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ بَلْ كُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا طَاغِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 So the word of our Lord has proved true against us : we shall surely taste.

فَحَقَّ عَلَيْنَا قَوْلُ رَبِّنَا إِنَّا لَذَائِقُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 We led you astray, for we ourselves were erring.

فَأَغْوَيْنَاكُمْ إِنَّا كُنَّا غَاوِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 So, that day they will be sharers in the chastisement.

فَإِنَّهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ فِي الْعَذَابِ مُشْتَرِكُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 Thus do We deal with the guilty.

إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَفْعَلُ بِالْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 They indeed were arrogant, when it was said to them : There is no god but Allāh ;

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا إِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 And said : Shall we give up our gods for a mad poet ?

وَيَقُولُونَ أَئِنَّا لَتَارِكُو آلِهَتِنَا لِشَاعِرٍ مَجْنُونٍ ﴿٣٦﴾

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deeds, but even here you will be brought low. This is again a prophecy of the vanquishment of the enemy in this very life.

2107 Though the description of the helplessness of the iniquitous given in this and the following verses applies to life after death, it equally describes their condition in this life.

37 Nay, he has brought the Truth and verifies the messengers.[2108]

بَلْ جَآءَ بِالْحَقِّ وَصَدَّقَ الْمُرْسَلِيْنَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 Surely you will taste the painful chastisement.

اِنَّكُمْ لَذَآئِقُوا الْعَذَابِ الْاَلِيْمِ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 And you are requited naught but for what you did —

وَمَا تُجْزَوْنَ اِلَّا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 Save the servants of Allāh, the purified ones.

اِلَّا عِبَادَ اللّٰهِ الْمُخْلَصِيْنَ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 For them is a known sustenance :[2109]

اُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمْ رِزْقٌ مَّعْلُوْمٌ ﴿٤١﴾

42 Fruits. And they are honoured,

فَوَاكِهُ ۚ وَهُمْ مُّكْرَمُوْنَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 In Gardens of delight,

فِيْ جَنّٰتِ النَّعِيْمِ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 On thrones, facing each other.

عَلٰى سُرُرٍ مُّتَقٰبِلِيْنَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 A bowl of running water will be made to go round them,

يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِكَاْسٍ مِّنْ مَّعِيْنٍ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 White, delicious to those who drink.

بَيْضَآءَ لَذَّةٍ لِّلشّٰرِبِيْنَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 It deprives not of reason, nor are they exhausted therewith.[2109a]

لَا فِيْهَا غَوْلٌ وَّلَا هُمْ عَنْهَا يُنْزَفُوْنَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And with them are those modest in gaze, having beautiful eyes,

وَعِنْدَهُمْ قٰصِرٰتُ الطَّرْفِ عِيْنٌ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 As if they were eggs, carefully protected.[2110]

كَاَنَّهُنَّ بَيْضٌ مَّكْنُوْنٌ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 Then some of them will turn to others, questioning mutually.

فَاَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ يَّتَسَآءَلُوْنَ ﴿٥٠﴾

2108 The early revelation of this chapter is universally admitted, and here, too, we have a clear statement that the Prophet came in fulfilment of earlier prophecy.

2109 The word *ma'lūm* (*known*) shows that the sustenance mentioned in the verses that follow is one that is already *known* to those servants of Allāh who are purified from every pollution. This description of the blessings of paradise shows that all those blessings were spiritually tasted by the righteous in this life. In fact, their brief but important description as *fruits* in the next verse clearly shows those blessings to be the fruits of their good deeds.

2109a The word *ghaul* is derived from *ghāla*, which means *it destroyed him*, and *ghālati-l-khamru* means *the wine deprived him of reason*, and *ghaul* means *privation of the intellectual faculties* (LL). *Yunzafūn* is derived from *nazafa* meaning *he entirely exhausted* a well of its water (LL). *Nazīf* is therefore *one intoxicated* or *deprived of reason*, and *anzafa* carries a more extensive significance (R). The drinks of this life, though a source of pleasure, bring evil in their train. The drinks of the next life, which are called *ma'īn* (*water of which one has reached the source*, or *water running upon the surface of the earth*) (LL), in v. 45, cause neither loss of reason, nor exhaustion. The name is common, but the nature of the two is different.

2110 The description of women given here calls attention to the prominent feature of the character of a good woman. In the first place, they are described

51 A speaker of them will say: Surely I had a comrade,

قَالَ قَآئِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ اِنِّيْ كَانَ لِيْ قَرِيْنٌ ﴿٥١﴾

52 Who said: Art thou indeed of those who accept?

يَّقُوْلُ اَئِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُصَدِّقِيْنَ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 When we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we then be requited?

ءَاِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَّعِظَامًا ءَاِنَّا لَمَدِيْنُوْنَ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 He will say: Will you look?

قَالَ هَلْ اَنْتُمْ مُّطَّلِعُوْنَ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 Then he looked down and saw him in the midst of hell.

فَاطَّلَعَ فَرَاٰهُ فِيْ سَوَآءِ الْجَحِيْمِ ﴿٥٥﴾

56 He will say: By Allāh! thou hadst almost caused me to perish;

قَالَ تَاللّٰهِ اِنْ كِدْتَّ لَتُرْدِيْنِ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 And had it not been for favour of my Lord, I should have been among those brought up.

وَلَوْلَا نِعْمَةُ رَبِّيْ لَكُنْتُ مِنَ الْمُحْضَرِيْنَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 Are we not to die,

اَفَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَيِّتِيْنَ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 Except our previous death? And are we not to be chastised?

اِلَّا مَوْتَتَنَا الْاُوْلٰى وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِيْنَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 Surely this is the mighty achievement.

اِنَّ هٰذَا لَهُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيْمُ ﴿٦٠﴾

61 For the like of this, then, let the workers work.

لِمِثْلِ هٰذَا فَلْيَعْمَلِ الْعٰمِلُوْنَ ﴿٦١﴾

62 Is this the better entertainment or the tree of Zaqqūm?[2111]

اَذٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ نُّزُلًا اَمْ شَجَرَةُ الزَّقُّوْمِ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 Surely We have made it a trial for the wrongdoers.

اِنَّا جَعَلْنٰهَا فِتْنَةً لِّلظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٦٣﴾

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as restraining their eyes, and modest in their gaze, and attention is thus called to the fact that the most valuable virtue of woman is that rare chastity which is described here as *restraint* or freedom of the eye from lust. Then the beauty of their eyes is praised, the suggestion clearly being that the purity of the eye leads to its beauty, or that the real beauty of the eye consists in its purity. In the second place, they are described as being eggs carefully protected, which alludes to their pure and unsoiled character. It should, however, be noted that what is apparently a description of women is really a description of the fruits of deeds done in this life, the words adopted being applicable to both (see the word *ḥūr* in 2356), and these are in fact spiritual blessings manifested physically. The blessings which it promises, whatever they may be, are as much meant for men as for women; the only thing certain about them is that their nature is different from the nature of the physical blessings of this life. See also 2148a.

2111 *Zaqqūm* is "*a dust-coloured tree, having small round leaves without thorns. It has a pungent odour and is bitter, and has knots in its stems . . . the heads of its leaves are very foul*" (LL). *Zaqqūm* also means *any deadly food* (T, LL), and in the dialect of Ifrīqiyah, it signifies *fresh butter with dates* (LL).

64 It is a tree that grows in the bottom of hell —

إِنَّهَا شَجَرَةٌ تَخْرُجُ فِيٓ أَصْلِ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٦٤﴾

65 Its produce is as it were the heads of serpents.[2112]

طَلْعُهَا كَأَنَّهُ رُءُوسُ الشَّيٰطِينِ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 Then truly they will eat of it and fill (their) bellies with it.

فَإِنَّهُمْ لَاٰكِلُونَ مِنْهَا فَمَالِـُٔونَ مِنْهَا الْبُطُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 Then surely they shall have after it a drink of boiling water.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ لَهُمْ عَلَيْهَا لَشَوْبًا مِّنْ حَمِيمٍ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 Then their return is surely to the flaming Fire.[2113]

ثُمَّ إِنَّ مَرْجِعَهُمْ لَإِلَى الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 They indeed found their fathers astray,

إِنَّهُمْ أَلْفَوْا اٰبَآءَهُمْ ضَآلِّينَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 So in their footsteps they are hastening on.

فَهُمْ عَلٰىٓ اٰثٰرِهِمْ يُهْرَعُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

71 And most of the ancients surely went astray before them,

وَلَقَدْ ضَلَّ قَبْلَهُمْ أَكْثَرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٧١﴾

72 And indeed We sent among them warners.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا فِيهِمْ مُّنْذِرِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾

73 Then see what was the end of those warned —

فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عٰقِبَةُ الْمُنْذَرِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 Except the servants of Allāh, the purified ones.

إِلَّا عِبَادَ اللّٰهِ الْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

SECTION 3 : **Noah and Abraham**

75 And Noah certainly called upon Us, and excellent Answerer of prayers are We!

وَلَقَدْ نَادٰىنَا نُوحٌ فَلَنِعْمَ الْمُجِيبُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 And We delivered him and his people from the great distress;

وَنَجَّيْنٰهُ وَأَهْلَهُ مِنَ الْكَرْبِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 And made his offspring the survivors,

وَجَعَلْنَا ذُرِّيَّتَهُ هُمُ الْبٰقِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

78 And left for him (praise) among the later generations,

وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِي الْاٰخِرِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾

Abū Jahl is said to have scoffed at the idea of *zaqqūm* being the food of those in hell by having prepared a repast of fresh butter with dates for a party of the Quraish chiefs, telling them that, according to the Prophet, such was the food that would be given to those who go to hell. See also 1442.

2112 The correct interpretation of *ru'ūs al-shayāṭīn* is that adopted here, for the Arabs apply the name *shaiṭān* to *a sort of serpent having a mane, ugly or foul in the head and face.* According to others it is the name of a certain ugly plant (T, LL).

2113 The words, *then their return is surely to hell,* are very significant, as if the food and drink described above were to be given to them before they

79 Peace be to Noah among the nations !

سَلٰمٌ عَلٰى نُوحٍ فِى الْعٰلَمِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾

80 Thus indeed do We reward the doers of good.

إِنَّا كَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِى الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾

81 Surely he was of Our believing servants.

إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨١﴾

82 Then We drowned the others.

ثُمَّ أَغْرَقْنَا الْاٰخَرِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾

83 And surely of his party was Abraham.

وَإِنَّ مِنْ شِيعَتِهِ لَإِبْرٰهِيمَ ﴿٨٣﴾

84 When he came to his Lord with a secure heart.

إِذْ جَآءَ رَبَّهُ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ ﴿٨٤﴾

85 When he said to his sire and his people : What is it that you worship ?

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَاذَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

86 A lie — gods besides Allāh do you desire ?

أَئِفْكًا اٰلِهَةً دُونَ اللّٰهِ تُرِيدُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

87 What is then your idea about the Lord of the worlds ?

فَمَا ظَنُّكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعٰلَمِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

88 Then he glanced a glance at the stars,

فَنَظَرَ نَظْرَةً فِى النُّجُومِ ﴿٨٨﴾

89 And said : Surely I am sick (of your deities).[2114]

فَقَالَ إِنِّى سَقِيمٌ ﴿٨٩﴾

90 So they turned their backs on him, going away.

فَتَوَلَّوْا عَنْهُ مُدْبِرِينَ ﴿٩٠﴾

91 Then he turned to their gods and said : Do you not eat ?

فَرَاغَ إِلٰٓى اٰلِهَتِهِمْ فَقَالَ أَلَا تَأْكُلُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

92 What is the matter with you that you speak not ?

مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَنْطِقُونَ ﴿٩٢﴾

93 So he turned upon them, smiting with the right hand.

فَرَاغَ عَلَيْهِمْ ضَرْبًا بِالْيَمِينِ ﴿٩٣﴾

94 Then they came to him, hastening.

فَأَقْبَلُوٓا إِلَيْهِ يَزِفُّونَ ﴿٩٤﴾

95 He said : Do you worship that which you hew out ?

قَالَ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مَا تَنْحِتُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾

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went to hell. This is the reason that it is called *an entertainment.* It is in fact a description of their evil plight in this life as well as in the Hereafter.

2114 The people with whom Abraham contended were not only worshippers of idols, but also worshippers of stars. Hence Abraham cast a glance at the stars and declared that he could not bear their worshipping others than God. LL gives the following as one of the explanations of the words *saqīm* (*sick*) on the authority of T: *I am sick of your worshipping what is not God.* But we also speak of a person as being *saqīm,* when he bears spite against another. Thus you say *huwa saqīm al-ṣadr 'alai-hi,* meaning *he is affected with spite against him* (T, LL). The words may thus be translated *I bear spite to your false gods.*

96 And Allāh has created you and what you make.

وَاللّٰهُ خَلَقَكُمْ وَمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٩٦﴾

97 They said: Build for him a building, then cast him into the flaming fire.

قَالُوا ابْنُوْا لَهٗ بُنْيَانًا فَاَلْقُوْهُ فِي الْجَحِيْمِ ﴿٩٧﴾

98 And they designed a plan against him, but We brought them low.

فَاَرَادُوْا بِهٖ كَيْدًا فَجَعَلْنٰهُمُ الْاَسْفَلِيْنَ ﴿٩٨﴾

99 And he said: Surely I flee to my Lord — He will guide me.

وَقَالَ اِنِّيْ ذَاهِبٌ اِلٰى رَبِّيْ سَيَهْدِيْنِ ﴿٩٩﴾

100 My Lord, grant me a doer of good deeds.

رَبِّ هَبْ لِيْ مِنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

101 So We gave him the good news of a forbearing son.

فَبَشَّرْنٰهُ بِغُلٰمٍ حَلِيْمٍ ﴿١٠١﴾

102 But when he became of (age to) work with him, he said: O my son, I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice thee:[2116] so consider what thou seest. He said: O my father, do as thou art commanded; if Allāh please, thou wilt find me patient.

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعْيَ قَالَ يٰبُنَيَّ اِنِّيْٓ اَرٰى فِي الْمَنَامِ اَنِّيْٓ اَذْبَحُكَ فَانْظُرْ مَاذَا تَرٰى ؕ قَالَ يٰٓاَبَتِ افْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ ؗ سَتَجِدُنِيْٓ اِنْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ مِنَ الصّٰبِرِيْنَ ﴿١٠٢﴾

103 So when they both submitted and he had thrown him down upon his forehead,

فَلَمَّآ اَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّهٗ لِلْجَبِيْنِ ﴿١٠٣﴾

104 And We called out to him saying, O Abraham,

وَنَادَيْنٰهُ اَنْ يّٰٓاِبْرٰهِيْمُ ﴿١٠٤﴾

105 Thou hast indeed fulfilled the vision.[2116a] Thus do We reward the doers of good.

قَدْ صَدَّقْتَ الرُّءْيَا ۚ اِنَّا كَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿١٠٥﴾

2116 That the child spoken of here was Ishmael and not Isaac is made clear by v. 112, which states that it was after this incident that Abraham received the news of the birth of Isaac. This, no doubt, contradicts the Bible statement, but the fact that Ishmael's descendants kept a memorial of this sacrifice in the annual pilgrimage to Makkah shows clearly that Ishmael, and not Isaac, was the son whom Abraham was commanded to sacrifice. Moreover, the Bible contradicts itself when it speaks of Isaac as "thine only son" (Gen. 27 : 2). Only Ishmael could be spoken of as "only son" before the birth of Isaac. The ḥadīth in which Isaac is spoken of as having been sacrificed is according to Ibn Kathīr *gharīb*, and must be rejected. The Holy Qur'ān makes it clear beyond all doubt that it was Ishmael whom Abraham was ordered to sacrifice.

2116a The words, *thou hast indeed fulfilled the vision*, show that the act of slaughtering was not needed for the fulfilment of the vision; the preparedness to do it amounted to its fulfilment. According to the Bible, Abraham cast out his son Ishmael and his mother Hagar in some wilderness when Ishmael was fourteen years of age (Gen. 21 : 8-21). The Holy Qur'ān is silent on this point, but, according to Bukhārī, the incident occurred when Ishmael was yet a suckling, and it was not in accordance with the wishes of Sarah but according to a Divine commandment that Abraham left Hagar and Ishmael in the wilderness near the Sacred

106 Surely this is a manifest trial.

إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَهُوَ الْبَلَٰٓؤُا الْمُبِينُ ﴿١٠٦﴾

107 And We ransomed him with a great sacrifice.[2117]

وَفَدَيْنَٰهُ بِذِبْحٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿١٠٧﴾

108 And We granted him among the later generations (the salutation),

وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِي الْآخِرِينَ ﴿١٠٨﴾

109 Peace be to Abraham!

سَلَٰمٌ عَلَىٰٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

110 Thus do We reward the doers of good.

كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١١٠﴾

111 Surely he was one of Our believing servants.

إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١١١﴾

112 And We gave him the good news of Isaac, a prophet, a righteous one.

وَبَشَّرْنَٰهُ بِإِسْحَٰقَ نَبِيًّا مِّنَ الصَّٰلِحِينَ ﴿١١٢﴾

113 And We blessed him and Isaac.[2118] And of their offspring some are doers of good, but some are clearly unjust to themselves.

وَبَٰرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَىٰٓ إِسْحَٰقَ ۚ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا مُحْسِنٌ وَظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِۦ مُبِينٌ ﴿١١٣﴾

SECTION 4 : **Moses, Aaron, Elias and Lot**

114 And certainly We conferred a favour on Moses and Aaron.

وَلَقَدْ مَنَنَّا عَلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ وَهَٰرُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾

115 And We delivered them, and their people from the mighty distress.

وَنَجَّيْنَٰهُمَا وَقَوْمَهُمَا مِنَ الْكَرْبِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿١١٥﴾

116 And We helped them, so they were the vanquishers.

وَنَصَرْنَٰهُمْ فَكَانُوا هُمُ الْغَٰلِبِينَ ﴿١١٦﴾

117 And We gave them both the clear Book.

وَءَاتَيْنَٰهُمَا الْكِتَٰبَ الْمُسْتَبِينَ ﴿١١٧﴾

House, and it was here, when Ishmael was in distress, that Zamzam was discovered (B. 60:9). The reference in the words *Thou has indeed fulfilled the vision* may be to this incident, Abraham being told that the dream had already been fulfilled by casting out Ishmael and leaving him at Makkah.

2117 To commemorate Ishmael's sacrifice, a great sacrifice was ordered. This was not only the sacrifice of a ram on this particular occasion, but the great institution of sacrifice now connected with the pilgrimage to Makkah. Perhaps there is also a reference here to the abolition of human sacrifice, which was prevalent among most ancient nations, and the significance is that the place of human sacrifice was now forever being taken by the sacrifice of a ram.

2118 Abraham and Isaac are spoken of distinctly to show that by blessing Abraham is here meant blessing his descendants through Ishmael.

118 And We guided them on the right way.

وَهَدَيْنَاهُمَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿١١٨﴾

119 And We granted them among the later generations (the salutation),

وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِمَا فِي الْآخِرِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾

120 Peace be to Moses and Aaron!

سَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

121 Thus do We reward the doers of good.

إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٢١﴾

122 Surely they were both of Our believing servants.

إِنَّهُمَا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٢٢﴾

123 And Elias was surely of those sent.

وَإِنَّ إِلْيَاسَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٢٣﴾

124 When he said to his people: Will you not guard against evil?

إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٢٤﴾

125 Do you call upon Ba'l[2119] and forsake the Best of the creators,

أَتَدْعُونَ بَعْلًا وَتَذَرُونَ أَحْسَنَ الْخَالِقِينَ ﴿١٢٥﴾

126 Allāh, your Lord and the Lord of your fathers of yore?

اللَّهَ رَبَّكُمْ وَرَبَّ آبَائِكُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٢٦﴾

127 But they rejected him, so they shall be brought up,

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَمُحْضَرُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

128 But not the servants of Allāh, the purified ones.

إِلَّا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

129 And We granted him among the later generations (the salutation),

وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِي الْآخِرِينَ ﴿١٢٩﴾

130 Peace be to Elias![2120]

سَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ إِلْ يَاسِينَ ﴿١٣٠﴾

131 Even thus We reward the doers of good.

إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣١﴾

132 Surely he was one of Our believing servants.

إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١٣٢﴾

133 And Lot was surely of those sent.

وَإِنَّ لُوطًا لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

134 When We delivered him and his people, all —

إِذْ نَجَّيْنَاهُ وَأَهْلَهُ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

135 Except an old woman among those who remained behind.

إِلَّا عَجُوزًا فِي الْغَابِرِينَ ﴿١٣٥﴾

136 Then We destroyed the others.

ثُمَّ دَمَّرْنَا الْآخَرِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾

137 And surely you pass by them in the morning,

وَإِنَّكُمْ لَتَمُرُّونَ عَلَيْهِمْ مُصْبِحِينَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

138 And at night. Do you not then understand?

وَبِاللَّيْلِ ۚ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٣٨﴾

2119 Ba'l stands for the sun, or the sun-god.

2120 Ilyāsīn is only another form of the name of Ilyās (Kf) or Elias. Elias is mentioned as being one of the prophets in 6:86. Some commentators are of opinion that Idrīs and Elias are two different names of the same prophet, but, as

SECTION 5 : **Jonah and the Prophet's Triumph**

139 And Jonah was surely of those sent.

وَإِنَّ يُونُسَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٣٩﴾

140 When he fled[2121] to the laden ship,

إِذْ أَبَقَ إِلَى الْفُلْكِ الْمَشْحُونِ ﴿١٤٠﴾

141 So he shared with others but was of those cast away.[2122]

فَسَاهَمَ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْمُدْحَضِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾

142 So the fish took him into its mouth[2123] while he was blamable.

فَالْتَقَمَهُ الْحُوتُ وَهُوَ مُلِيمٌ ﴿١٤٢﴾

143 But had he not been of those who glorify (Us),

فَلَوْلَا أَنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُسَبِّحِينَ ﴿١٤٣﴾

144 He would have tarried in its belly till the day when they are raised.[2124]

لَلَبِثَ فِي بَطْنِهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ﴿١٤٤﴾

145 Then We cast him on the naked shore, while he was sick.

فَنَبَذْنَاهُ بِالْعَرَاءِ وَهُوَ سَقِيمٌ ﴿١٤٥﴾

146 And We caused a gourd to grow up for him.[2124a]

وَأَنْبَتْنَا عَلَيْهِ شَجَرَةً مِنْ يَقْطِينٍ ﴿١٤٦﴾

147 And We sent him to a hundred thousand or more.

وَأَرْسَلْنَاهُ إِلَىٰ مِائَةِ أَلْفٍ أَوْ يَزِيدُونَ ﴿١٤٧﴾

I have shown in 1553, Idrīs in the Holy Qur'ān stands for Enoch, and Elias is the same as the Elijah of the Bible.

2121 It is meaningless to say that Jonah fled from God. He was a prophet and knew that no one could flee from God, for God's kingdom is unlimited. Nor does the Qur'ān say that he fled from God. Even the commentators do not accept this (Rz). It would appear that he fled from his people or from the king; see also 1651 and 1652.

2122 *Sāhama* means *he drew lots* or *he shared with another in a thing* (LL). According to the Bible, Jonah went into a boat but was cast into the sea on account of a storm (Jonah 1:15).

2123 According to Jonah 1:17, Jonah was devoured by a fish. The word used in the Qur'ān is *iltaqama,* which does not necessarily signify the act of devouring. *Laqm* means a *morsel,* and from the same root is *iltaqama,* which means *he took into his mouth* and also *embraced ; iltaqama fā-hā fi-l-taqbīl* means *he took her mouth within his lips in kissing* (LL). According to one explanation, his heel only was drawn by the fish into its mouth.

2124 The meaning is that the fish would have eaten him, and he would have died. *By the day when they are raised* is not meant the actual day of Resurrection, because the fish was not an immortal fish that could live to the day of Resurrection. A person's death is generally called the day of his resurrection in a certain sense. *Man māta fa-qad qāmat qiyāmatu-hū — he who dies, his resurrection comes to pass* — is the heading of a chapter in the *Mishkāt* (**Msh. 26:7**), a standard Ḥadīth collection.

2124a According to the Bible, the gourd gave shelter to Jonah, but the next day a worm smote the gourd so that it withered, and Jonah grieved for it. The lesson drawn from this incident is stated thus: "Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow. . . . And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand" (Jonah 4:9-11). These were the hundred thousand or more persons to which Jonah was sent as stated in v. 147.

148 And they believed, so We gave them provision till a time.

فَاٰمَنُوْا فَمَتَّعْنٰهُمْ اِلٰى حِيْنٍ ﴿١٤٨﴾

149 Now ask them whether thy Lord has daughters and they have sons ?

فَاسْتَفْتِهِمْ اَلِرَبِّكَ الْبَنَاتُ وَ لَهُمُ الْبَنُوْنَ ﴿١٤٩﴾

150 Or did We create the angels females, while they witnessed ?

اَمْ خَلَقْنَا الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ اِنَاثًا وَّهُمْ شٰهِدُوْنَ ﴿١٥٠﴾

151 Now surely it is of their own lie that they say :

اَلَآ اِنَّهُمْ مِّنْ اِفْكِهِمْ لَيَقُوْلُوْنَ ﴿١٥١﴾

152 Allāh has begotten. And truly they are liars.

وَلَدَ اللّٰهُ وَ اِنَّهُمْ لَكٰذِبُوْنَ ﴿١٥٢﴾

153 Has He preferred daughters to sons ?

اَصْطَفَى الْبَنَاتِ عَلَى الْبَنِيْنَ ﴿١٥٣﴾

154 What is the matter with you ? How you judge !

مَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُوْنَ ﴿١٥٤﴾

155 Will you not then mind ?

اَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿١٥٥﴾

156 Or have you a clear authority ?

اَمْ لَكُمْ سُلْطٰنٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿١٥٦﴾

157 Then bring your Book, if you are truthful.

فَاْتُوْا بِكِتٰبِكُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿١٥٧﴾

158 And they assert a relationship between Him and the jinn.[2124b] And certainly the jinn know that they will be brought up (for judgment) —

وَجَعَلُوْا بَيْنَهٗ وَبَيْنَ الْجِنَّةِ نَسَبًا وَلَقَدْ عَلِمَتِ الْجِنَّةُ اِنَّهُمْ لَمُحْضَرُوْنَ ﴿١٥٨﴾

159 Glory be to Allāh from what they describe !—

سُبْحٰنَ اللّٰهِ عَمَّا يَصِفُوْنَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

160 But not so the servants of Allāh, the purified ones.[2124c]

اِلَّا عِبَادَ اللّٰهِ الْمُخْلَصِيْنَ ﴿١٦٠﴾

161 So surely you and that which you serve,

فَاِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُوْنَ ﴿١٦١﴾

162 Not against Him can you cause (any) to fall into trial,

مَآ اَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ بِفٰتِنِيْنَ ﴿١٦٢﴾

163 Save him who will burn in the flaming Fire.

اِلَّا مَنْ هُوَ صَالِ الْجَحِيْمِ ﴿١٦٣﴾

164 And there is none of us but has an assigned place,[2124d]

وَمَا مِنَّآ اِلَّا لَهٗ مَقَامٌ مَّعْلُوْمٌ ﴿١٦٤﴾

2124b They said that they considered the angels to be daughters of God and worshipped them. In the Qur'ān, however, it is stated that it was really the jinn — their own leaders in evil — that they worshipped, not the angels: " He will say to the angels, Did these serve you? They will say . . . Nay they served the jinn " (34:40, 41).

2124c It is the evildoers that will be brought up for judgment (v. 158), not the servants of Allāh.

2124d These words are put into the mouth of the believers.

165 And verily we are ranged in ranks,

وَإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الصَّآفُّونَ ﴿١٦٥﴾

166 And we truly glorify (Him).

وَإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الْمُسَبِّحُونَ ﴿١٦٦﴾

167 And surely they used to say:

وَإِنْ كَانُوا لَيَقُولُونَ ﴿١٦٧﴾

168 Had we a reminder from those of yore,

لَوْ أَنَّ عِنْدَنَا ذِكْرًا مِّنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٦٨﴾

169 We would have been sincere servants of Allāh.

لَكُنَّا عِبَادَ اللّٰهِ الْمُخْلَصِينَ ﴿١٦٩﴾

170 But (now) they disbelieve in it, so they will come to know.

فَكَفَرُوا بِهٖ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾

171 And certainly Our word has already gone forth to Our servants, to those sent,

وَلَقَدْ سَبَقَتْ كَلِمَتُنَا لِعِبَادِنَا الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٧١﴾

172 That they, surely they, will be helped,

إِنَّهُمْ لَهُمُ الْمَنْصُورُونَ ﴿١٧٢﴾

173 And Our hosts, surely they, will be triumphant.

وَإِنَّ جُنْدَنَا لَهُمُ الْغٰلِبُونَ ﴿١٧٣﴾

174 So turn away from them till a time,[2125]

فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ حَتّٰى حِينٍ ﴿١٧٤﴾

175 And watch them, they too will see.

وَأَبْصِرْهُمْ فَسَوْفَ يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿١٧٥﴾

176 Would they hasten on Our chastisement?

أَفَبِعَذَابِنَا يَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ﴿١٧٦﴾

177 So when it descends in their court, evil will be the morning of the warned ones.

فَإِذَا نَزَلَ بِسَاحَتِهِمْ فَسَآءَ صَبَاحُ الْمُنْذَرِينَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

178 And turn away from them till a time,

وَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ حَتّٰى حِينٍ ﴿١٧٨﴾

179 And watch, for they too will see.

وَأَبْصِرْ فَسَوْفَ يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿١٧٩﴾

180 Glory be to thy Lord, the Lord of Might, above what they describe!

سُبْحٰنَ رَبِّكَ رَبِّ الْعِزَّةِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨٠﴾

181 And peace be to those sent!

وَسَلٰمٌ عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿١٨١﴾

182 And praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds!

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٨٢﴾

2125 That is, the time of victory (Bd).

CHAPTER 38

ṢĀD

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 5 *sections;* 88 *verses*)

The chapter is entitled *Ṣād* from its initial letter, which stands for *Ṣādiq* or *Truthful* God. It describes the sufferings of prophets at the hands of their enemies. Even prophets like David and Solomon, who ruled mighty kingdoms, and like Job, who had been granted abundance, did not escape opposition and had to suffer at the hands of their enemies. But as the name of the chapter signifies, Allāh was a *Truthful God,* Who at the height of opposition foretold the discomfiture of the enemy, and the final triumph of Truth.

The date of the revelation of this chapter may be fixed at about the same time as that of the preceding one. The opposition had no doubt grown intense, and the earlier emigration may have already taken place, or may have followed it soon. It may be placed about the close of the early Makkan period. The first section clearly speaks of the determined opposition of the enemy and prophesies his discomfiture; the second asserts how even a king-prophet like David had his enemies, and how he was delivered from their hands; the third states that even Solomon with all his glory could not escape the opposition of enemies, yet it was the grace of Allāh, not the glory of his kingdom, that delivered him from his enemies. Job's sufferings are spoken of in the fourth section, and the triumph of the righteous is plainly stated. The typical opposition of the devil to the prophet-man forms the subject-matter of the concluding section.

SECTION 1 **The Enemy's Discomfiture**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Truthful God ![2126] By the Qur'ān, possessing eminence ![2127]

صٓ وَالْقُرْاٰنِ ذِى الذِّكْرِ ۝١

2 Nay, those who disbelieve are in self-exaltation and opposition.

بَلِ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا فِىْ عِزَّةٍ وَّشِقَاقٍ ۝٢

3 How many a generation We destroyed before them, then they cried when there was no longer time for escape ![2128]

كَمْ اَهْلَكْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِّنْ قَرْنٍ فَنَادَوْا وَّلَاتَ حِيْنَ مَنَاصٍ ۝٣

4 And they wonder that a warner from among themselves has come to them, and the disbelievers say: This is an enchanter, a liar.

وَعَجِبُوْٓا اَنْ جَآءَهُمْ مُّنْذِرٌ مِّنْهُمْ وَقَالَ الْكٰفِرُوْنَ هٰذَا سٰحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ ۝٤

5 Makes he the gods a single God? Surely this is a strange thing.

اَجَعَلَ الْاٰلِهَةَ اِلٰهًا وَّاحِدًا ۚ اِنَّ هٰذَا لَشَىْءٌ عُجَابٌ ۝٥

6 And the chiefs among them say: Go and steadily adhere to your gods: surely this is a thing intended.[2129]

وَانْطَلَقَ الْمَلَاُ مِنْهُمْ اَنِ امْشُوْا وَاصْبِرُوْا عَلٰٓى اٰلِهَتِكُمْ ۚ اِنَّ هٰذَا لَشَىْءٌ يُّرَادُ ۝٦

7 We never heard of this in the former faith: this is nothing but a forgery.

مَا سَمِعْنَا بِهٰذَا فِى الْمِلَّةِ الْاٰخِرَةِ ۚ اِنْ هٰذَآ اِلَّا اخْتِلَاقٌ ۝٧

8 Has the Reminder been revealed to him from among us? Nay, they are in doubt as to My Reminder. Nay, they have not yet tasted My chastisement.

ءَاُنْزِلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ مِنْۢ بَيْنِنَا ۭ بَلْ هُمْ فِىْ شَكٍّ مِّنْ ذِكْرِىْ ۚ بَلْ لَّمَّا يَذُوْقُوْا عَذَابِ ۝٨

2126 *Ṣād* stands for *Ṣādiq*, meaning *Truthful God* (JB); or for *ṣadaq-Allāh*, i.e., Allāh speaks the truth.

2127 *Dhikr* means *eminence* here, as in **2:152** (LL). The calling to witness of the Qur'ān possessing eminence indicates that the truth of the Qur'ān will become manifest by the eminence to which it will raise those who follow it.

2128 That is, they did not heed the warning, but cried for help when punishment actually overtook them, and there was no escape from it.

2129 *By a thing intended* is meant that it is a thing which the Prophet intends to bring about but which he cannot, or that the appearance of the Prophet is one of the disasters decreed by fate.

9 Or, have they the treasures of the mercy of thy Lord, the Mighty, the Great Giver?

أَمْ عِنْدَهُمْ خَزَآئِنُ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّكَ الْعَزِيزِ الْوَهَّابِ ﴿٩﴾

10 Or is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and what is between them theirs? Then let them rise higher in means.[2130]

أَمْ لَهُمْ مُّلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فَلْيَرْتَقُوا فِي الْأَسْبَابِ ﴿١٠﴾

11 What an army of the allies is here put to flight![2131]

جُنْدٌ مَّا هُنَالِكَ مَهْزُومٌ مِّنَ الْأَحْزَابِ ﴿١١﴾

12 The people of Noah, and ʻĀd, and Pharaoh, the lord of hosts,[2132] rejected (prophets) before them,

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَّعَادٌ وَّفِرْعَوْنُ ذُو الْأَوْتَادِ ﴿١٢﴾

13 And Thamūd and the people of Lot and the dwellers of the thicket. These were the parties (opposing Truth).

وَثَمُودُ وَقَوْمُ لُوطٍ وَّأَصْحٰبُ لْئَيْكَةِ أُولٰٓئِكَ الْأَحْزَابُ ﴿١٣﴾

14 Not one of them but rejected the messengers, so just was My retribution.

إِنْ كُلٌّ إِلَّا كَذَّبَ الرُّسُلَ فَحَقَّ عِقَابِ ﴿١٤﴾

SECTION 2: **David's Enemies**

15 And these wait but for one cry, wherein there is no delay.

وَمَا يَنْظُرُ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَّاحِدَةً مَّا لَهَا مِنْ فَوَاقٍ ﴿١٥﴾

2130 By *asbāb* (*means*) are meant the means to strengthen their own power or the means to bring about the vanquishment of Truth. Their *rising higher* or *ascending in means* stands for having recourse to all the means they can think of. As they were powerful in the land and masters of it, they should find the best means to retain their power, and prove the warning of the Prophet to be false. That they will not be able to do so, they are told in the next verse.

2131 This is a prophecy relating to the discomfiture and overthrow of the opponents of Islām when they combine all possible forces against it. The Prophet is thus not only enjoined patience under his present sufferings, but he is further told that the opposition against him will assume yet more formidable proportions. He is comforted at the same time with the knowledge that the combined forces of opposition will be utterly routed and overthrown. This happened in the battle known as *the battle of the Aḥzāb*, or the battle of the Allies; see 1981.

2132 *Autād* is the plural of *watad*, which means literally *a peg* firmly driven into the ground. But it is frequently used metaphorically. Thus *autad al-bilād* signifies *the chiefs of the towns, provinces,* or *countries* (LA, LL). Bd interprets *dhu-l-autād* as meaning *lord of many hosts*. And generally it is also taken as meaning lord of a strong dominion.

16 And they say: Our Lord, hasten on for us our portion before the day of Reckoning.[2133]

وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا عَجِّل لَّنَا قِطَّنَا قَبْلَ يَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ ﴿١٦﴾

17 Bear patiently what they say, and remember Our servant David, the possessor of power. He ever turned (to Allāh).

اِصْبِرْ عَلٰى مَا يَقُوْلُوْنَ وَاذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَا دَاوٗدَ ذَا الْاَيْدِ ۚ اِنَّهٗۤ اَوَّابٌ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Truly We made the mountains subject to him, glorifying (Allāh) at nightfall and sunrise,[2134]

اِنَّا سَخَّرْنَا الْجِبَالَ مَعَهٗ يُسَبِّحْنَ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْاِشْرَاقِ ﴿١٨﴾

19 And the birds gathered together. All were obedient to him.

وَالطَّيْرَ مَحْشُوْرَةً ؕ كُلٌّ لَّهٗۤ اَوَّابٌ ﴿١٩﴾

20 And We strengthened his kingdom and We gave him wisdom and a clear judgment.

وَشَدَدْنَا مُلْكَهٗ وَاٰتَيْنٰهُ الْحِكْمَةَ وَفَصْلَ الْخِطَابِ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 And has the story of the adversaries come to thee? When they made an entry into the private chamber by climbing the wall —

وَهَلْ اَتٰىكَ نَبَؤُا الْخَصْمِ ۘ اِذْ تَسَوَّرُوا الْمِحْرَابَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 When they came upon David so he was afraid of them. They said: Fear not; two litigants, of whom one has wronged the other, so decide between us with justice, and act not unjustly, and guide us to the right way.

اِذْ دَخَلُوْا عَلٰى دَاوٗدَ فَفَزِعَ مِنْهُمْ قَالُوْا لَا تَخَفْ ۚ خَصْمٰنِ بَغٰى بَعْضُنَا عَلٰى بَعْضٍ فَاحْكُمْ بَيْنَنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تُشْطِطْ وَاهْدِنَاۤ اِلٰى سَوَآءِ الصِّرَاطِ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 This is my brother. He has ninety-nine ewes and I have a single ewe. Then he said, Make it over to me, and he has prevailed against me in dispute.

اِنَّ هٰذَاۤ اَخِيْ ۙ لَهٗ تِسْعٌ وَّتِسْعُوْنَ نَعْجَةً وَّلِيَ نَعْجَةٌ وَّاحِدَةٌ ۙ فَقَالَ اَكْفِلْنِيْهَا وَعَزَّنِيْ فِي الْخِطَابِ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 He said: Surely he has wronged thee in demanding thy ewe (to add) to his own ewes. And surely many partners wrong one another save those who believe and do good, and very few are

قَالَ لَقَدْ ظَلَمَكَ بِسُؤَالِ نَعْجَتِكَ اِلٰى نِعَاجِهٖ ؕ وَاِنَّ كَثِيْرًا مِّنَ الْخُلَطَآءِ لَيَبْغِيْ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ وَقَلِيْلٌ

2133 It is clearly a demand on the part of disbelievers for punishment in this life; they were again and again told that their doom was coming, and they wanted it to come immediately.

2134 For mountains glorifying God, and for the birds in the next verse, see 2022.

they! And David knew that We had tried him, so he asked his Lord for protection, and he fell down bowing and turned (to God).[2136]

Prostration

مَّا هُمْ ۗ وَظَنَّ دَاوٗدُ اَنَّمَا فَتَنّٰهُ فَاسْتَغْفَرَ رَبَّهٗ وَخَرَّ رَاكِعًا وَّاَنَابَ ﴿۲۴﴾

25 So We gave him this protection, and he had a nearness to Us and an excellent resort.

فَغَفَرْنَا لَهٗ ذٰلِكَ ۗ وَاِنَّ لَهٗ عِنْدَنَا لَزُلْفٰى وَحُسْنَ مَاٰبٍ ﴿۲۵﴾

26 O David, surely We have made thee a ruler in the land; so judge between men justly and follow not desire, lest it lead thee astray from the path of Allāh. Those who go astray from the path of Allāh, for them is surely a severe chastisement because they forgot the day of Reckoning.

يٰدَاوٗدُ اِنَّا جَعَلْنٰكَ خَلِيْفَةً فِى الْاَرْضِ فَاحْكُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوٰى فَيُضِلَّكَ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۗ اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَضِلُّوْنَ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيْدٌۢ بِمَا نَسُوْا يَوْمَ الْحِسَابِ ﴿۲۶﴾

2136 The men who thus attacked David by *climbing over the wall* were his enemies, as the Qur'ān plainly states. They had thought of taking David unawares and putting him to death. But David, though terrified, was ready to meet them, and the two men, finding their plan thus frustrated, made an excuse for coming to him in such an unusual manner. The Qur'ān does not anywhere say that these were angels; the suggestion is, moreover, inconsistent with their description as *adversaries*, and with their *climbing over the wall*. The story of David committing adultery and two angels having come to him thus to remind him of the sin is a puerile falsehood, wherever it may be found. It has been repudiated by the best Muslim opinion. Rz says: "Most of the learned and those who have searched for the truth among them declare this charge false and condemn it as a lie and a mischievous story". And the Caliph 'Alī, when he heard the false story, said: "Whoever relates the story of David as the story-tellers relate it, I will give him 160 stripes, and this is the punishment of those who falsely charge the prophets" (Rz). The words *istaghfara* and *ghafar-nā* occurring in this and the next verse by no means indicate that David had committed a sin, for *istighfār* really signifies the *seeking of protection* from sin; see 380. David sought Divine protection when he saw that his enemies had grown so bold against him; and by *ghafar-nā* in the next verse is meant the rectification of his affair, the reason given there making this significance clear: "Surely he had a nearness to Us and an excellent resort". It may be added that a party of the Israelites themselves was opposed to David and Solomon; and the revolt of the ten tribes against Rehoboam, Solomon's son, is a clear proof of this animosity. Hence many of the false charges against these two prophet-kings. The recitation of this verse is followed by actual prostration; see 978.

SECTION 3 : **Solomon and his Enemies**

27 And We created not the heaven and the earth and what is between them in vain. That is the opinion of those who disbelieve.[2137] So woe to those who disbelieve on account of the Fire !

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَآءَ وَالْاَرْضَ وَمَا
بَيْنَهُمَا بَاطِلًا ۭ ذٰلِكَ ظَنُّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا ۚ
فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنَ النَّارِ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 Shall We treat those who believe and do good like the mischief-makers in the earth ? Or shall We make the dutiful like the wicked ?

اَمْ نَجْعَلُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ
كَالْمُفْسِدِيْنَ فِي الْاَرْضِ ۡ اَمْ نَجْعَلُ
الْمُتَّقِيْنَ كَالْفُجَّارِ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 (This is) a Book that We have revealed to thee abounding in good, that they may ponder over its verses, and that the men of understanding may mind.

كِتٰبٌ اَنْزَلْنٰهُ اِلَيْكَ مُبٰرَكٌ لِّيَدَّبَّرُوْٓا
اٰيٰتِهٖ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ اُولُوا الْاَلْبَابِ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 And We gave to David Solomon. Most excellent the servant ! Surely he ever turned (to Allāh).

وَوَهَبْنَا لِدَاوٗدَ سُلَيْمٰنَ ۭ نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ ۭ
اِنَّهٗٓ اَوَّابٌ ۭ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 When well-bred, swift (horses)[2139] were brought to him at evening —

اِذْ عُرِضَ عَلَيْهِ بِالْعَشِيِّ الصّٰفِنٰتُ الْجِيَادُ ﴿٣١﴾

32 So he said, I love the good things on account of the remembrance of my Lord — until they were hidden behind the veil.

فَقَالَ اِنِّيْٓ اَحْبَبْتُ حُبَّ الْخَيْرِ عَنْ
ذِكْرِ رَبِّيْ حَتّٰى تَوَارَتْ بِالْحِجَابِ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 (He said) : Bring them back to me. So he began to stroke (their) legs and necks.[2140]

رُدُّوْهَا عَلَيَّ ۭ فَطَفِقَ مَسْحًۢا بِالسُّوْقِ
وَالْاَعْنَاقِ ﴿٣٣﴾

2137 The believer is guided by the principle of the accountability of human actions and of a significance underlying everything that exists in heaven or earth. The disbeliever, on the other hand, makes mischief, as he believes that he will not be any the worse for it, and thus ignores the law of cause and effect, which prevails in the universe.

2139 *Ṣāfināt* is plural of *ṣāfin*, which signifies *a horse standing upon three legs and the extremity of the hoof of the fourth leg* (LL) ; hence it means a horse that is still when standing, or a well-bred horse.

2140 *Masaḥa shai'an* means he wiped a thing with his hand, or passed his hand over it, and horses are always stroked on their legs and necks after a race.

34 And certainly we tried Solomon, and We put on his throne a (mere) body,[2141] so he turned (to Allāh).

وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا سُلَيْمٰنَ وَأَلْقَيْنَا عَلٰى كُرْسِيِّهٖ جَسَدًا ثُمَّ أَنَابَ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 He said: My Lord, forgive me and grant me a kingdom which is not fit for any one after me;[2142] surely Thou art the Great Giver.

قَالَ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِيْ وَهَبْ لِيْ مُلْكًا لَّا يَنْبَغِيْ لِأَحَدٍ مِّنْ بَعْدِيْ ۚ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 So We made the wind subservient to him; it made his command to run gently wherever he desired,

فَسَخَّرْنَا لَهُ الرِّيْحَ تَجْرِيْ بِأَمْرِهٖ رُخَآءً حَيْثُ أَصَابَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 And the devils, every builder and diver,

وَالشَّيٰطِيْنَ كُلَّ بَنَّآءٍ وَّغَوَّاصٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 And others fettered in chains.[2143]

وَّاٰخَرِيْنَ مُقَرَّنِيْنَ فِي الْأَصْفَادِ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 This is Our free gift, so give freely or withhold, without reckoning.

هٰذَا عَطَآؤُنَا فَامْنُنْ أَوْ أَمْسِكْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 And surely he had a nearness to Us and an excellent resort.

وَإِنَّ لَهٗ عِنْدَنَا لَزُلْفٰى وَحُسْنَ مَاٰبٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

This significance of the word here is accepted by I'Ab (IJ). The words *tawārat bi-l-ḥijāb*, which mean *they were hidden behind the veil*, refer to the horses, which had gone so far in the race that they were hidden from Solomon's eyes. The story that Solomon killed the horses has no basis.

2141 By the *mere body* that was put on his throne is meant either his son Rehoboam, who lost the allegiance of all except a single tribe of Israel (I Kings 12:17), or Jeroboam, who led the revolt against the house of David, and, on becoming king of ten tribes, set up image-worship in Dan and Beth-el, the two calves being supposed to be images of Jehovah (I Kings 12:28), and also began the worship of molten images (I Kings 14:9). Thus both Rehoboam and Jeroboam answer the description of a *body* (without real life) thrown on Solomon's throne. See also 2029.

2142 The previous verse speaks of the imbecile heir-apparent to Solomon's throne. Hence we find Solomon praying here for a spiritual kingdom, for that is the only kingdom which is not in danger of being spoiled by an heir. The glory of Solomon's temporal kingdom was not maintained after his death; nor has a king like Solomon appeared in Israel. By *anyone after me* is meant *anyone in Israel*, not the whole world.

2143 The description given here of the devils shows clearly that the designation applies to men of foreign tribes subjected to Solomon's rule, because it was the latter who were forced into labour by Solomon. The words *every builder and diver* make it clear that the *jinn* and *devils* who are related to have been subjected to Solomon were only human beings. This is further shown by the words *fettered in chains*; chains are needed to keep in control material beings, such as men. See also 2027.

SECTION 4 : **Job — Triumph of the Righteous**

41 And remember Our servant Job. When he cried to his Lord : The devil has afflicted me with toil and torment.[2144]

وَاذْكُرْ عَبْدَنَآ اَيُّوْبَ ۘ اِذْ نَادٰى رَبَّهٗٓ اَنِّيْ مَسَّنِيَ الشَّيْطٰنُ بِنُصْبٍ وَّعَذَابٍ ﴿۴۱﴾

42 Urge with thy foot ; here is a cool washing-place and a drink.[2145]

اُرْكُضْ بِرِجْلِكَ ۚ هٰذَا مُغْتَسَلٌۢ بَارِدٌ وَّشَرَابٌ ﴿۴۲﴾

43 And We gave him his people and the like of them with them,[2146] a mercy from Us, and a reminder for men of understanding.

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهٗٓ اَهْلَهٗ وَمِثْلَهُمْ مَّعَهُمْ رَحْمَةً مِّنَّا وَذِكْرٰى لِاُولِي الْاَلْبَابِ ﴿۴۳﴾

2144 The story of Job is given here as well as in the 21st chapter, the reference being more brief there than here. All that the Qur'ān states about him is that he was a righteous person who suffered some kind of distress, remained patient under trials, and was ultimately delivered from affliction. All these circumstances of his life are disposed of in the space of a few lines. The dramatic poem of forty-two chapters known as the Book of Job finds no place in the Holy Qur'ān.

The toil and torment of which Job complains seem to relate to some journey of his in a desert, where he finds himself in an evil plight, on account of the fatigue of the journey and the thirst which afflicts him. There are many circumstances which point to this conclusion. The use of the word *nuṣb,* signifying *toil* or *fatigue,* is one of them. Another is that, as a remedy for this, he is led to a place where he finds a cool washing-place and a drink. A third is the mention of the devil (*shaiṭān*) in connection with his trouble, for *shaiṭān al-falā,* lit., *the devil of the desert,* signifies *thirst* (Q, LL). The mention of this distressing journey of Job contains, no doubt, a hint to the Prophet's long journey from Makkah to Madīnah, which was to be undertaken under particularly distressing circumstances. This journey of Job was undoubtedly undertaken in connection with the delivery of the message with which he was entrusted, just as in the case of the Prophet's Flight from Makkah to Madīnah.

2145 *Urkuḍ bi-rijli-ka* literally signifies *urge with thy foot,* the significance being *urge thy horse.* The word *rakaḍa* is used especially in connection with a beast, meaning, as LL says, *he struck and hit therewith as one strikes and hits therewith a beast.* This special use is made clear in all lexicons by further examples of the use of the word ; *rakaḍtu* means *I urged* the horse to trot with my foot ; *rakaḍa, he struck* the beast to urge it with a foot (LL). The meaning is therefore *urge thy horse to go further,* and the result is that there he finds a place where he is able to refresh himself both with drink and washing. He thought that he was in a waterless desert, and he complained that he was troubled with fatigue from the journey and with thirst ; in reply he is told to urge his horse or the beast he rode upon to trot further on, where he will find rest. It is a lesson not to despair under difficulties.

2146 *Ahla-hū* may mean either *his people* or *his family.* The *giving* of *ahl* to him means that he met them again. The addition of the *like of them with them* shows that his *followers* are meant here. As I have already stated, there is a prophetical reference to the Prophet's Flight in Job's journey, and the Prophet again met not only his followers who fled from Makkah, but found also *the like of them* at Madīnah, i.e., the Anṣār of Madīnah.

44 And take in thy hand few worldly goods and earn goodness therewith and incline not to falsehood.[2147] Surely We found him patient; most excellent the servant! Surely he (ever) turned (to Us).

وَخُذْ بِيَدِكَ ضِغْثًا فَاضْرِب بِّهِ وَلَا تَحْنَثْ ۗ إِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ صَابِرًا ۚ نِّعْمَ الْعَبْدُ ۖ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 And remember Our servants Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, men of power and insight.

وَاذْكُرْ عِبَادَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ أُولِي الْأَيْدِي وَالْأَبْصَارِ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 We indeed purified them by a pure quality, the keeping in mind of the (final) abode.

إِنَّا أَخْلَصْنَاهُم بِخَالِصَةٍ ذِكْرَى الدَّارِ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And surely they were with Us, of the elect, the best.

وَإِنَّهُمْ عِندَنَا لَمِنَ الْمُصْطَفَيْنَ الْأَخْيَارِ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And remember Ishmael and Elisha and Dhu-l-Kifl; and they were all of the best.

وَاذْكُرْ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَالْيَسَعَ وَذَا الْكِفْلِ ۖ وَكُلٌّ مِّنَ الْأَخْيَارِ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 This is a reminder. And surely there is an excellent resort for the dutiful:

هَٰذَا ذِكْرٌ ۚ وَإِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ لَحُسْنَ مَآبٍ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 Gardens of perpetuity — the doors are opened for them.[2148]

جَنَّاتِ عَدْنٍ مُّفَتَّحَةً لَّهُمُ الْأَبْوَابُ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 Reclining therein, calling therein for many fruits and drink.

مُتَّكِئِينَ فِيهَا يَدْعُونَ فِيهَا بِفَاكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ وَشَرَابٍ ﴿٥١﴾

52 And with them are those modest in gaze, equals in age.[2148a]

وَعِندَهُمْ قَاصِرَاتُ الطَّرْفِ أَتْرَابٌ ﴿٥٢﴾

2147 I make a departure here from the ordinary rendering of these words which are translated thus: "Take in thy hand a branch and smite therewith and break not the oath". To explain these words, a story is added that Job had taken an oath to give a hundred stripes to his wife on account of her impatience in his affliction, but that he was commanded to keep the oath by striking her with a bundle of twigs. This story has no basis. Even if we adopt this significance, the meaning would be that Job was commanded to be lenient in his dealing with his enemies when he ultimately vanquished them, like a man who instead of using the sword used a bundle of twigs to punish his enemies. But the word *dighth* means a *handful of twigs* or *shrubs* as also a *handful of worldly goods,* and the words *ākhidh al-ḍighth,* occurring in a ḥadīth, are explained by T as meaning *he who obtains somewhat of worldly goods* (LL). About the word *ḍarb,* it has already been noted that it carries a number of significances; see 96. There are reasons to think that Job was a rich man, and hence I think he is here told not to be inclined too much to the attainment of worldly riches. They are only needed to the extent of enabling a man to earn goodness thereby.

2148 That is, the doors of these gardens are opened for them in this very life; or, they are always open to them.

2148a, see next page.

53 This is what you are promised for the day of Reckoning.

هٰذَا مَا تُوعَدُونَ لِيَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 Surely this is Our sustenance; it will never come to an end —

إِنَّ هٰذَا لَرِزْقُنَا مَا لَهُ مِنْ نَفَادٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 This (is for the good)! And surely there is an evil resort for the inordinate —

هٰذَا ۚ وَإِنَّ لِلطَّاغِينَ لَشَرَّ مَآبٍ ﴿٥٥﴾

56 Hell. They will enter it. So evil is the resting-place.

جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَوْنَهَا ۚ فَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 This — so let them taste it, boiling and intensely cold (drink),[2149]

هٰذَا فَلْيَذُوقُوهُ حَمِيمٌ وَغَسَّاقٌ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 And other similar (punishment), of various sorts.[2149a]

وَآخَرُ مِنْ شَكْلِهِ أَزْوَاجٌ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 This is an army rushing headlong with you — [2149b] no welcome for them! Surely they will burn in fire.

هٰذَا فَوْجٌ مُقْتَحِمٌ مَعَكُمْ ۖ لَا مَرْحَبًا بِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ صَالُو النَّارِ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 They say:[2149c] Nay! you — no welcome to you! You prepared it for us, so evil is the resting-place.

قَالُوا بَلْ أَنْتُمْ لَا مَرْحَبًا بِكُمْ ۖ أَنْتُمْ قَدَّمْتُمُوهُ لَنَا ۖ فَبِئْسَ الْقَرَارُ ﴿٦٠﴾

61 They say: Our Lord, whoever prepared it for us, give him more, a double, punishment in the Fire.

قَالُوا رَبَّنَا مَنْ قَدَّمَ لَنَا هٰذَا فَزِدْهُ عَذَابًا ضِعْفًا فِي النَّارِ ﴿٦١﴾

62 And they say: What is the matter with us? — we see not men whom we used to count among the vicious.

وَقَالُوا مَا لَنَا لَا نَرَىٰ رِجَالًا كُنَّا نَعُدُّهُمْ مِنَ الْأَشْرَارِ ﴿٦٢﴾

2148a For the modest in gaze, see 2110. Here, in addition, they are called equals in age, as showing that their growth begins with the growth of spiritual life in man, thus showing that they are the fruits of good deeds, whether done by males or females, who would all have these fruits equally.

2149 The word *ghassāq*, which is generally rendered as *ichor*, is really a qualification of *drink* (understood, as in the case of *ḥamīm*, which means *boiling*), and means *intensely cold* (T). It also means *stinking* (LL), but being mentioned along with *ḥamīm*, or boiling, the significance adopted suits the context. They will be made to consume intensely hot and intensely cold drink, because they went to the two extremes and did not follow the mean.

2149a *Azwāj* is plural of *zauj*, which means *a pair* or *one of a pair*, also *sort* or *species* (LL). The word may carry the significance adopted or it may mean *in pairs*, referring to the two extremes, as in the previous verse.

2149b This is the army of blind followers of falsehood.

2149c The speakers here are the blind followers, those addressed being the ringleaders.

63 Did we (only) take them in scorn, or do our eyes miss them ?

أَتَّخَذْنَٰهُمْ سِخْرِيًّا أَمْ زَاغَتْ عَنْهُمُ الْأَبْصَارُ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 That surely is the truth — the contending one with another of the inmates of the Fire.

إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ لَحَقٌّ تَخَاصُمُ أَهْلِ النَّارِ ﴿٦٤﴾

SECTION 5 : **Opposition to Prophets**

65 Say : I am only a warner ; and there is no God but Allāh, the One, the Subduer (of all) —

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا مُنْذِرٌ ۖ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَٰهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 The Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, the Mighty, the Forgiving.

رَبُّ السَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفَّارُ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 Say : It is a message of importance,[2150]

قُلْ هُوَ نَبَؤٌا عَظِيمٌ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 From which you turn away.

أَنْتُمْ عَنْهُ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 I have no knowledge of the exalted chiefs when they contend.[2151]

مَا كَانَ لِيَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ بِالْمَلَإِ الْأَعْلَىٰ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 Only this is revealed to me that I am a plain warner.

إِنْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ إِلَّا أَنَّمَا أَنَا نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿٧٠﴾

71 When thy Lord said to the angels : Surely I am going to create a mortal from dust.[2152]

إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةِ إِنِّي خَالِقٌ بَشَرًا مِنْ طِينٍ ﴿٧١﴾

72 So when I have made him complete and breathed into him of My spirit, fall down submitting to him.

فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَٰجِدِينَ ﴿٧٢﴾

73 And the angels submitted, all of them,

فَسَجَدَ الْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

2150 The message of importance is the Prophet's message to the whole of humanity, the message which discloses the vast spiritual realm hidden to the ordinary human eye. That those who turn away from it are doomed to perdition is the necessary consequence, and, hence the doom of the opponents forms part of this message.

2151 The exalted chiefs are the heavenly beings who come first to know of the Divine decree relating to the punishment of the opponents of Truth, referred to in v. 68. It is these opponents that are spoken of here as *contending ;* they carried on a contention against Truth.

2152 The creation of Adam and the submission of the angels typifies the raising of a prophet and the submission to him of the good and the righteous. Compare 2 : 30, etc.

74 But not Iblīs.[2152a] He was proud and he was one of the disbelievers.

إِلَّآ إِبۡلِيسَ ٱسۡتَكۡبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ ٱلۡكٰفِرِينَ ○

75 He said: O Iblīs, what prevented thee from submitting to him whom I created with both My hands? Art thou proud or art thou of the exalted ones?

قَالَ يٰٓإِبۡلِيسُ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَن تَسۡجُدَ لِمَا خَلَقۡتُ بِيَدَيَّ أَسۡتَكۡبَرۡتَ أَمۡ كُنتَ مِنَ ٱلۡعَالِينَ ٧٥

76 He said: I am better than he; Thou hast created me of fire, and him Thou didst create of dust.[2153]

قَالَ أَنَا خَيۡرٌ مِّنۡهُ خَلَقۡتَنِي مِن نَّارٍ وَّخَلَقۡتَهُۥ مِن طِينٍ ٧٦

77 He said: Go forth from hence! surely thou art driven away:

قَالَ فَٱخۡرُجۡ مِنۡهَا فَإِنَّكَ رَجِيمٌ ٧٧

78. And surely My curse is on thee to the day of Judgment.

وَّإِنَّ عَلَيۡكَ لَعۡنَتِيٓ إِلَىٰ يَوۡمِ ٱلدِّينِ ٧٨

79 He said: My Lord, respite me to the day that they are raised.[2153a]

قَالَ رَبِّ فَأَنظِرۡنِيٓ إِلَىٰ يَوۡمِ يُبۡعَثُونَ ○

80 He said: Surely thou art of the respited ones.

قَالَ فَإِنَّكَ مِنَ ٱلۡمُنظَرِينَ ٨٠

81 Till the day of the time made known.

إِلَىٰ يَوۡمِ ٱلۡوَقۡتِ ٱلۡمَعۡلُومِ ٨١

82 He said: Then, by Thy Might! I will surely lead them all astray,

قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لَأُغۡوِيَنَّهُمۡ أَجۡمَعِينَ ٨٢

83 Except Thy servants from among them, the purified ones.

إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنۡهُمُ ٱلۡمُخۡلَصِينَ ٨٣

84 He said: The Truth is, and the truth I speak —

قَالَ فَٱلۡحَقُّ وَٱلۡحَقَّ أَقُولُ ٨٤

85 That I shall fill hell with thee and with all those among them who follow thee.

لَأَمۡلَئَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنكَ وَمِمَّن تَبِعَكَ مِنۡهُمۡ أَجۡمَعِينَ ٨٥

86 Say: I ask you no reward for it; nor am I of the impostors.

قُلۡ مَآ أَسۡـَٔلُكُمۡ عَلَيۡهِ مِنۡ أَجۡرٍ وَّمَآ أَنَا مِنَ ٱلۡمُتَكَلِّفِينَ ٨٦

87 It is naught but a Reminder to the nations.

إِنۡ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكۡرٌ لِّلۡعٰلَمِينَ ٨٧

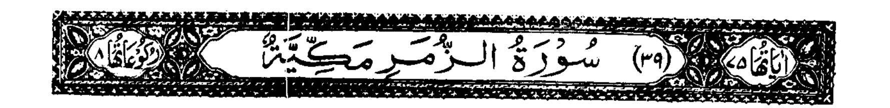
88 And certainly you will come to know about it after a time.

وَلَتَعۡلَمُنَّ نَبَأَهُۥ بَعۡدَ حِينٍ ٨٨

2152a See 57, 58.

2153 The creation from fire is an indication of rebelliousness, of a fiery temper, and the creation from dust signifies submissiveness and meekness; see 862.

2153a See 1338.



CHAPTER 39

Al-Zumar: THE COMPANIES

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 8 *sections*; 75 *verses*)

The name of this chapter, *The Companies*, refers to the two classes, the believers and the disbelievers. Its revelation belongs to the middle Makkan period.

Sincere obedience to Allāh is required in the first section. Those who obey are the believers, and those who refuse to obey are the disbelievers, and the two are spoken of in the next section. The third shows that the Qur'ān is a perfect guidance, and the fourth that its rejectors will be punished. The fifth emphasizes the punishment of rejectors, by stating that evil will not be averted from those who persist in rejection, and the sixth calls attention to Divine mercy, which is so vast that the greatest sinners have no reason to despair. The last two sections speak of the coming of the judgment, when each of the two parties is made to taste that which it deserves.

SECTION 1 **Obedience to Allāh**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 The revelation of the Book is from Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise.

تَنْزِيْلُ الْكِتٰبِ مِنَ اللّٰهِ الْعَزِيْزِ الْحَكِيْمِ ①

2 Surely We have revealed to thee the Book with truth, so serve Allāh, being sincere to Him in obedience.

إِنَّآ أَنْزَلْنَآ إِلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ
فَاعْبُدِ اللّٰهَ مُخْلِصًا لَّهُ الدِّيْنَ ②

3 Now surely sincere obedience is due to Allāh (alone). And those who choose protectors besides Him (say): We serve them only that they may bring us nearer to Allāh.[2154] Surely Allāh will judge between them in that in which they differ. Surely Allāh guides not him who is a liar, ungrateful.

أَلَا لِلّٰهِ الدِّيْنُ الْخَالِصُ ۗ وَالَّذِيْنَ
اتَّخَذُوْا مِنْ دُوْنِهٖٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ ۘ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ
إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُوْنَآ إِلَى اللّٰهِ زُلْفٰى ۗ إِنَّ اللّٰهَ
يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ فِيْ مَا هُمْ فِيْهِ يَخْتَلِفُوْنَ ۗ
إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَهْدِيْ مَنْ هُوَ كٰذِبٌ كَفَّارٌ ③

4 If Allāh desired to take a son to Himself, He could have chosen those He pleased out of those whom He has created—[2155] Glory be to Him! He is Allāh, the One, the Subduer (of all).

لَوْ أَرَادَ اللّٰهُ أَنْ يَّتَّخِذَ وَلَدًا لَّاصْطَفٰى
مِمَّا يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ ۙ سُبْحٰنَهٗ ۗ هُوَ اللّٰهُ
الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ ④

5 He has created the heavens and the earth with truth; He makes the

خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ ۚ

2154 All worshippers of false deities pretend that such deities are worshipped only to get nearer to God, as if God Himself were unapproachable. The idol-worshippers say that the idols are only symbols for concentration on God, while the Christians, plainly spoken of in the next verse, hold that without the Son they can have no access to God. But undue reverence of created things is a step leading to degradation of human nature. Hence it is that Islām requires sincere obedience to, or worship of, God alone.

2155 We find the Christian doctrine referred to and refuted in very early Makkan revelations, such as the 19th chapter, which was recited by the Muslim refugees in Abyssinia before the Negus, in or about the fifth year of the Prophet's mission. The Qur'ān refers to the error of attributing a son to the Divine Being almost as frequently as to the setting up of idols. It is pointed out here that no one holds a relation of sonship to Allāh, but that it is His chosen servants that are metaphorically called His sons, because in being manifestations of the Divine attributes they stand to Allāh in the same relation as a son stands to a father, being images of His attributes as a son is the image of a father.

night cover the day and makes the day overtake the night, and He has made the sun and the moon subservient ; each one moves on to an assigned term. Now surely He is the Mighty, the Forgiver.

يُكَوِّرُ الَّيْلَ عَلَى النَّهَارِ وَيُكَوِّرُ النَّهَارَ عَلَى الَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ ۖ كُلٌّ يَّجْرِىْ لِاَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۗ اَلَا هُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْغَفَّارُ ۝٥

6 He created you from a single being, then made its mate of the same (kind). And He sent down for you eight of the cattle in pairs.[2156] He creates you in the wombs of your mothers — creation after creation — in triple darkness. That is Allāh, your Lord ; His is the kingdom. There is no God but He. How are you then turned away ?

خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ نَّفْسٍ وَّاحِدَةٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَاَنْزَلَ لَكُمْ مِّنَ الْاَنْعَامِ ثَمٰنِيَةَ اَزْوَاجٍ ۗ يَخْلُقُكُمْ فِىْ بُطُوْنِ اُمَّهٰتِكُمْ خَلْقًا مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ خَلْقٍ فِىْ ظُلُمٰتٍ ثَلٰثٍ ۗ ذٰلِكُمُ اللّٰهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ ۗ لَاۤ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۚ فَاَنّٰى تُصْرَفُوْنَ ۝٦

7 If you are ungrateful, then surely Allāh is above need of you. And He likes not ungratefulness in His servants. And if you are grateful, He likes it for you. And no bearer of a burden will bear another's burden. Then to your Lord is your return, then will He inform you of what you did. Surely He is Knower of what is in the breasts.

اِنْ تَكْفُرُوْا فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَنِىٌّ عَنْكُمْ ۟ وَلَا يَرْضٰى لِعِبَادِهِ الْكُفْرَ ۚ وَاِنْ تَشْكُرُوْا يَرْضَهُ لَكُمْ ۗ وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِّزْرَ اُخْرٰى ۗ ثُمَّ اِلٰى رَبِّكُمْ مَّرْجِعُكُمْ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ۗ اِنَّهٗ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ ۝٧

8 And when distress afflicts a man he calls upon his Lord, turning to Him ; then when He grants him a favour from Him, he forgets that for which he called upon Him before, and sets up rivals to Allāh that he may cause (men) to stray from His path. Say : Enjoy thine ungratefulness for a little, surely thou art of the companions of the Fire.

وَاِذَا مَسَّ الْاِنْسَانَ ضُرٌّ دَعَا رَبَّهٗ مُنِيْبًا اِلَيْهِ ثُمَّ اِذَا خَوَّلَهٗ نِعْمَةً مِّنْهُ نَسِىَ مَا كَانَ يَدْعُوْۤا اِلَيْهِ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَجَعَلَ لِلّٰهِ اَنْدَادًا لِّيُضِلَّ عَنْ سَبِيْلِهٖ ۗ قُلْ تَمَتَّعْ بِكُفْرِكَ قَلِيْلًا ۖ اِنَّكَ مِنْ اَصْحٰبِ النَّارِ ۝٨

2156 The word *anzala* (infinitive noun *inzāl*) is not applied only to the actual *sending down* of a thing, but also to ***making** it accessible to men. Inzāl* means *īṣāl* or *iblāgh* (R), just as iron (57 : 25) and clothing (7 : 26) are spoken of as having been sent down. It is in this sense that the cattle are spoken of here as being *sent down* for men. The eight of the cattle are the four pairs spoken of in 6 : 144. The four animals are mentioned particularly as being most useful for man.

9 Is he who is obedient during hours of the night, prostrating himself and standing, taking care of the Hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Lord— ? Say: Are those who know and those who know not alike? Only men of understanding mind.

أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَانِتٌ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَّ
قَائِمًا يَّحْذَرُ الْاٰخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُوْا رَحْمَةَ
رَبِّهٖ ۭ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِيْنَ
يَعْلَمُوْنَ وَالَّذِيْنَ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ۭ اِنَّمَا
يَتَذَكَّرُ اُولُوا الْاَلْبَابِ ﴿٩﴾

SECTION 2: **Believers and Disbelievers**

10 Say: O My servants who believe; keep your duty to your Lord. For those who do good in this world is good, and Allāh's earth is spacious.[2157] Truly the steadfast will be paid their reward without measure.

قُلْ يٰعِبَادِ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوْا رَبَّكُمْ ۭ
لِلَّذِيْنَ اَحْسَنُوْا فِيْ هٰذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ ۭ
وَاَرْضُ اللّٰهِ وَاسِعَةٌ ۭ اِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى
الصّٰبِرُوْنَ اَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿١٠﴾

11 Say: I am commanded to serve Allāh, being sincere to Him in obedience,

قُلْ اِنِّيْٓ اُمِرْتُ اَنْ اَعْبُدَ اللّٰهَ مُخْلِصًا
لَّهُ الدِّيْنَ ﴿١١﴾

12 And I am commanded to be the first of those who submit.

وَاُمِرْتُ لِاَنْ اَكُوْنَ اَوَّلَ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 Say: I fear, if I disobey my Lord, the chastisement of a grevious day.

قُلْ اِنِّيْٓ اَخَافُ اِنْ عَصَيْتُ رَبِّيْ
عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيْمٍ ﴿١٣﴾

14 Say: Allāh I serve, being sincere to Him in my obedience.

قُلِ اللّٰهَ اَعْبُدُ مُخْلِصًا لَّهٗ دِيْنِيْ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Serve then what you will beside Him. Say: The losers surely are those who lose themselves and their people on the day of Resurrection. Now surely that is the manifest loss!

فَاعْبُدُوْا مَا شِئْتُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِهٖ ۭ قُلْ
اِنَّ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ الَّذِيْنَ خَسِرُوْٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ
وَاَهْلِيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۭ اَلَا ذٰلِكَ هُوَ
الْخُسْرَانُ الْمُبِيْنُ ﴿١٥﴾

16 They shall have coverings of fire above them and coverings beneath them. With that Allāh makes His servants to fear; so keep your duty to Me, O My servants.

لَهُمْ مِّنْ فَوْقِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ مِّنَ النَّارِ وَ
مِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ ۭ ذٰلِكَ يُخَوِّفُ اللّٰهُ
بِهٖ عِبَادَهٗ ۭ يٰعِبَادِ فَاتَّقُوْنِ ﴿١٦﴾

2157 The words are a comfort to the Muslims, who were subjected to sufferings in their own land, and give them the assurance that, if suppressed in one land, Islām will prosper in other lands.

17 And those who eschew the worship of the idols and turn to Allāh, for them is good news. So give good news to My servants,

وَالَّذِينَ اجْتَنَبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ أَن يَعْبُدُوهَا وَأَنَابُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَىٰ ۚ فَبَشِّرْ عِبَادِ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Who listen to the Word, then follow the best of it. Such are they whom Allāh has guided, and such are the men of understanding.

الَّذِينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَاهُمُ اللَّهُ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمْ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٨﴾

19 He against whom the sentence of chastisement is due — canst thou save him who is in the Fire ?

أَفَمَنْ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِ كَلِمَةُ الْعَذَابِ ط أَفَأَنتَ تُنقِذُ مَن فِي النَّارِ ﴿١٩﴾

20 But those who keep their duty to their Lord, for them are high places,[2159] above them higher places, built (for them), wherein rivers flow. (It is) the promise of Allāh. Allāh fails not in (His) promise.

لَٰكِنِ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ غُرَفٌ مِّن فَوْقِهَا غُرَفٌ مَّبْنِيَّةٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ۖ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ ط لَا يُخْلِفُ اللَّهُ الْمِيعَادَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Seest thou not that Allāh sends down water from the clouds, then makes it go down into the earth in springs, then brings forth therewith herbage of various hues; then it withers so that thou seest it turn yellow, then He makes it chaff ?[2160] Surely there is a reminder in this for men of understanding.

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَنزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَسَلَكَهُ يَنَابِيعَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُ بِهِ زَرْعًا مُّخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهُ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ فَتَرَاهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَجْعَلُهُ حُطَامًا ط إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَذِكْرَىٰ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٢١﴾

2159 This shows that in the Hereafter, and in this life as well, there is an unceasing progress, for the high places to which the righteous attain have places still higher above them.

2160 The allusion is to the fate of nations; they are brought into existence, made to rise, then decay and are swept out of existence. Even the Muslim nations are subject to the same law, but Islām itself, being a law of life, is not subject to decay. The place of one nation that decays is taken by another. Moreover, nations that decay because of their transgressions may again be raised to life by turning to righteousness.

SECTION 3 : **A Perfect Guidance**

22 Is he whose breast Allāh has opened to Islām so that he follows a light from his Lord—? So woe to those whose hearts are hardened against the remembrance of Allāh! Such are in clear error.

أَفَمَنْ شَرَحَ اللَّهُ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ فَهُوَ عَلَىٰ نُورٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ ۚ فَوَيْلٌ لِلْقَاسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ مِنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 Allāh has revealed the best announcement, a Book consistent, repeating (its injunctions),[2161] whereat do shudder the skins of those who fear their Lord, then their skins and their hearts soften to Allāh's remembrance. This is Allāh's guidance—He guides with it whom He pleases. And he whom Allāh leaves in error, there is no guide for him.

اللَّهُ نَزَّلَ أَحْسَنَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابًا مُتَشَابِهًا مَثَانِيَ تَقْشَعِرُّ مِنْهُ جُلُودُ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ ثُمَّ تَلِينُ جُلُودُهُمْ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُدَى اللَّهِ يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Is then he who has to guard himself with his own person against the evil chastisement on the Resurrection day—? And it will be said to the iniquitous: Taste what you earned.

أَفَمَنْ يَتَّقِي بِوَجْهِهِ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۚ وَقِيلَ لِلظَّالِمِينَ ذُوقُوا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 Those before them denied, so the chastisement came to them from whence they perceived not.

كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَأَتَاهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 So Allāh made them taste disgrace in this world's life, and certainly the chastisement of the Hereafter is greater. Did they but know!

فَأَذَاقَهُمُ اللَّهُ الْخِزْيَ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَعَذَابُ الْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ ۚ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

2161 The Qur'ān is here spoken of as being *mutashābih* and *mathānī*. The first word means *that which is conformable in its various parts* (LL). This claim is by no means insignificant. The Qur'ān was revealed by portions during a period of twenty-three years, and during this period the circumstances under which the Holy Prophet lived were of such a varied nature that the history of no other man offers a similar combination of varying circumstances. Yet, through all these vicissitudes, the Qur'ān shows a strict uniformity. The conformability of its various parts, however, signifies more than a mere uniformity; it signifies that some parts explain other parts. *Mutashābih*, it should be noted, signifies, according to the best authorities, that *some parts of it verify other parts*. Again, it is called *mathānī*, pl. of *mathnā*, which means *repeated* or *repeating*. It is given this name because it repeats over and over again the most important subjects, especially the Unity of the Divine Being and the accountability of human actions. See also 387.

27 And certainly We have set forth for men in this Qur'ān similitudes of every sort that they may mind.[2162]

وَلَقَدْ ضَرَبْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِيْ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنِ
مِنْ كُلِّ مَثَلٍ لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 An Arabic Qur'ān without any crookedness, that they may guard against evil.

قُرْاٰنًا عَرَبِيًّا غَيْرَ ذِيْ عِوَجٍ لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُوْنَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 Allāh sets forth a parable: A man belonging to partners differing with one another, and a man (devoted) wholly to one man. Are the two alike in condition? Praise be to Allāh! Nay, most of them know not.

ضَرَبَ اللّٰهُ مَثَلًا رَّجُلًا فِيْهِ شُرَكَآءُ
مُتَشٰكِسُوْنَ وَرَجُلًا سَلَمًا لِّرَجُلٍ ؕ
هَلْ يَسْتَوِيٰنِ مَثَلًا ؕ اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ ۚ
بَلْ اَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 Surely thou wilt die and they (too) will die;

اِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَّاِنَّهُمْ مَّيِّتُوْنَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 Then surely on the day of Resurrection you will contend one with another before your Lord.

ثُمَّ اِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ عِنْدَ
رَبِّكُمْ تَخْتَصِمُوْنَ ﴿٣١﴾

PART XXIV

SECTION 4: **Rejectors will be Abased**

32 Who is then more unjust than he who utters a lie against Allāh and denies the truth, when it comes to him? Is there not in hell an abode for the disbelievers?

فَمَنْ اَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَذَبَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ
وَكَذَّبَ بِالصِّدْقِ اِذْ جَآءَهٗ ؕ اَلَيْسَ
فِيْ جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 And he who brings the truth and accepts the truth — such are the dutiful.

وَالَّذِيْ جَآءَ بِالصِّدْقِ وَصَدَّقَ بِهٖٓ
اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُوْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 They shall have with their Lord what they please. Such is the reward of the doers of good —

لَهُمْ مَّا يَشَآءُوْنَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ؕ ذٰلِكَ
جَزٰٓؤُا الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 That Allāh may ward off from them the worst of what they did, and give them their reward for the best of what they did.[2162a]

لِيُكَفِّرَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُمْ اَسْوَاَ الَّذِيْ عَمِلُوْا
وَيَجْزِيَهُمْ اَجْرَهُمْ بِاَحْسَنِ الَّذِيْ
كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٣٥﴾

2162 The Holy Qur'ān repeatedly claims to be a complete collection of the best teachings for the moral and spiritual welfare of man. Here it claims to be a perfect book, as not only containing all the necessary teachings, but also answering all the objections of its opponents; see 1467 and 1785.

2162a The Holy Qur'ān brought about an unprecedented revolution in the

36 Is not Allāh sufficient for His servant? And they seek to frighten thee with those besides Him.[2163] And whomsoever Allāh leaves in error, there is no guide for him.

أَلَيْسَ اللّٰهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهٗ ۖ وَيُخَوِّفُوْنَكَ بِالَّذِيْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِهٖ ۚ وَمَنْ يُّضْلِلِ اللّٰهُ فَمَا لَهٗ مِنْ هَادٍ ﴿۳۶﴾

37 And whom Allāh guides, there is none that can lead him astray. Is not Allāh Mighty, the Lord of retribution?

وَمَنْ يَّهْدِ اللّٰهُ فَمَا لَهٗ مِنْ مُّضِلٍّ ۗ أَلَيْسَ اللّٰهُ بِعَزِيْزٍ ذِي انْتِقَامٍ ﴿۳۷﴾

38. And if thou ask them, Who created the heavens and the earth? They will say: Allāh. Say: See you then that those you call upon besides Allāh, would they, if Allāh desire to afflict me with harm, remove His harm? Or if He desire to show me mercy, could they withhold His mercy? Say: Allāh is sufficient for me. On Him do the reliant rely.

وَلَئِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُوْلُنَّ اللّٰهُ ۗ قُلْ أَفَرَءَيْتُمْ مَّا تَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ إِنْ أَرَادَنِيَ اللّٰهُ بِضُرٍّ هَلْ هُنَّ كٰشِفٰتُ ضُرِّهٖ أَوْ أَرَادَنِيْ بِرَحْمَةٍ هَلْ هُنَّ مُمْسِكٰتُ رَحْمَتِهٖ ۗ قُلْ حَسْبِيَ اللّٰهُ ۗ عَلَيْهِ يَتَوَكَّلُ الْمُتَوَكِّلُوْنَ ﴿۳۸﴾

39 Say: O my people, work in your place. Surely I am a worker, so you will come to know,

قُلْ يٰقَوْمِ اعْمَلُوْا عَلٰى مَكَانَتِكُمْ إِنِّيْ عَامِلٌ ۚ فَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۳۹﴾

40 Who it is to whom there comes a chastisement abasing him, and on whom falls a lasting chastisement.[2164]

مَنْ يَّأْتِيْهِ عَذَابٌ يُّخْزِيْهِ وَيَحِلُّ عَلَيْهِ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيْمٌ ﴿۴۰﴾

41 Surely We have revealed to thee the Book with truth for (the good of) men. So whoever follows the right way, it is for his own soul, and whoever errs, he errs only to its detriment. And thou art not a custodian over them.

إِنَّآ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ لِلنَّاسِ بِالْحَقِّ ۚ فَمَنِ اهْتَدٰى فَلِنَفْسِهٖ ۚ وَمَنْ ضَلَّ فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا ۚ وَمَآ أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِوَكِيْلٍ ﴿۴۱﴾

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world. People who took pride in doing evil deeds now aspired to deeds of righteousness. They were thus turned away from the worst deeds to the best. This verse prophetically refers to this great change.

2163 The superstitious Arabs no doubt believed that their idols could do harm to men who did not admit their authority.

2164 Two kinds of punishment are plainly spoken of, viz., the punishment that will bring disgrace, which is clearly the punishment of this life, and the lasting punishment that the wicked receive in the life after death. The first of these demonstrates the truth of the other.

SECTION 5 : **Punishment cannot be Averted**

42. Allāh takes (men's) souls at the time of their death, and those that die not, during their sleep. Then He withholds those on whom He has passed the decree of death[2165] and sends the others back till an appointed term. Surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect.

اَللّٰهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْاَنْفُسَ حِيْنَ مَوْتِهَا
وَالَّتِيْ لَمْ تَمُتْ فِيْ مَنَامِهَا ۚ فَيُمْسِكُ
الَّتِيْ قَضٰى عَلَيْهَا الْمَوْتَ وَيُرْسِلُ
الْاُخْرٰٓى اِلٰٓى اَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ؕ اِنَّ فِيْ
ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَّتَفَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 Or, take they intercessors besides Allāh ? Say : What ! Even though they control naught, nor do they understand.

اَمِ اتَّخَذُوْا مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ شُفَعَآءَ ؕ
قُلْ اَوَلَوْ كَانُوْا لَا يَمْلِكُوْنَ
شَيْـًٔا وَّلَا يَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 Say : Allāh's is the intercession altogether. His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. Then to Him you will be returned.

قُلْ لِّلّٰهِ الشَّفَاعَةُ جَمِيْعًا ؕ لَهٗ مُلْكُ
السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ؕ ثُمَّ اِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُوْنَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 And when Allāh alone is mentioned, the hearts of those who believe not in the Hereafter shrink, and when those besides Him are mentioned, lo ! they are joyful.[2166]

وَاِذَا ذُكِرَ اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهُ اشْمَاَزَّتْ
قُلُوْبُ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِالْاٰخِرَةِ ۚ
وَاِذَا ذُكِرَ الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِهٖٓ
اِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُوْنَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 Say : O Allāh, Originator of the heavens and the earth, Knower of the unseen and the seen, Thou judgest between Thy servants as to that wherein they differ.

قُلِ اللّٰهُمَّ فَاطِرَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ
عٰلِمَ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ اَنْتَ تَحْكُمُ
بَيْنَ عِبَادِكَ فِيْ مَا كَانُوْا فِيْهِ يَخْتَلِفُوْنَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And had those who do wrong all that is in the earth and the like of it with it, they would certainly offer

وَلَوْ اَنَّ لِلَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا مَا فِي الْاَرْضِ
جَمِيْعًا وَّمِثْلَهٗ مَعَهٗ لَافْتَدَوْا بِهٖ

2165 It is clear that it is not the animal soul that is taken away in sleep ; it is the soul that stands for human consciousness. In death both are taken away. The statement further makes it clear that the word *tawaffā* is applied to the taking of the soul and not to the removal of the body from one place to another. See also 1659 and 1731.

2166 Elsewhere the Holy Qur'ān says: "And most of them believe not in Allāh without associating others with Him" (12:106).

it as ransom from the evil of the chastisement on the day of Resurrection. And what they never thought of shall become plain to them from Allāh.[2166a]

مِنْ سُوْٓءِ الْعَذَابِ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۭ وَبَدَا لَهُمْ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُوْنُوْا يَحْتَسِبُوْنَ ﴿۴۷﴾

48 And the evil of what they wrought will become plain to them,[2167] and that which they mocked at will beset them.

وَبَدَا لَهُمْ سَيِّاٰتُ مَا كَسَبُوْا وَحَاقَ بِهِمْ مَّا كَانُوْا بِهٖ يَسْتَهْزِءُوْنَ ﴿۴۸﴾

49 So when harm afflicts a man he calls upon Us; then, when We give him a boon from Us, he says: I have been given it only by means of knowledge. Nay, it is a trial, but most of them know not.

فَاِذَا مَسَّ الْاِنْسَانَ ضُرٌّ دَعَانَا ۡ ثُمَّ اِذَا خَوَّلْنٰهُ نِعْمَةً مِّنَّا ۙ قَالَ اِنَّمَآ اُوْتِيْتُهٗ عَلٰى عِلْمٍ ۭ بَلْ هِيَ فِتْنَةٌ وَّلٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۴۹﴾

50 Those before them did say it indeed, but what they earned availed them not.

قَدْ قَالَهَا الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَمَآ اَغْنٰى عَنْهُمْ مَّا كَانُوْا يَكْسِبُوْنَ ﴿۵۰﴾

51 So there befell them the evil which they had earned. And those who are unjust from among these, there shall befall them the evil which they earn, and they shall not escape.[2168]

فَاَصَابَهُمْ سَيِّاٰتُ مَا كَسَبُوْا ۭ وَالَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا مِنْ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ سَيُصِيْبُهُمْ سَيِّاٰتُ مَا كَسَبُوْا ۙ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُعْجِزِيْنَ ﴿۵۱﴾

52 Know they not that Allāh gives ample subsistence to whom He pleases, and He straitens; surely there are signs in this for a people who believe.

اَوَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۭ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُّؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿۵۲﴾ ع

2166a *What they never thought of* signifies the overthrow of their power in this life and the manifestation of the evil consequences of their deeds in the Hereafter.

2167 The fact that the heaven and hell of the next life are only manifestations of the spiritual realities of this life is stated here in clear language. The evil consequences of what they do are hidden from the eye in this life, but they shall *become plain* in the next life.

2168 Wonderful indeed is the certainty of the tone in which these prophecies are worded, when all around there was not a single ray of hope for Islām, and its enemies were in the ascendant.

SECTION 6 : **Divine Mercy**

53 Say : O My servants who have been prodigal regarding their souls, despair not of the mercy of Allāh ; surely Allāh forgives sins altogether. He is indeed the Forgiving, the Merciful.[2169]

قُلْ يٰعِبَادِىَ الَّذِيْنَ اَسْرَفُوْا عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوْا مِنْ رَّحْمَةِ اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ جَمِيْعًا ؕ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 And turn to your Lord and submit to Him before chastisement comes to you, then you will not be helped.

وَاَنِيْبُوْٓا اِلٰى رَبِّكُمْ وَاَسْلِمُوْا لَهٗ مِنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّاْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنْصَرُوْنَ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 And follow the best[2170] that has been revealed to you from your Lord before chastisement comes to you all of a sudden, while you perceive not—

وَاتَّبِعُوْٓا اَحْسَنَ مَآ اُنْزِلَ اِلَيْكُمْ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّاْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ بَغْتَةً وَّاَنْتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُوْنَ ﴿٥٥﴾

56 Lest a soul should say : O woe is me, that I fell short of my duty to Allāh ! and surely I was of those who laughed to scorn ;

اَنْ تَقُوْلَ نَفْسٌ يّٰحَسْرَتٰى عَلٰى مَا فَرَّطْتُّ فِىْ جَنْۢبِ اللّٰهِ وَاِنْ كُنْتُ لَمِنَ السّٰخِرِيْنَ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 Or it should say : Had Allāh guided me, I should have been dutiful ;

اَوْ تَقُوْلَ لَوْ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ هَدٰىنِىْ لَكُنْتُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 Or it should say, when it sees the chastisement : Had I another chance I should be a doer of good.

اَوْ تَقُوْلَ حِيْنَ تَرَى الْعَذَابَ لَوْ اَنَّ لِىْ كَرَّةً فَاَكُوْنَ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 Aye ! My communications came to thee, but thou didst reject them, and wast proud and wast of the disbelievers.

بَلٰى قَدْ جَآءَتْكَ اٰيٰتِىْ فَكَذَّبْتَ بِهَا وَاسْتَكْبَرْتَ وَكُنْتَ مِنَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 And on the day of Resurrection thou wilt see those who lied against

وَيَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ تَرَى الَّذِيْنَ كَذَبُوْا

2169 Stress is laid on the mercy and love of Allāh in all religions, but these great Divine attributes find their true and final expression in Islām. No religion gives the solace and comfort which we find in this verse. It discloses the all-comprehensive mercy of Allāh, before which the sins of men become quite insignificant.

2170 *Aḥsan*, or *best*, stands for the revelation of the Qur'ān. God has ever been revealing His will to men, but the Qur'ān, being the final expression of His will, is the best revelation that has been sent to men.

Allāh, their faces will be blackened. Is there not in hell an abode for the proud ?

عَلَى اللّٰهِ وُجُوْهُهُمْ مُّسْوَدَّةٌ ۭ اَلَيْسَ فِيْ جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْمُتَكَبِّرِيْنَ ۝٦٠

61 And Allāh delivers those who keep their duty with their achievement —evil touches them not, nor do they grieve.

وَيُنَجِّي اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا بِمَفَازَتِهِمْ ۡ لَا يَمَسُّهُمُ السُّوْٓءُ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ ۝٦١

62 Allāh is the Creator of all things and He has charge over everything.

اَللّٰهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ۡ وَّهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَّكِيْلٌ ۝٦٢

63 His are the treasures of the heavens and the earth. And those who disbelieve in the messages of Allāh, such are the losers.

لَهٗ مَقَالِيْدُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۭ وَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُوْنَ ۝٦٣

SECTION 7 : **The Final Judgment**

64 Say : Do you bid me serve others than Allāh, O ye ignorant ones?

قُلْ اَفَغَيْرَ اللّٰهِ تَاْمُرُوْٓنِّيْٓ اَعْبُدُ اَيُّهَا الْجٰهِلُوْنَ ۝٦٤

65 And certainly, it has been revealed to thee and to those before thee : If thou associate (with Allāh), thy work would certainly come to naught and thou wouldst be a loser.

وَلَقَدْ اُوْحِيَ اِلَيْكَ وَاِلَى الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ ۚ لَئِنْ اَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ ۝٦٥

66 Nay, but serve Allāh alone and be of the thankful.

بَلِ اللّٰهَ فَاعْبُدْ وَكُنْ مِّنَ الشّٰكِرِيْنَ ۝٦٦

67 And they honour not Allāh with the honour due to Him ; and the whole earth will be in His grip on the day of Resurrection and the heavens rolled up in His right hand. Glory be to Him ! and highly exalted is He above what they associate (with Him).

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهٖ ۖ وَالْاَرْضُ جَمِيْعًا قَبْضَتُهٗ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ وَالسَّمٰوٰتُ مَطْوِيّٰتٌ بِيَمِيْنِهٖ ۭ سُبْحٰنَهٗ وَتَعٰلٰى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُوْنَ ۝٦٧

68 And the trumpet is blown, so all those in the heavens and all those in the earth will swoon, except such as Allāh please. Then it will be blown

وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّوْرِ فَصَعِقَ مَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْاَرْضِ اِلَّا مَنْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ ۭ ثُمَّ نُفِخَ فِيْهِ اُخْرٰى

again, when lo! they stand up, awaiting.[2170a]

فَإِذَا هُمْ قِيَامٌ يَّنْظُرُوْنَ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 And the earth beams with the light of its Lord, and the Book is laid down, and the prophets and the witnesses are brought up, and judgment is given between them with justice, and they are not wronged.[2170b]

وَ اَشْرَقَتِ الْاَرْضُ بِنُوْرِ رَبِّهَا وَ وُضِعَ الْكِتٰبُ وَجِايْٓءَ بِالنَّبِيّٖنَ وَالشُّهَدَآءِ وَ قُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَ هُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 And every soul is paid back fully for what it did, and He knows best what they do.

وَ وُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ وَ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَفْعَلُوْنَ ﴿٧٠﴾

SECTION 8: **Each Party meets with its Desert**

71 And those who disbelieve are driven to hell in companies; until, when they come to it, its doors are opened, and the keepers of it say to them: Did not there come to you messengers from among you reciting to you the messages of your Lord and warning you of the meeting of this day of yours? They say: Yea. But the word of punishment proved true against the disbelievers.

وَسِيْقَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اِلٰى جَهَنَّمَ زُمَرًا ؕ حَتّٰٓى اِذَا جَآءُوْهَا فُتِحَتْ اَبْوَابُهَا وَ قَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَآ اَلَمْ يَاْتِكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنْكُمْ يَتْلُوْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ اٰيٰتِ رَبِّكُمْ وَ يُنْذِرُوْنَكُمْ لِقَآءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هٰذَا ؕ قَالُوْا بَلٰى وَ لٰكِنْ حَقَّتْ كَلِمَةُ الْعَذَابِ عَلَى الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٧١﴾

72 It is said: Enter the gates of hell to abide therein; so evil is the abode of the proud.

قِيْلَ ادْخُلُوْٓا اَبْوَابَ جَهَنَّمَ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ۚ فَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى الْمُتَكَبِّرِيْنَ ﴿٧٢﴾

2170a For the *Ṣūr*, see 789. Here it is stated that the trumpet is blown twice. At the first blowing all swoon, and at the second blowing they all stand up, awaiting to receive the judgment. A general destruction is thus followed by a resurrection. In the case of the spiritual resurrection, the destruction signifies the destruction of the old order.

2170b The beaming of the earth with the light of its Lord in the Resurrection is in reference to the clear manifestation of the consequences of the deeds which remain generally hidden in this life. The laying down of the Book refers to the passing of the judgment on the good and the evil according to their deserts. The prophets and the witnesses are brought up, these being the people who sow the seeds of virtue and turn men's minds to God. Prophets were sent to every nation, and the followers of the Prophet Muhammad, who take the place of the previous prophets in turning men's minds to God, are the witnesses spoken of here; they are specially mentioned by this name in 2: 143. A deeper reference to the spiritual resurrection is evident throughout.

73 And those who keep their duty to their Lord are conveyed to the Garden in companies until when they come to it, and its doors are opened and the keepers of it say to them: Peace be to you! you led pure lives; so enter it to abide.

وَسِيْقَ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ اِلَى الْجَنَّةِ
زُمَرًا ؕ حَتّٰۤى اِذَا جَآءُوْهَا وَفُتِحَتْ
اَبْوَابُهَا وَقَالَ لَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا سَلٰمٌ
عَلَيْكُمْ طِبْتُمْ فَادْخُلُوْهَا خٰلِدِيْنَ ﴿۷۳﴾

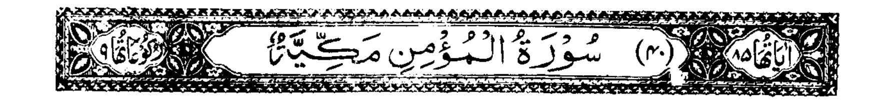
74 And they say: Praise be to Allāh! Who has made good to us His promise, and He has made us inherit the land; we abide in the Garden where we please.[2170c] So goodly is the reward of the workers.

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِيْ صَدَقَنَا
وَعْدَهٗ وَاَوْرَثَنَا الْاَرْضَ نَتَبَوَّاُ مِنَ
الْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ نَشَآءُ ۚ فَنِعْمَ اَجْرُ الْعٰمِلِيْنَ ﴿۷۴﴾

75 And thou seest the angels going round about the Throne of Power, glorifying their Lord with praise. And they are judged with justice, and it is said: Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds!

وَتَرَى الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ حَآفِّيْنَ مِنْ حَوْلِ
الْعَرْشِ يُسَبِّحُوْنَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ
وَقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَقِيْلَ الْحَمْدُ
لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿۷۵﴾

2170c Never was prophecy uttered in clearer terms, nor in more adverse circumstances. The day must come, we are here told, when the believers will praise God for making them inherit the land. Within fifteen years of this prophecy they were made masters of Arabia, and within another five they were made to inherit the Holy Land. Note, further, how the prophecies of triumph in this life are combined with the Resurrection in which the righteous are to receive the mighty spiritual blessings in full manifestation.



CHAPTER 40

Al-Mu'min: THE BELIEVER

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 9 *sections*; 85 *verses*)

The title of this chapter, *Al-Mu'min*, or *The Believer*, is taken from the mention of a *believer* in Moses from among Pharaoh's people (v. 28). This man pleaded for Moses, when Pharaoh wanted to kill him, and drew attention to the fact that, if Moses preached the truth, no opposition to him could prosper.

From this, the 40th, to the 46th chapter, there is a group of seven chapters which all begin with *Ḥā Mīm*, and are therefore called *Āl Ḥā Mīm*, i.e., the chapters beginning with *Ḥā Mīm*. They all belong to the period when opposition to the Holy Prophet was very bitter, and active persecution of the Muslims had begun, which culminated in their first flight to Abyssinia; and they belong to the middle Makkan period. All these chapters are further akin inasmuch as they all offer a solace to the persecuted Muslims, warn the persecutors, and foretell the triumph of truth and the failure of opposition. In fact, the failure of the opposing forces is the chief theme of these chapters; this is made plain by a saying of the Holy Prophet, for which see 2171. There is not much of the history of the earlier prophets, with the exception of Moses and Abraham, and bare references to others or the fate of their people. The Unity and the Power of Allāh is the constant theme, and there are frequent appeals to the disbelievers to take advantage of Divine mercy.

This chapter opens with a statement relating to the Divine plan for the protection of the faithful, who are told that they should not be misled by the power of the opponents, which will soon be broken. The second section continues the subject, only laying greater stress upon the failure of the opponents and the approach of their doom, when they would be perfectly helpless. The next three sections repeat the warning with reference to Moses' history. The sixth states that the prophets of God and the believers in them are always assisted against their opponents, while the seventh calls attention to the great power of Allāh, with Whom nothing is impossible. The last two sections again deal with the end of opposition, repeatedly warning the disbelievers.

SECTION 1 **Protection of the Faithful**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

1 Beneficent God![2171]

حٰمٓ ﴿١﴾

2 The revelation of the Book is from Allāh, the Mighty, the Knowing,

تَنْزِيْلُ الْكِتٰبِ مِنَ اللّٰهِ الْعَزِيْزِ الْعَلِيْمِ ﴿٢﴾

3 Forgiver of sin and Acceptor of repentence, Severe to punish, Lord of bounty.[2172] There is no God but He; to Him is the eventual coming.

غَافِرِ الذَّنْبِ وَقَابِلِ التَّوْبِ شَدِيْدِ الْعِقَابِ ذِي الطَّوْلِ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ اِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿٣﴾

4 None dispute concerning the messages of Allāh but those who disbelieve, so let not their control in the land deceive thee.

مَا يُجَادِلُ فِيْٓ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا فَلَا يَغْرُرْكَ تَقَلُّبُهُمْ فِي الْبِلَادِ ﴿٤﴾

5 Before them the people of Noah and the parties after them rejected (prophets), and every nation purposed against its messenger to destroy him, and disputed by means of falsehood to render null thereby the truth, so I seized them; how (terrible) was then My retribution!

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوْحٍ وَّالْاَحْزَابُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ وَهَمَّتْ كُلُّ اُمَّةٍ بِرَسُوْلِهِمْ لِيَاْخُذُوْهُ وَجٰدَلُوْا بِالْبَاطِلِ لِيُدْحِضُوْا بِهِ الْحَقَّ فَاَخَذْتُهُمْ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عِقَابِ ﴿٥﴾

6 And thus did the word of thy Lord prove true against those who disbelieve that they are the companions of the Fire.

وَكَذٰلِكَ حَقَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اَنَّهُمْ اَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ ﴿٦﴾

2171 In a saying of the Holy Prophet occur the words: "If you are attacked by night, say *Ḥā Mīm*, they shall not be made victorious", where *ḥā mīm* is explained as meaning, *Allāhumma*, or *O Allāh!* (N, LL). I'Ab gives the following three interpretations: It is the great name of Allāh; it is an oath; the two letters are an abbreviation for al-Raḥmān, i.e., the Beneficent (IJ). They may be abbreviations as well for *Ḥamīd* (Praised), and *Majīd* (Glorious), or for *Ḥayy* (the Living), ***Qayyūm*** (the Self-Subsisting), or for *Raḥmān* (Beneficent) and *Raḥīm* (Merciful).

2172 Of the four attributes, the first two and the last refer to Divine forgiveness, mercy and bounty, while only one refers to punishment of evil, and thus the attribute of mercy preponderates even when punishment is spoken of.

7 Those who bear the Throne of Power and those around it celebrate the praise of their Lord and believe in Him and ask protection for those who believe :[2174] Our Lord, Thou embracest all things in mercy and knowledge,[2175] so protect those who turn (to Thee) and follow Thy way, and save them from the chastisement of hell.

اَلَّذِيْنَ يَحْمِلُوْنَ الْعَرْشَ وَمَنْ حَوْلَهٗ يُسَبِّحُوْنَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِهٖ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُوْنَ لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ۚ رَبَّنَا وَسِعْتَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ رَّحْمَةً وَّعِلْمًا فَاغْفِرْ لِلَّذِيْنَ تَابُوْا وَاتَّبَعُوْا سَبِيْلَكَ وَقِهِمْ عَذَابَ الْجَحِيْمِ ⑦

8 Our Lord, make them enter the Gardens of perpetuity, which Thou hast promised them and such of their fathers and their wives and their offspring as are good. Surely Thou art the Mighty, the Wise[2176] :

رَبَّنَا وَاَدْخِلْهُمْ جَنّٰتِ عَدْنِ ِالَّتِيْ وَعَدْتَّهُمْ وَمَنْ صَلَحَ مِنْ اٰبَآئِهِمْ وَاَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَذُرِّيّٰتِهِمْ ۭ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ⑧

9 And guard them from evil, and whom Thou guardest from evil this day, Thou hast indeed mercy on him. And that is the mighty achievement.

وَقِهِمُ السَّيِّاٰتِ ۭ وَمَنْ تَقِ السَّيِّاٰتِ يَوْمَئِذٍ فَقَدْ رَحِمْتَهٗ ۭ وَذٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيْمُ ⑨

SECTION 2 : **Failure of Opponents**

10 Those who disbelieve are told : Certainly Allāh's hatred (of you), when you were called upon to the faith and you rejected, was much greater than your hatred (now) of yourselves.[2177]

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا يُنَادَوْنَ لَمَقْتُ اللّٰهِ اَكْبَرُ مِنْ مَّقْتِكُمْ اَنْفُسَكُمْ اِذْ تُدْعَوْنَ اِلَى الْاِيْمَانِ فَتَكْفُرُوْنَ ⑩

2174 Those *who bear the 'arsh* or the Throne of Power are not the bearers of any material thing ; see 895 for *'Arsh*. Generally the words are explained as meaning angels, but see 895, where I have explained these words as meaning bearers of Divine messages, i.e., the prophets, while those around it are the faithful who, walking in the footsteps of the prophets, carry the Divine message to the world. See also 2555, where another explanation is given.

2175 Here we are told that Divine mercy is as comprehensive as Divine knowledge, and they both extend over all things. No other religion takes such a broad view of the mercy of the Divine Being.

2176 The wives and the offspring of the faithful, those of them who do good, are here mentioned as entering paradise along with them.

2177 The violent hatred referred to is the hatred of the evildoers for themselves, when the evil consequences of their evil deeds become manifest to them.

11 They say: Our Lord, twice hast Thou made us die, and twice hast Thou given us life,[2178] so we confess our sins. Is there then a way of escape?

قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَمَتَّنَا اثْنَتَيْنِ وَأَحْيَيْتَنَا اثْنَتَيْنِ فَاعْتَرَفْنَا بِذُنُوبِنَا فَهَلْ إِلَىٰ خُرُوجٍ مِّن سَبِيلٍ ﴿١١﴾

12 That is because when Allāh alone was called upon, you disbelieved, and when associates were given to Him, you believed.[2179] So judgment belongs to Allāh, the High, the Great.

ذَٰلِكُم بِأَنَّهُ إِذَا دُعِيَ اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ كَفَرْتُمْ ۖ وَإِن يُشْرَكْ بِهِ تُؤْمِنُوا ۚ فَالْحُكْمُ لِلَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْكَبِيرِ ﴿١٢﴾

13 He it is Who shows you His signs and sends down for you sustenance from heaven,[2180] and none minds but he who turns (to Him).

هُوَ الَّذِي يُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُنَزِّلُ لَكُم مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ رِزْقًا ۚ وَمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ إِلَّا مَن يُنِيبُ ﴿١٣﴾

14 So call upon Allāh, being sincere to Him in obedience, though the disbelievers are averse —

فَادْعُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Exalter of degrees, Lord of the Throne of Power, He makes the spirit to light by His command upon whom He pleases of His servants,[2181] that he may warn (men) of the day of Meeting—

رَفِيعُ الدَّرَجَاتِ ذُو الْعَرْشِ يُلْقِي الرُّوحَ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ لِيُنذِرَ يَوْمَ التَّلَاقِ ﴿١٥﴾

16 The day when they come forth. Nothing concerning them remains hidden from Allāh.[2182] To whom belongs the kingdom this day? To Allāh, the One, the Subduer (of all).

يَوْمَ هُم بَارِزُونَ ۖ لَا يَخْفَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ مِنْهُمْ شَيْءٌ ۚ لِّمَنِ الْمُلْكُ الْيَوْمَ ۖ لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ ﴿١٦﴾

17 This day every soul is rewarded what it has earned. No injustice this day! Surely Allāh is Swift in Reckoning.

الْيَوْمَ تُجْزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ ۚ لَا ظُلْمَ الْيَوْمَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ﴿١٧﴾

How much greater must have been the hatred of Allāh, the Fountain-head of purity, for them when they committed those deeds! How Forbearing and Merciful was He not to visit them with immediate punishment!

2178 The first state of death is the state of nothingness from which man is brought into existence, the second life being the life after death.

2179 In almost all the great religions at the advent of Islām, some kind of *shirk* was mixed with the doctrine of pure Unity to which Islām invited people.

2180 The meaning is simply that *God provides the means of sustenance*; or, the sustenance from heaven means the spiritual sustenance.

2181, 2182, see next page.

18 And warn them of the day that draws near,[2183] when hearts, grieving inwardly, rise up to the throats.[2184] The iniquitous will have no friend, nor any intercessor who should be obeyed.

وَأَنذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْآزِفَةِ إِذِ الْقُلُوبُ لَدَى الْحَنَاجِرِ كَاظِمِينَ ۚ مَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ حَمِيمٍ وَلَا شَفِيعٍ يُطَاعُ ﴿١٨﴾

19 He knows the dishonesty of eyes and that which the breasts conceal.

يَعْلَمُ خَائِنَةَ الْأَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِي الصُّدُورُ ﴿١٩﴾

20 And Allāh judges with truth. And those whom they call upon besides Him judge naught! Surely Allāh is the Hearing, the Seeing.

وَاللَّهُ يَقْضِي بِالْحَقِّ ۖ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِهِ لَا يَقْضُونَ بِشَيْءٍ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ﴿٢٠﴾

SECTION 3 : **A Warning in Moses' History**

21 Have they not travelled in the land and seen what was the end of those who were before them? Mightier than these were they in strength and in fortifications[2185] in the land, but Allāh destroyed them for their sins. And they had none to protect them from Allāh.

أَوَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۚ كَانُوا هُمْ أَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً وَآثَارًا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ لَهُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ مِن وَاقٍ ﴿٢١﴾

22 That was because there came to them their messengers with clear arguments, but they disbelieved, so Allāh destroyed them. Surely He is Strong, Severe in Retribution.

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانَت تَّأْتِيهِمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَكَفَرُوا فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّهُ قَوِيٌّ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٢٢﴾

2181 The *rūḥ* is here spoken of as being granted only to the elect, and the object is to warn men; hence *rūḥ* means the Divine revelation, not the soul which is given to every man. By the day of Meeting is meant the day of meeting with God.

2182 It is implied that the hidden consequences of the deeds will be made manifest on that day, for from Allāh nothing is hidden.

2183 *Āzifah* is from *azafa*, meaning *it drew near* (LL), and hence *yaum al-āzifah* is *the day that draws near*. It is the nearer punishment of this life that is spoken of here.

2184 The verse depicts the state of the hearts of the disbelievers on the day of their vanquishment.

2185 *Āthār* is plural of *athar*, which means *a mark*, and also *a monument* or *memorial of antiquity*. Here it is considered to signify *great buildings* and *fortifications* (JB).

23 And certainly We sent Moses with Our messages and clear authority,

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسٰى بِاٰيٰتِنَا وَسُلْطٰنٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 To Pharaoh and Hāmān and Korah,[2186] but they said: A lying enchanter!

اِلٰى فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامٰنَ وَقَارُوْنَ فَقَالُوْا سٰحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 So when he brought to them the Truth from Us, they said:[2187] Slay the sons of those who believe with him and keep their women alive. And the plot of the disbelievers is bound to fail.

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ بِالْحَقِّ مِنْ عِنْدِنَا قَالُوا اقْتُلُوْٓا اَبْنَآءَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مَعَهٗ وَاسْتَحْيُوْا نِسَآءَهُمْ ۭ وَمَا كَيْدُ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ اِلَّا فِيْ ضَلٰلٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 And Pharaoh said: Leave me to slay Moses and let him call upon his Lord. Surely I fear that he will change your religion or that he will make mischief to appear in the land.

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ ذَرُوْنِيْٓ اَقْتُلْ مُوْسٰى وَلْيَدْعُ رَبَّهٗ ۚ اِنِّيْٓ اَخَافُ اَنْ يُّبَدِّلَ دِيْنَكُمْ اَوْ اَنْ يُّظْهِرَ فِي الْاَرْضِ الْفَسَادَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And Moses said: Truly I seek refuge in my Lord and your Lord from every proud one who believes not in the day of Reckoning.

وَقَالَ مُوْسٰٓى اِنِّيْ عُذْتُ بِرَبِّيْ وَرَبِّكُمْ مِّنْ كُلِّ مُتَكَبِّرٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُ بِيَوْمِ الْحِسَابِ ﴿٢٧﴾

SECTION 4: **A Believer of Pharaoh's People**

28 And a believing man of Pharaoh's people, who hid his faith, said: Will you slay a man because he says, My Lord is Allāh, and indeed he has brought you clear arguments from your Lord? And if he be a liar, on him will be his lie, and if he be truthful, there will befall you some of that which he threatens you with. Surely Allāh guides not one who is a prodigal, a liar.[2188]

وَقَالَ رَجُلٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ ۖ مِّنْ اٰلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَكْتُمُ اِيْمَانَهٗٓ اَتَقْتُلُوْنَ رَجُلًا اَنْ يَّقُوْلَ رَبِّيَ اللّٰهُ وَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ مِنْ رَّبِّكُمْ ۭ وَاِنْ يَّكُ كَاذِبًا فَعَلَيْهِ كَذِبُهٗ ۚ وَاِنْ يَّكُ صَادِقًا يُّصِبْكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِيْ يَعِدُكُمْ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَهْدِيْ مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ كَذَّابٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

2186 The words do not indicate that the message to Pharaoh and Hāmān and Korah was given at one and the same time. All that is meant is that these three were the chief men who did not accept his message and they were destroyed. Of these Korah was an Israelite; see 1895.

2187 It is not meant that all the three persons mentioned in the previous verse met Moses with this reply. A perusal of the verses that follow will show that the speaker here is only Pharaoh, as advised by his chiefs, both he and Hāmān being mentioned by name, the latter in v. 36, while no mention is made of Korah.

2188 *Some of that* with which they are threatened will befall them, because

29 O my people, yours is the kingdom this day, being masters in the land, but who will help us against the punishment of Allāh, if it comes to us? Pharaoh said: I only show you that which I see and I guide you only to the right way.

يٰقَوْمِ لَكُمُ الْمُلْكُ الْيَوْمَ ظٰهِرِيْنَ فِي
الْاَرْضِ فَمَنْ يَّنْصُرُنَا مِنْۢ بَاْسِ
اللّٰهِ اِنْ جَآءَنَا ؕ قَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ مَآ
اُرِيْكُمْ اِلَّا مَآ اَرٰى وَمَآ اَهْدِيْكُمْ
اِلَّا سَبِيْلَ الرَّشَادِ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 And he who believed said: O my people, surely I fear for you the like of what befell the parties,[2189]

وَقَالَ الَّذِيْٓ اٰمَنَ يٰقَوْمِ اِنِّيْٓ اَخَافُ
عَلَيْكُمْ مِّثْلَ يَوْمِ الْاَحْزَابِ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 The like of what befell the people of Noah and 'Ād and Thamūd and those after them. And Allāh wishes no injustice for (His) servants.

مِثْلَ دَاْبِ قَوْمِ نُوْحٍ وَّعَادٍ وَّثَمُوْدَ
وَالَّذِيْنَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِهِمْ ؕ وَمَا اللّٰهُ
يُرِيْدُ ظُلْمًا لِّلْعِبَادِ ﴿٣١﴾

32 And, O my people, I fear for you the day of Calling out—[2190]

وَيٰقَوْمِ اِنِّيْٓ اَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ يَوْمَ التَّنَادِ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 The day on which you will turn back retreating, having none to save you from Allāh; and whomsoever Allāh leaves in error there is no guide for him.

يَوْمَ تُوَلُّوْنَ مُدْبِرِيْنَ ۚ مَا لَكُمْ مِّنَ
اللّٰهِ مِنْ عَاصِمٍ ۚ وَمَنْ يُّضْلِلِ اللّٰهُ
فَمَا لَهٗ مِنْ هَادٍ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 And Joseph indeed came to you before with clear arguments, but you ever remained in doubt as to what he brought you; until, when he died, you said: Allāh will never raise a messenger after him. Thus does Allāh leave him in error who is a prodigal, a doubter—

وَلَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ يُوْسُفُ مِنْ قَبْلُ
بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ فَمَا زِلْتُمْ فِيْ شَكٍّ مِّمَّا
جَآءَكُمْ بِهٖ ؕ حَتّٰٓى اِذَا هَلَكَ قُلْتُمْ
لَنْ يَّبْعَثَ اللّٰهُ مِنْۢ بَعْدِهٖ رَسُوْلًا ؕ
كَذٰلِكَ يُضِلُّ اللّٰهُ مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ مُّرْتَابُ ﴿٣٤﴾

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the mercy of Allāh wards off some of the deserved punishment. Compare the believer's argument with that advanced by Gamaliel to deal leniently with the apostles of Christ: "Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God" (Acts 5: 38, 39).

2189 *Yaum al-Aḥzāb* signifies *the events which befell the people of yore* (Bd). By the *parties* are meant the parties who organized opposition to the prophets. The word *yaum* is used in Arabic, as its equivalent *day* is used in English, to signify *a contest* or *a fight* (LL), and in the phrase *ayyām al-'Arab*, lit., *the days of the Arabs*, it signifies *accidents* or *struggles*. Hence I render it as *what befell*. There is nothing extraordinary in an Egyptian knowing how certain people on the borders of Arabia perished.

2190 *Yaum al-tanād* means *the day of calling out one to another*, i.e., the day of distress on which one will call out to the other for help, none being able to help himself or another. Every day of distress is *the day of calling out*, and the description need not be limited to the day of Judgment.

35 Those who dispute concerning the messages of Allāh without any authority that has come to them. Greatly hated is it by Allāh and by those who believe. Thus does Allāh seal every heart, of a proud, haughty one.

الَّذِينَ يُجَادِلُونَ فِي آيَاتِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ سُلْطَانٍ أَتَاهُمْ ۖ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِندَ اللَّهِ وَعِندَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يَطْبَعُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ قَلْبِ مُتَكَبِّرٍ جَبَّارٍ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 And Pharaoh said: O Hāmān, build for me a tower that I may attain the means of access—

وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَا هَامَانُ ابْنِ لِي صَرْحًا لَّعَلِّي أَبْلُغُ الْأَسْبَابَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 The means of access to the heavens, then reach the God of Moses, and I surely think him to be a liar.[2192] And thus the evil of his deed was made fair-seeming to Pharaoh, and he was turned aside from the way. And the plot of Pharaoh ended in naught but ruin.

أَسْبَابَ السَّمَاوَاتِ فَأَطَّلِعَ إِلَىٰ إِلَٰهِ مُوسَىٰ وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّهُ كَاذِبًا ۚ وَكَذَٰلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِفِرْعَوْنَ سُوءُ عَمَلِهِ وَصُدَّ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ ۚ وَمَا كَيْدُ فِرْعَوْنَ إِلَّا فِي تَبَابٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

SECTION 5: **The End of Pharaoh's People**

38 And he who believed said: O my people, follow me I will guide you to the right way.

وَقَالَ الَّذِي آمَنَ يَا قَوْمِ اتَّبِعُونِ أَهْدِكُمْ سَبِيلَ الرَّشَادِ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 O my people, this life of the world is but a (passing) enjoyment, and the Hereafter, that is the abode to settle.

يَا قَوْمِ إِنَّمَا هَٰذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا مَتَاعٌ وَإِنَّ الْآخِرَةَ هِيَ دَارُ الْقَرَارِ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 Whoever does evil, he is requited only with the like of it; and whoever does good, whether male or female, and he is a believer, these shall enter the Garden, to be given therein sustenance without measure.

مَنْ عَمِلَ سَيِّئَةً فَلَا يُجْزَىٰ إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا ۖ وَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ يُرْزَقُونَ فِيهَا بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 And, O my people, how is it that I call you to salvation and you call me to the Fire?

وَيَا قَوْمِ مَا لِي أَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى النَّجَاةِ وَتَدْعُونَنِي إِلَى النَّارِ ﴿٤١﴾

2192 As Moses spoke of the Lord of the heavens and the earth, Pharaoh mocked at the idea by suggesting that he would build a tower to attack Moses' God.

42 You call me to disbelieve in Allāh and to associate with Him that of which I have no knowledge, and I call you to the Mighty, the Forgiving.

تَدْعُونَنِي لِأَكْفُرَ بِاللَّهِ وَأُشْرِكَ بِهِ مَا لَيْسَ لِي بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَأَنَا أَدْعُوكُمْ إِلَى الْعَزِيزِ الْغَفَّارِ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 Without doubt that which you call me to has no title to be called to in this world, or in the Hereafter, and our return is to Allāh, and the prodigals are companions of the Fire.

لَا جَرَمَ أَنَّمَا تَدْعُونَنِي إِلَيْهِ لَيْسَ لَهُ دَعْوَةٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَا فِي الْآخِرَةِ وَأَنَّ مَرَدَّنَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَأَنَّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ هُمْ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 So you will remember what I say to you, and I entrust my affair to Allāh. Surely Allāh is Seer of the servants.

فَسَتَذْكُرُونَ مَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَأُفَوِّضُ أَمْرِي إِلَى اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 So Allāh protected him from the evil that they planned; and evil chastisement overtook Pharaoh's people—

فَوَقَاهُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِ مَا مَكَرُوا ۖ وَحَاقَ بِآلِ فِرْعَوْنَ سُوءُ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 The Fire. They are brought before it (every) morning and evening, and on the day when the Hour comes to pass: Make Pharaoh's people enter the severest chastisement.

النَّارُ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا غُدُوًّا وَعَشِيًّا ۖ وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ أَدْخِلُوا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And when they contend one with another in the Fire, the weak saying to those who were proud: Surely we were your followers; will you then avert from us a portion of the Fire?

وَإِذْ يَتَحَاجُّونَ فِي النَّارِ فَيَقُولُ الضُّعَفَاءُ لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا لَكُمْ تَبَعًا فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُغْنُونَ عَنَّا نَصِيبًا مِنَ النَّارِ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 Those who were proud say: Now we are all in it: Allāh has indeed judged between the servants.

قَالَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا إِنَّا كُلٌّ فِيهَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ حَكَمَ بَيْنَ الْعِبَادِ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 And those in the Fire will say to the guards of hell: Pray to your Lord to lighten our chastisement for a day.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ فِي النَّارِ لِخَزَنَةِ جَهَنَّمَ ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ يُخَفِّفْ عَنَّا يَوْمًا مِنَ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 They will say: Did not your nessengers come to you with clear rguments? They will say: Yea. They will say: Then pray. And the prayer of the disbelievers goes only astray.

قَالُوا أَوَلَمْ تَكُ تَأْتِيكُمْ رُسُلُكُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ۖ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ ۚ قَالُوا فَادْعُوا ۗ وَمَا دُعَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ ﴿٥٠﴾

SECTION 6 : **Messengers Receive Divine Help**

51 We certainly help Our messengers, and those who believe, in this world's life and on the day when the witnesses arise—[2193]

إِنَّا لَنَنصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْأَشْهَادُ ﴿٥١﴾

52 The day on which their excuse will not benefit the unjust, and for them is a curse and for them is the evil abode.

يَوْمَ لَا يَنفَعُ الظَّالِمِينَ مَعْذِرَتُهُمْ وَلَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ سُوءُ الدَّارِ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 And We indeed gave Moses the guidance, and We made the Children of Israel inherit the Book —

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْهُدَىٰ وَأَوْرَثْنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْكِتَابَ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 A guidance and a reminder for men of understanding.

هُدًى وَذِكْرَىٰ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 So be patient; surely the promise of Allāh is true; and ask protection for thy sin[2194] and celebrate the praise of thy Lord in the evening and the morning.

فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنبِكَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَارِ ﴿٥٥﴾

2193 The emphatic promise that the Prophet will be helped in this life, too, was made at a time when he was being persecuted, and there was not the least indication that his powerful opponents would be vanquished.

2194 The words *istaghfir-li-dhanbi-ka* occurring here, and repeated in 47 : 19, do not negative the claim made repeatedly that the Prophet was sinless. Fully five times the Holy Prophet is described in the Holy Qur'ān as being one who purified others from sin, in 2 : 129, 151 ; 3 : 163 ; 9 : 103, and 62 : 2. How could a sinful man purify others from sins? In fact, we do not find any prophet or reformer so plainly described as a purifier of others as the Holy Prophet Muḥammad. Again, the Holy Prophet is repeatedly spoken of in the Holy Qur'ān as walking in the way of perfect righteousness and entire submission to Allāh. Obedience to the Messenger is obedience to Allāh (4 : 80) ; if you love Allāh, then follow me, Allāh will love you (3 : 30). In the presence of these and a hundred other statements of a similar nature, sin could not be attributed to him. A perusal of the Holy Book further proves that the Qur'ān does not allow us to attribute sin to any prophet: "They precede Him not in speech, and only according to His commandment do they act" (21 : 27).

The significance of *dhanb* has already been fully explained in 393. The other word occurring here is *istighfār*. It is of the measure of *istif'āl*, and signifies the asking of *ghafr* or *maghfirah*. According to R, *ghafr* means *the covering of a thing with that which will protect it from dirt*. Hence the words *ghufrān* and *maghfirah* on the part of Allāh signify, according to the same authority, *His granting protection to His servants against chastisement*. And *istaghfara* is explained as meaning *he sought of God covering* or *forgiveness* or *pardon* (T, LL). It will thus be seen that the idea of protection is the dominant idea in the word *ghafr* and its

56 Those who dispute about the messages of Allāh without any authority having come to them, there is naught in their breasts but (a desire) to become great, which they will never attain. So seek refuge in Allāh. Surely He is the Hearing, the Seeing.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُجَادِلُونَ فِيٓ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ
بِغَيْرِ سُلْطٰنٍ اَتٰىهُمْ ۙ اِنْ فِيْ صُدُوْرِهِمْ
اِلَّا كِبْرٌ مَّا هُمْ بِبَالِغِيْهِ ۚ فَاسْتَعِذْ
بِاللّٰهِ ؕ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْبَصِيْرُ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 Assuredly the creation of the heavens and the earth is greater than the creation of men ; but most people know not.[2195]

لَخَلْقُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضِ اَكْبَرُ مِنْ
خَلْقِ النَّاسِ وَ لٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ
لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 And the blind and the seeing are not alike, nor those who believe and do good and the evildoers. Little do you mind !

وَ مَا يَسْتَوِي الْاَعْمٰى وَ الْبَصِيْرُ ۙ۬
وَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَ عَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ وَ
لَا الْمُسِيْٓءُ ؕ قَلِيْلًا مَّا تَتَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 The Hour is surely coming—there is no doubt therein—but most people believe not.

اِنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَاٰتِيَةٌ لَّا رَيْبَ فِيْهَا
وَ لٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 And your Lord says : Pray to Me, I will answer you. Those who disdain My service will surely enter hell, abased.

وَ قَالَ رَبُّكُمُ ادْعُوْنِيْٓ اَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ ؕ
اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَسْتَكْبِرُوْنَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِيْ
سَيَدْخُلُوْنَ جَهَنَّمَ دٰخِرِيْنَ ﴿٦٠﴾

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derivatives, and the word not only signifies the *forgiveness of sin,* but also the *covering of sin,* which is really the *granting of protection against sin.* That *ghafr* means *protection against the punishment of sin as well as protection against the commission of sin* is made clear by Qasṭalānī in his commentary of *Bukhārī: Al-ghafru al-sitru wa huwa immā baina-l-'abdi wa-l-dhanbi wa immā baina-l-dhanbi wa 'uqūbati-hī,* i.e., *ghafr* means *protection, and it is either a protection of the servant from sins or a protection from the punishment of sin.* . It is therefore protection in the first sense that is meant here, protection from sins, a protection from the imperfections of human nature, which make a man liable to sin unless he is protected by Allāh. In fact, wherever the word *ghafr* or *istighfār* is used in connection with the righteous as in 3:16, 7:151, 17:25, 40:7, etc., it is the protection from sin that is meant. See also 380 and 2307.

2195 Man is insignificant as compared with the vast creation of the heavens and the earth, yet he deems himself so great that he would not bow his head before the great Creator of this vast creation. But according to Abu-l-'Āliyah, by the *nās* is here meant *Dajjāl,* or Anti-Christ. The Ma'ālim al-Tanzīl quotes the following ḥadīth : "Hishām ibn 'Āmir relates having heard the Messenger of Allāh saying that from the creation of man to the coming of the Hour, there is no creation greater in temptation than Anti-Christ"

SECTION 7 : The Power of Allāh

61 Allāh is He Who made for you the night for resting in and the day for seeing. Surely Allāh is Full of Grace to men, but most men give not thanks.

اَللّٰهُ الَّذِيْ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الَّيْلَ لِتَسْكُنُوْا فِيْهِ وَ النَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَذُوْ فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَ لٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُوْنَ ﴿٦١﴾

62 That is Allāh, your Lord, the Creator of all things. There is no God but He. Whence are you then turned away ?

ذٰلِكُمُ اللّٰهُ رَبُّكُمْ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ۘ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۫ فَاَنّٰى تُؤْفَكُوْنَ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 Thus are turned away those who deny the messages of Allāh.

كَذٰلِكَ يُؤْفَكُ الَّذِيْنَ كَانُوْا بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ يَجْحَدُوْنَ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 Allāh is He Who made the earth a resting-place for you and the heaven a structure, and He formed you, then made goodly your forms, and He provided you with goodly things. That is Allāh, your Lord—so blessed is Allāh, the Lord of the worlds.

اَللّٰهُ الَّذِيْ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْاَرْضَ قَرَارًا وَّ السَّمَآءَ بِنَآءً وَّ صَوَّرَكُمْ فَاَحْسَنَ صُوَرَكُمْ وَ رَزَقَكُمْ مِّنَ الطَّيِّبٰتِ ؕ ذٰلِكُمُ اللّٰهُ رَبُّكُمْ ۚۖ فَتَبٰرَكَ اللّٰهُ رَبُّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٦٤﴾

65 He is the Living, there is no God but He ; so call on Him, being sincere to Him in obedience. Praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds !

هُوَ الْحَيُّ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ فَادْعُوْهُ مُخْلِصِيْنَ لَهُ الدِّيْنَ ؕ اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 Say : I am forbidden to serve those whom you call upon besides Allāh, when clear arguments have come to me from my Lord ; and I am commanded to submit to the Lord of the worlds.

قُلْ اِنِّيْ نُهِيْتُ اَنْ اَعْبُدَ الَّذِيْنَ تَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ لَمَّا جَآءَنِيَ الْبَيِّنٰتُ مِنْ رَّبِّيْ ۫ وَ اُمِرْتُ اَنْ اُسْلِمَ لِرَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 He it is Who created you from dust, then from a small life-germ, then from a clot, then He brings you forth as a child, then that you may attain your maturity, then that you may be old ; and of you are some who die before and that you may reach an appointed term, and that you may understand.

هُوَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِّنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوْٓا اَشُدَّكُمْ ثُمَّ لِتَكُوْنُوْا شُيُوْخًا ۚ وَ مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُّتَوَفّٰى مِنْ قَبْلُ وَ لِتَبْلُغُوْٓا اَجَلًا مُّسَمًّى وَّ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 He it is Who gives life and causes death, so when He decrees an affair, He only says to it, Be, and it is.

هُوَ الَّذِيْ يُحْيٖ وَ يُمِيْتُ ۚ فَاِذَا قَضٰٓى اَمْرًا فَاِنَّمَا يَقُوْلُ لَهٗ كُنْ فَيَكُوْنُ ﴿٦٨﴾

SECTION 8: **The End of Opposition**

69 Seest thou not those who dispute concerning the messages of Allāh? How are they turned away?—

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يُجَادِلُونَ فِيٓ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ ۗ أَنّٰى يُصْرَفُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 Those who reject the Book and that with which We have sent Our messengers. But they shall soon know.

الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِالْكِتٰبِ وَبِمَآ أَرْسَلْنَا بِهٖ رُسُلَنَا ۛ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

71 When the fetters are on their necks and the chains. They are dragged

إِذِ الْأَغْلٰلُ فِيٓ أَعْنَاقِهِمْ وَالسَّلٰسِلُ ۖ يُسْحَبُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

72 Into hot water; then in the Fire they are burned.

فِي الْحَمِيمِ ۙ ثُمَّ فِي النَّارِ يُسْجَرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

73 Then it is said to them: Where is that which you used to set up

ثُمَّ قِيلَ لَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 Besides Allāh? They will say: They have failed us; nay, we used not to call upon anything before. Thus does Allāh confound the disbelievers.

مِنْ دُونِ اللّٰهِ ۗ قَالُوا ضَلُّوا عَنَّا بَلْ لَّمْ نَكُنْ نَّدْعُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ شَيْـًٔا ۗ كَذٰلِكَ يُضِلُّ اللّٰهُ الْكٰفِرِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 That is because you exulted in the land unjustly and because you behaved insolently.

ذٰلِكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَمْرَحُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 Enter the gates of hell to abide therein; so evil is the abode of the proud.

اُدْخُلُوٓا أَبْوَابَ جَهَنَّمَ خٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ فَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 Therefore be patient, surely the promise of Allāh is true. But whether We make thee see part of what We threaten them with, or cause thee to die, to Us shall they be returned.[2196]

فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللّٰهِ حَقٌّ ۚ فَإِمَّا نُرِيَنَّكَ بَعْضَ الَّذِي نَعِدُهُمْ أَوْ نَتَوَفَّيَنَّكَ فَإِلَيْنَا يُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾

78 And certainly We sent messengers before thee — of them are those We have mentioned to thee and of them are those We have not mentioned to thee. Nor was it possible for a messenger to bring a sign except with Allāh's permission; so when Allāh's command comes, judgment is given with truth, and those who treat (it) as a lie are lost.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِّنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْهُمْ مَّنْ قَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ لَّمْ نَقْصُصْ عَلَيْكَ ۗ وَمَا كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ أَنْ يَّأْتِيَ بِاٰيَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ۚ فَإِذَا جَآءَ أَمْرُ اللّٰهِ قُضِيَ بِالْحَقِّ وَخَسِرَ هُنَالِكَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾

2196 The statement is made only to emphasize that they must suffer the evil

SECTION 9 : **The End of Opposition**

79 Allāh is He Who made the cattle for you that you may ride on some of them, and some of them you eat.

اَللّٰهُ الَّذِیْ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْاَنْعَامَ لِتَرْكَبُوْا
مِنْهَا وَ مِنْهَا تَاْكُلُوْنَ ﴿۷۹﴾

80 And there are advantages in them for you, and that you may attain through them a need which is in your breasts,[2197] and on them and on ships you are borne.

وَ لَكُمْ فِیْهَا مَنَافِعُ وَ لِتَبْلُغُوْا عَلَیْهَا
حَاجَةً فِیْ صُدُوْرِكُمْ وَ عَلَیْهَا وَ
عَلَى الْفُلْكِ تُحْمَلُوْنَ ﴿۸۰﴾

81 And He shows you His signs ; which then of Allāh's signs will you deny ?

وَ یُرِیْكُمْ اٰیٰتِهٖ فَاَیَّ اٰیٰتِ اللّٰهِ تُنْكِرُوْنَ ﴿۸۱﴾

82 Do they not travel in the land and see what was the end of those before them ? They were more numerous than these and greater in strength and in fortifications in the land, but what they earned availed them not.

اَفَلَمْ یَسِیْرُوْا فِی الْاَرْضِ فَیَنْظُرُوْا
كَیْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِیْنَ مِنْ
قَبْلِهِمْ كَانُوْۤا اَكْثَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَ اَشَدَّ
قُوَّةً وَّ اٰثَارًا فِی الْاَرْضِ فَمَاۤ اَغْنٰى
عَنْهُمْ مَّا كَانُوْا یَكْسِبُوْنَ ﴿۸۲﴾

83 Then when their messengers came to them with clear arguments, they exulted in what they had with them of knowledge and that at which they used to mock befell them.

فَلَمَّا جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَیِّنٰتِ
فَرِحُوْا بِمَا عِنْدَهُمْ مِّنَ الْعِلْمِ وَ
حَاقَ بِهِمْ مَّا كَانُوْا بِهٖ یَسْتَهْزِءُوْنَ ﴿۸۳﴾

84 So when they saw Our punishment, they said : We believe in Allāh alone, and we deny what we used to associate with Him.

فَلَمَّا رَاَوْا بَاْسَنَا قَالُوْۤا اٰمَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ
وَحْدَهٗ وَ كَفَرْنَا بِمَا كُنَّا بِهٖ مُشْرِكِیْنَ ﴿۸۴﴾

85 But their faith could not profit them when they saw Our punishment. Such is Allāh's law, which ever takes its course in the matter of His servants ; and there the disbelievers are lost.

فَلَمْ یَكُ یَنْفَعُهُمْ اِیْمَانُهُمْ لَمَّا رَاَوْا
بَاْسَنَا سُنَّتَ اللّٰهِ الَّتِیْ قَدْ خَلَتْ
فِیْ عِبَادِهٖ وَ خَسِرَ هُنَالِكَ الْكٰفِرُوْنَ ﴿۸۵﴾

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consequences of their deeds, whether the Prophet lives to see their punishment or dies before they are punished.

2197 That is, they are of use to you in carrying your burdens and yourselves from one place to another.

(٤١) سُوْرَةُ حٰمٓ السَّجْدَةِ مَكِّيَّةٌ

اٰيَاتُهَا ٥٤ — رُكُوْعَاتُهَا ٦

CHAPTER 41

ḤĀ MĪM

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 6 *sections*; 54 *verses*)

This chapter bears the name of its initial letters, Ḥā Mīm, or *Ḥā Mīm Sajdah.* It is also known as *Fuṣṣilat,* which means a thing *made plain,* the word occurring in v. 3. It is the second chapter of the *Ḥā Mīm* group. As regards its subject-matter, and date of revelation, see introductory note to the last chapter. The first section contains an invitation to the acceptance of the Truth; the second gives a warning in case of rejection; the third refers to the evidence of man's own faculties against the rejection of Truth; the fourth shows that believers are strengthened by inspiration; and the fifth points to the effect of revelation, which gives life to those who are morally and spiritually dead. But if warnings and arguments are not heeded, the doom is inevitable, the signs of which could be witnessed in the gradual spread of Truth. This is stated in the sixth section.

SECTION 1 **Invitation to the Truth**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Beneficent God!

حٰمٓ ①

2 A revelation from the Beneficent, the Merciful.

تَنْزِيْلٌ مِّنَ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ②

3 A Book of which the verses are made plain, an Arabic Qur'ān for a people who know—

كِتٰبٌ فُصِّلَتْ اٰيٰتُهٗ قُرْاٰنًا عَرَبِيًّا لِّقَوْمٍ يَّعْلَمُوْنَ ③

4 Good news and a warning. But most of them turn away, so they hear not.

بَشِيْرًا وَّنَذِيْرًا فَاَعْرَضَ اَكْثَرُهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَسْمَعُوْنَ ④

5 And they say: Our hearts are under coverings from that to which thou callest us, and there is a deafness in our ears, and there is a veil between us and thee,[2198] so act, we too are acting.

وَقَالُوْا قُلُوْبُنَا فِيْۤ اَكِنَّةٍ مِّمَّا تَدْعُوْنَاۤ اِلَيْهِ وَفِيْۤ اٰذَانِنَا وَقْرٌ وَّمِنْۢ بَيْنِنَا وَبَيْنِكَ حِجَابٌ فَاعْمَلْ اِنَّنَا عٰمِلُوْنَ ⑤

6 Say: I am only a mortal like you. It is revealed to me that your

قُلْ اِنَّمَاۤ اَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوْحٰۤى اِلَيَّ

2198 Note that the coverings of the hearts, the deafness of the ears and the

God is one God, so keep in the straight path to Him, and ask His protection. And woe to the polytheists!

أَنَّمَآ إِلَٰهُكُمْ إِلَٰهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَاسْتَقِيمُوٓا إِلَيْهِ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ ۗ وَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُشْرِكِينَ ۝٦

7 Who give not the poor-rate, and who are disbelievers in the Hereafter.

الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَوٰةَ وَهُم بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ كَٰفِرُونَ ۝٧

8 Those who believe and do good, for them is surely a reward never to be cut off.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّٰلِحَٰتِ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ ۝٨

SECTION 2: **The Warning**

9 Say: Do you indeed disbelieve in Him Who created the earth in two days, and do you set up equals with Him? That is the Lord of the worlds.

قُلْ أَئِنَّكُمْ لَتَكْفُرُونَ بِالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَرْضَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ وَتَجْعَلُونَ لَهُ أَندَادًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ رَبُّ الْعَٰلَمِينَ ۝٩

10 And He made in it mountains above its surface, and He blessed therein and ordained therein its foods, in four days;[2199] alike for (all) seekers.[2200]

وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ مِن فَوْقِهَا وَبَٰرَكَ فِيهَا وَقَدَّرَ فِيهَآ أَقْوَٰتَهَا فِيٓ أَرْبَعَةِ أَيَّامٍ سَوَآءً لِّلسَّآئِلِينَ ۝١٠

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hanging of the veils are used simply to indicate their own determined rejection of the Truth. They resolved neither to open their hearts, lest the Truth should enter them, nor to lend their ears so that they might even hear the preaching of the Prophet. In fact, it was their own act which brought about that consequence.

2199 For the creation of the heavens and the earth in six days, see 894a; the day in fact stands for a stage in growth. The making of the earth in two days and the making on it of the mountains, rivers and of plant and animal life in four days is really one continuous process, there being six days or six stages in all. The first stage is the throwing off of the cosmic matter called the earth; the second stage is the cooling of its surface; the third is the making of the mountains; the fourth is that of blessing it by waters and making in it rivers; the fifth and the sixth stages are spoken of as the ordaining of foods, being, in the first place, the growth of plant life and, in the second, the growth of animal life, culminating in the creation of man. That the creation in six days does not refer to the time actually taken in making the heavens and the earth, which is still going on, is noted even by the earlier commentators.

2200 The meaning of this passage is that the foods which are made in the earth are equally accessible to all seekers.

11 Then He directed Himself to the heaven and it was a vapour, so He said to it and to the earth: Come both, willingly or unwillingly. They both said: We come willingly.[2201]

ثُمَّ اسْتَوٰٓى إِلَى السَّمَآءِ وَهِيَ دُخَانٌ فَقَالَ لَهَا وَلِلْأَرْضِ ائْتِيَا طَوْعًا أَوْ كَرْهًا ۗ قَالَتَآ أَتَيْنَا طَآئِعِينَ ﴿١١﴾

12 So He ordained them seven heavens in two days,[2201a] and revealed in every heaven its affair. And We adorned the lower heaven with lights, and (made it) to guard.[2201b] That is the decree of the Mighty, the Knowing.

فَقَضٰهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمٰوٰتٍ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ وَأَوْحٰى فِي كُلِّ سَمَآءٍ أَمْرَهَا ۚ وَزَيَّنَّا السَّمَآءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيحَ ۖ وَحِفْظًا ۚ ذٰلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ ﴿١٢﴾

13 But if they turn away, then say: I warn you of a scourge like the scourge of 'Ād and Thamūd.[2202]

فَإِنْ أَعْرَضُوا فَقُلْ أَنْذَرْتُكُمْ صٰعِقَةً مِّثْلَ صٰعِقَةِ عَادٍ وَّثَمُودَ ﴿١٣﴾

14 When messengers came to them from before them and behind them,[2203] saying, Serve nothing but Allāh, they said: If our Lord had pleased, He would have sent down angels. So we are disbelievers in that with which you are sent.

إِذْ جَآءَتْهُمُ الرُّسُلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوٓا إِلَّا اللّٰهَ ۖ قَالُوا لَوْ شَآءَ رَبُّنَا لَأَنْزَلَ مَلٰٓئِكَةً فَإِنَّا بِمَآ أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ كٰفِرُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Then as to 'Ād, they were unjustly proud in the land, and said: Who is mightier than we in power? See they not that Allāh Who created them is mightier than they in power? And they denied Our messages.

فَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَقَالُوا مَنْ أَشَدُّ مِنَّا قُوَّةً ۖ أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللّٰهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَهُمْ هُوَ أَشَدُّ مِنْهُمْ قُوَّةً ۖ وَكَانُوا بِآيٰتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

2201 Note that heaven is here plainly spoken of as being originally *dukhān*, *smoke, vapour* or *gaseous matter*. The command to creation to come willingly or unwillingly is a reference to the Divine laws working in nature. Everything created, whether in the heavens or the earth, is subject to law. The existence of one law throughout the universe is clear evidence of the existence of One God, the Maker of that law.

2201a Just as, about the earth, it is stated in v. 9 that it was created in two days or in two stages, we are told here about the heavenly bodies that they, too, were created in two days or two stages. The creation of heavenly bodies is thus subject to the same law. For the seven heavens, see 46. The words that follow — *and revealed in every heaven its affair* — show that everything created in nature serves a purpose.

2201b See 2101.

2202 The first 13 verses of this chapter were recited by the Holy Prophet when 'Utbah ibn Rabī'ah came to him with a message from the Quraish. The message was to the effect that the Prophet should discontinue speaking ill of their

2203, see next page.

16 So We sent on them a furious wind in unlucky days that We might make them taste the chastisement of abasement in this world's life. And the chastisement of the Hereafter is truly more abasing, and they will not be helped.[2204]

فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا صَرْصَرًا فِيٓ أَيَّامٍ نَّحِسَاتٍ لِّنُذِيقَهُمْ عَذَابَ الْخِزْيِ فِي الْحَيَوٰةِ الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَعَذَابُ الْآخِرَةِ أَخْزَىٰ ۖ وَهُمْ لَا يُنصَرُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 And as for Thamūd, We showed them the right way, but they preferred blindness to guidance,[2205] so the scourge of an abasing chastisement overtook them for what they had earned.

وَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَهَدَيْنَٰهُمْ فَاسْتَحَبُّوا الْعَمَىٰ عَلَى الْهُدَىٰ فَأَخَذَتْهُمْ صَٰعِقَةُ الْعَذَابِ الْهُونِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 And We delivered those who believed and kept their duty.

وَنَجَّيْنَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

SECTION 3 : **Man's Evidence against Himself**

19 And the day when the enemies of Allāh are gathered to the Fire, they will be formed into groups.

وَيَوْمَ يُحْشَرُ أَعْدَآءُ اللَّهِ إِلَى النَّارِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 Until, when they come to it, their ears and their eyes and their skins will bear witness against them as to what they did.[2206]

حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا مَا جَآءُوهَا شَهِدَ عَلَيْهِمْ سَمْعُهُمْ وَأَبْصَٰرُهُمْ وَجُلُودُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 And they will say to their skins : Why bear ye witness against us? They will say : Allāh Who makes everything speak has made us speak, and He created you at first, and to Him you are returned.

وَقَالُوا لِجُلُودِهِمْ لِمَ شَهِدتُّمْ عَلَيْنَا ۖ قَالُوٓا أَنطَقَنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِيٓ أَنطَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ خَلَقَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

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gods and condemning their ways, and then they would be willing to make him their chief, or give him the most beautiful woman in marriage, or collect wealth for him. When 'Utbah had delivered his message, the Prophet read these verses; but when he reached v. 13, warning the Makkans of the fate of 'Ād and Thamūd, 'Utbah entreated him to speak no more, and went back to the Quraish to make known to them the Prophet's reply (Rz).

2203 The coming of the prophets from before and behind signifies their impressing the truth of their message upon their people in every possible way. Some understand the coming of the prophets from near and from far (JB).

2204 The Quraish are warned in these words of an abasing punishment in this life, and a still more abasing punishment in the Hereafter. Their *unlucky days* were the days of drought.

2205 *'Amā* is metaphorically used in relation to the mind, as meaning *erring*; the connection between the two meanings being the *not finding* or *not taking the right way* or *the being blind in respect of the mind* (LL).

2206 The bearing of witness by the ears and the eyes and the skins shows the truth of the law that the consequences of evil deeds will become manifest.

22 And you did not cover yourselves lest your ears and your eyes and your skins should bear witness against you, but you thought that Allāh knew not much of what you did.

وَمَا كُنتُمْ تَسْتَتِرُونَ أَن يَشْهَدَ عَلَيْكُمْ سَمْعُكُمْ وَلَا أَبْصَارُكُمْ وَلَا جُلُودُكُمْ وَلَٰكِن ظَنَنتُمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَعْلَمُ كَثِيرًا مِّمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 And that, your (evil) thought which you entertained about your Lord, ruined you, so have you become of the lost ones.

وَذَٰلِكُمْ ظَنُّكُمُ الَّذِي ظَنَنتُم بِرَبِّكُمْ أَرْدَاكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُم مِّنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Then if they are patient, the Fire is their abode. And if they ask for goodwill, they are not of those who are granted goodwill.[2206a]

فَإِن يَصْبِرُوا فَالنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَّهُمْ ۖ وَإِن يَسْتَعْتِبُوا فَمَا هُم مِّنَ الْمُعْتَبِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And We have appointed for them comrades,[2207] so they make fair-seeming to them what is before them and what is behind them, and the word proved true against them among the nations of jinn and men that have passed away before them: they are surely losers.

وَقَيَّضْنَا لَهُمْ قُرَنَاءَ فَزَيَّنُوا لَهُم مَّا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَحَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلُ فِي أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا خَاسِرِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

SECTION 4: **Believers Strengthened**

26 And those who disbelieve say: Listen not to this Qur'ān but make noise therein, perhaps you may overcome.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَسْمَعُوا لِهَٰذَا الْقُرْآنِ وَالْغَوْا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَغْلِبُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 So We shall certainly make those who disbelieve taste a severe chastisement, and We shall certainly requite them for the worst of what they did.

فَلَنُذِيقَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَسْوَأَ الَّذِي كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 That is the reward of Allāh's enemies—the Fire. For them therein is the home to abide. A requital for their denying Our messages.

ذَٰلِكَ جَزَاءُ أَعْدَاءِ اللَّهِ النَّارُ ۖ لَهُمْ فِيهَا دَارُ الْخُلْدِ ۖ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَجْحَدُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

2206a God's goodwill can be gained in this life, and for those who waste that opportunity here the only way to that goodwill is to go through the ordeal of Fire.

2207 These comrades are wicked companions.

29 And those who disbelieve, will say : Our Lord, show us those who led us astray from among the jinn and the men that we may trample them under our feet, so that they may be of the lowest.

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا رَبَّنَا أَرِنَا الَّذَيْنِ أَضَلَّانَا مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ نَجْعَلْهُمَا تَحْتَ أَقْدَامِنَا لِيَكُونَا مِنَ الْأَسْفَلِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 Those who say, Our Lord is Allāh, then continue in the right way, the angels descend upon them, saying: Fear not, nor be grieved, and receive good news of the Garden which you were promised.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 We are your friends in this world's life and in the Hereafter, and you have therein what your souls desire and you have therein what you ask for.[2208]

نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَاؤُكُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ ۚ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِي أَنْفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَدَّعُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 A welcome gift from the Forgiving, the Merciful.

نُزُلًا مِنْ غَفُورٍ رَحِيمٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

SECTION 5 : **Effect of the Revelation**

33 And who is better in speech than one who calls to Allāh and does good, and says : I am surely of those who submit ?

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ قَوْلًا مِمَّنْ دَعَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا وَقَالَ إِنَّنِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 And not alike are the good and the evil. Repel (evil) with what is best, when lo ! he between whom and thee is enmity would be as if he were a warm friend.

وَلَا تَسْتَوِي الْحَسَنَةُ وَلَا السَّيِّئَةُ ۚ ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِيٌّ حَمِيمٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 And none is granted it but those who are patient, and none is granted it but the owner of a mighty good fortune.

وَمَا يُلَقَّاهَا إِلَّا الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا ۚ وَمَا يُلَقَّاهَا إِلَّا ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣٥﴾

2208 Vv. 30 and 31 show that it is in this life that the angels descend upon the faithful, giving them the joyful news that they should not have any fear. In fact, it is here, when the faithful are persecuted and oppressed, and when the powers of evil seem to have the upper hand, that such assurances are most needed, and it is here that the angels give them comfort and strength to bear hardships, and thus they ultimately overcome the forces of evil.

36 And if a false imputation from the devil afflict thee, seek refuge in Allāh.[2209] Surely He is the Hearing, the Knowing.

وَإِمَّا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ نَزْغٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللّٰهِ ؕ إِنَّهٗ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ ۝٣٦

37 And of His signs are the night and the day and the sun and the moon. Adore not the sun nor the moon, but adore Allāh Who created them, if He it is that you serve.

وَمِنْ اٰيٰتِهِ الَّيْلُ وَالنَّهَارُ وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ ؕ لَا تَسْجُدُوْا لِلشَّمْسِ وَلَا لِلْقَمَرِ وَاسْجُدُوْا لِلّٰهِ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَهُنَّ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُوْنَ ۝٣٧

38 But if they are proud, yet those with thy Lord glorify Him night and day, and they tire not.[2209a]

Prostration

فَإِنِ اسْتَكْبَرُوْا فَالَّذِيْنَ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ يُسَبِّحُوْنَ لَهٗ بِالَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْـَٔمُوْنَ ۝٣٨ السجدة

39 And of His signs is this, that thou seest the earth still, but when We send down water thereon, it stirs and swells.[2210] He Who gives it life is surely the Giver of life to the dead. Surely He is Possessor of Power over all things.

وَمِنْ اٰيٰتِهٖٓ أَنَّكَ تَرَى الْأَرْضَ خَاشِعَةً فَإِذَآ أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا الْمَآءَ اهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَتْ ؕ إِنَّ الَّذِيْٓ أَحْيَاهَا لَمُحْيِ الْمَوْتٰى ؕ إِنَّهٗ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ۝٣٩

40 Those who distort Our messages are not hidden from Us. Is he then who is cast into the Fire better or he who comes safe on the day of Resurrection? Do what you like, surely He is Seer of what you do.

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يُلْحِدُوْنَ فِيْٓ اٰيٰتِنَا لَا يَخْفَوْنَ عَلَيْنَا ؕ أَفَمَنْ يُّلْقٰى فِي النَّارِ خَيْرٌ أَمْ مَّنْ يَّأْتِيْٓ اٰمِنًا يَّوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ؕ اِعْمَلُوْا مَا شِئْتُمْ ۙ إِنَّهٗ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ۝٤٠

41 Those who disbelieve in the Reminder when it comes to them, and surely it is an Invincible Book:

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بِالذِّكْرِ لَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّهٗ لَكِتٰبٌ عَزِيْزٌ ۝٤١

42 Falsehood cannot come at it from before or behind it: a revelation from the Wise, the Praised One.

لَّا يَأْتِيْهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْۢ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهٖ ؕ تَنْزِيْلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيْمٍ حَمِيْدٍ ۝٤٢

2209 The previous verse teaches the repelling of evil with good. This verse suggests another remedy for evil. The primary significance of *nazagha-hū* is *he charged him with vice* or *spoke evil of him* (T). It is in this sense that the word is used here and the context makes it clear. It is also used in this sense in 7:200; see 973. It also means *intrusion on* or *interference in an affair for the purpose of causing mischief in it* (R), and the word is used in this sense in 12:100. The Prophet is here told that, if his work is interfered with by evildoers or if false imputations are made against him, he should seek refuge in Allāh, and Divine help, which always comes to the righteous, will make truth triumphant.

2209a, 2210, see next page.

43 Naught is said to thee but what was said to messengers before thee. Surely thy Lord is the Lord of Forgiveness and the Lord of painful Retribution.

مَا يُقَالُ لَكَ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ قِيلَ لِلرُّسُلِ
مِنْ قَبْلِكَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَذُوْ مَغْفِرَةٍ
وَّذُوْ عِقَابٍ أَلِيْمٍ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 And if We had made it a Qur'ān in a foreign tongue, they would have said: Why have not its messages been made clear? What! a foreign (tongue) and an Arab![2211] Say: It is to those who believe a guidance and a healing,[2212] and those who believe not, there is a deafness in their ears and it is obscure to them. These are called to from a place afar.

وَلَوْ جَعَلْنٰهُ قُرْاٰنًا أَعْجَمِيًّا لَّقَالُوْا
لَوْلَا فُصِّلَتْ اٰيٰتُهٗ ۚ ءَاَعْجَمِيٌّ وَّعَرَبِيٌّ ۗ
قُلْ هُوَ لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا هُدًى وَّشِفَآءٌ ۗ
وَالَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ فِيْٓ اٰذَانِهِمْ
وَقْرٌ وَّهُوَ عَلَيْهِمْ عَمًى ۚ أُولٰٓئِكَ
يُنَادَوْنَ مِنْ مَّكَانٍ بَعِيْدٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

SECTION 6: **Gradual Spread of Truth**

45 And indeed We gave Moses the Book, but differences arose therein. And had not a word already gone forth from thy Lord, judgment would have been given between them. And surely they are in a disquieting doubt about it.

وَلَقَدْ اٰتَيْنَا مُوْسَى الْكِتٰبَ فَاخْتُلِفَ
فِيْهِ ۚ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِنْ
رَّبِّكَ لَقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَفِيْ
شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مُرِيْبٍ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 Whoever does good, it is for his own soul; and whoever does evil, it is against it. And thy Lord is not in the least unjust to the servants.

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهٖ وَمَنْ
اَسَآءَ فَعَلَيْهَا ۚ وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيْدِ ﴿٤٦﴾

2209a The recitation of this verse is followed by an actual prostration; see 978.

2210 The *still earth* signifies land dried up and without herbage; its stirring indicates its moving with life and its swelling the producing of herbage. This is entirely metaphorical. It indicates that, when Divine revelation comes, it gives a new life to men. Attention is called to this in the words that follow. The effect of rain upon earth is likened to the effect of the Qur'ān upon the hearts of men. *Dead* here are the spiritually dead.

2211 There seems to be a reference here to the prophecies which spoke of the coming of an Ishmaelite or an Arab prophet. The reference to Moses in the next verse confirms this, because Moses spoke plainly of a prophet like himself appearing from among the brethren of the Israelites, who are no others than the Ishmaelites.

2212 The Qur'ān is here called a healing because it was a remedy for the spiritual diseases which prevailed in the world. It is the book which proved itself to be a *healing*, because it found a nation affected with the worst possible spiritual and moral diseases, and within less than a quarter of a century cleansed a whole

PART XXV

47 To Him is referred the knowledge of the Hour. And no fruit comes forth from its coverings, nor does a female bear or bring forth but with His knowledge. And on the day when He calls out to them: Where are My associates? they will say: We declare to Thee, not one of us can bear witness.

إِلَيْهِ يُرَدُّ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ ۚ وَمَا
تَخْرُجُ مِنْ ثَمَرٰتٍ مِّنْ اَكْمَامِهَا
وَمَا تَحْمِلُ مِنْ اُنْثٰى وَلَا تَضَعُ
اِلَّا بِعِلْمِهٖ ۚ وَيَوْمَ يُنَادِيْهِمْ اَيْنَ
شُرَكَآءِيْ ۙ قَالُوْٓا اٰذَنّٰكَ ۙ مَا مِنَّا مِنْ شَهِيْدٍ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And those whom they called upon before will fail them, and they will know that they cannot escape.

وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَّا كَانُوْا يَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ
قَبْلُ وَظَنُّوْا مَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ مَّحِيْصٍ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 Man tires not of praying for good, but, if evil touch him, he is despairing, hopeless.

لَا يَسْـَٔمُ الْاِنْسَانُ مِنْ دُعَآءِ الْخَيْرِ ۫
وَاِنْ مَّسَّهُ الشَّرُّ فَيَـُٔوْسٌ قَنُوْطٌ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 And if We make him taste mercy from Us after distress has touched him, he says: This is due to me,[2214] and I think not that the Hour will come to pass; and if I am sent back to my Lord, I shall have sure good with Him. So We shall certainly inform those who disbelieve of what they do, and We shall make them taste of hard chastisement.

وَلَئِنْ اَذَقْنٰهُ رَحْمَةً مِّنَّا مِنْۢ بَعْدِ
ضَرَّآءَ مَسَّتْهُ لَيَقُوْلَنَّ هٰذَا لِيْ ۙ
وَمَآ اَظُنُّ السَّاعَةَ قَآئِمَةً ۙ وَّلَئِنْ
رُّجِعْتُ اِلٰى رَبِّيْٓ اِنَّ لِيْ عِنْدَهٗ لَلْحُسْنٰى ۚ
فَلَنُنَبِّئَنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بِمَا عَمِلُوْا ۫
وَلَنُذِيْقَنَّهُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابٍ غَلِيْظٍ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 And when We show favour to man, he turns away and withdraws himself; but when evil touches him, he is full of lengthy supplications.

وَاِذَآ اَنْعَمْنَا عَلَى الْاِنْسَانِ اَعْرَضَ
وَنَاٰ بِجَانِبِهٖ ۚ وَاِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ فَذُوْ
دُعَآءٍ عَرِيْضٍ ﴿٥١﴾

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country and a whole nation of all those diseases. Its healing effect, however, has not been limited to Arabia, and to-day there is no people on the surface of the earth that does not bear witness to the great healing power of the Qur'ān, which is so far-reaching in its effect that non-Muslims have benefited by it equally with Muslims.

2214 The words indicate man's ungratefulness for Divine blessings. He does not recognize Divine goodness in those gifts, but says "this is due to me", i.e., I have obtained it by my own exertion and I deserve it. And then he denies the Judgment.

52 Say : See you, if it is from Allāh, then you disbelieve in it, who is in greater error than he who is in opposition far away ?

قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِن كَانَ مِنْ عِندِ ٱللَّهِ ثُمَّ كَفَرْتُم بِهِۦ مَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنْ هُوَ فِى شِقَاقٍۭ بَعِيدٍ ﴿٥٢﴾

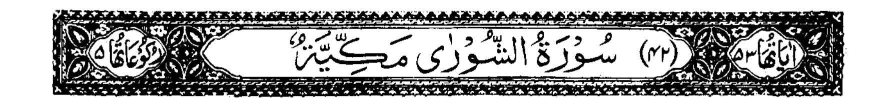
53 We will soon show them Our signs in farthest regions and among their own people,[2215] until it is quite clear to them that it is the Truth. Is it not enough that thy Lord is a Witness over all things ?

سَنُرِيهِمْ ءَايَٰتِنَا فِى ٱلْءَافَاقِ وَفِىٓ أَنفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ ٱلْحَقُّ ۗ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 Now surely they are in doubt as to the meeting with their Lord. Lo ! He surely encompasses all things.

أَلَآ إِنَّهُمْ فِى مِرْيَةٍ مِّن لِّقَآءِ رَبِّهِمْ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّهُۥ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ مُّحِيطٌۢ ﴿٥٤﴾

2215 The word *āfāq* means *borders* or *extremities of the earth*, or *its remote sides*, and the great message conveyed here is that Islām will spread to the most distant regions of the earth — *anfusi-him* denoting *their own people*, or the Arabs. What is stated here is this that Islām will quickly spread, not only in Arabia but in the remote regions of the earth, and this prophecy is contained in a chapter revealed early at Makkah, when Muslims were being severely persecuted and the message of Islām had apparently little hope of finding acceptance anywhere. If the prophecy is so clear, its fulfilment is clearer still. Within twenty years of its birth, Islām spread through the whole of Arabia, and within a hundred years, it reached the farthest regions of the earth, both in the East and the West. Both the prophecy and its fulfilment are thus two of the most amazing facts of history.



CHAPTER 42

Al-Shūrā : THE COUNSEL

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 5 *sections;* 53 *verses*)

This is the third chapter of the *Ḥā Mīm* group, and is known as *The Counsel.* The title is taken from v. 38, which enjoins the Muslims to make it a rule to take counsel in all affairs of importance. The injunction lays down the basis of government by council or parliamentary government.

As regards the date of revelation and the context, see the introductory note to chapter 40. Having spoken of the consequences of the rejection of Truth in the last chapter, we are here told that Divine mercy is predominant over all other Divine attributes, and accordingly the first section tells us that even the act of warning is a merciful act on the part of the Divine Being, for He reveals His will through His prophets, while His angels solicit forgiveness for men. The second section states that Divine judgment is given to settle differences. The third shows that Allāh's dealing with men is just and no nation is destroyed unjustly. The fourth section calls attention to the fact that even the unjust are given respite, therefore the believers must wait patiently. The last section states that the Qur'ān, being a revelation from the Divine Being, guides aright, hence those who do not follow its directions will find themselves in an evil plight.

SECTION 1 **Divine Mercy in giving Warning**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

1 Beneficent God!

حٰمٓ ﴿١﴾

2 Knowing, Hearing, Powerful God![2216]

عٓسٓقٓ ﴿٢﴾

3 Thus does Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise, reveal to thee, and (He revealed) to those before thee.

كَذٰلِكَ يُوْحِيْٓ اِلَيْكَ وَاِلَى الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ ۙ اللّٰهُ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿٣﴾

4 To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth; and He is the High, the Great.

لَهٗ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ؕ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيْمُ ﴿٤﴾

5 The heavens may almost be rent asunder above them, while the angels celebrate the praise of their Lord and ask forgiveness for those on earth.[2217] Now surely Allāh is the Forgiving, the Merciful.

تَكَادُ السَّمٰوٰتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِنْ فَوْقِهِنَّ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ يُسَبِّحُوْنَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُوْنَ لِمَنْ فِي الْاَرْضِ ؕ اَلَآ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿٥﴾

6 And those who take protectors besides Him — Allāh watches over them; and thou hast not charge over them.

وَالَّذِيْنَ اتَّخَذُوْا مِنْ دُوْنِهٖٓ اَوْلِيَآءَ اللّٰهُ حَفِيْظٌ عَلَيْهِمْ ۖ وَمَآ اَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِوَكِيْلٍ ﴿٦﴾

7 And thus have We revealed to thee an Arabic Qur'ān, that thou mayest warn the mother-town and those around it,[2218] and give warning of the day of Gathering, wherein is no doubt. A party will be in the Garden and (another) party in the burning Fire.

وَكَذٰلِكَ اَوْحَيْنَآ اِلَيْكَ قُرْاٰنًا عَرَبِيًّا لِّتُنْذِرَ اُمَّ الْقُرٰى وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا وَتُنْذِرَ يَوْمَ الْجَمْعِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ ؕ فَرِيْقٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَفَرِيْقٌ فِي السَّعِيْرِ ﴿٧﴾

2216 The first two letters are the same as at the commencement of chapter 40; in the latter three, *'Ain* stands for *'Alīm* or *Knowing*, *Sīn* for *Samī'* or *Hearing*, *Qāf* for *Qādir* or *Powerful*.

2217 The significance is that the wickedness of man calls for immediate punishment but the mercy of Allāh withholds it. The rending asunder of the heaven is elsewhere used to signify Divine displeasure at the Christian doctrine of the divinity of Jesus (19:90, 91). The Divine displeasure at the wickedness of man is very great, but His mercy supercedes all. The angels' prayer for forgiveness for man shows that Allāh Himself desires to forgive man. The deeds of men do not merit forgiveness, but forgiveness is the attribute of the Divine Being, and that Divine attribute is exercised through the solicitude of the angels.

2218 *Umm al-qurā* is Makkah, which is called the *mother of the towns* because it was destined to be the spiritual centre of the whole world; see 799.

8 And if Allāh had pleased, He would surely have made them a single nation, but He admits whom He pleases to His mercy. And the wrong-doers have no protector nor helper.

وَلَوْ شَآءَ اللّٰهُ لَجَعَلَهُمْ أُمَّةً وَّاحِدَةً وَّلٰكِنْ يُّدْخِلُ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ فِيْ رَحْمَتِهٖ ۭ وَالظّٰلِمُوْنَ مَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ وَّلِيٍّ وَّلَا نَصِيْرٍ ۝

9 Or have they taken protectors besides Him? But Allāh is the Protector, and He gives life to the dead, and He is Possessor of power over all things.

أَمِ اتَّخَذُوْا مِنْ دُوْنِهٖٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ ۚ فَاللّٰهُ هُوَ الْوَلِيُّ وَهُوَ يُحْيِ الْمَوْتٰى ۡ وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ۝

SECTION 2: **Judgment is Given**

10 And in whatever you differ, the judgment thereof is with Allāh. That is Allāh, my Lord; on Him I rely, and to Him I turn.

وَمَا اخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيْهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَحُكْمُهٗٓ إِلَى اللّٰهِ ۭ ذٰلِكُمُ اللّٰهُ رَبِّيْ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ ۚ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيْبُ ۝

11 The Originator of the heavens and the earth. He has made for you pairs from among yourselves, and pairs of the cattle, too, multiplying you thereby. Nothing is like Him; and He is the Hearing, the Seeing.[2219]

فَاطِرُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۭ جَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا وَّمِنَ الْأَنْعَامِ أَزْوَاجًا ۚ يَذْرَؤُكُمْ فِيْهِ ۭ لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهٖ شَيْءٌ ۚ وَهُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْبَصِيْرُ ۝

12 His are the treasures of the heavens and the earth — He amplifies and straitens subsistence for whom He pleases. Surely He is Knower of all things.

لَهٗ مَقَالِيْدُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۭ إِنَّهٗ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ۝

13 He has made plain to you the religion which He enjoined upon Noah and which We have revealed to thee, and which We enjoined on Abraham and Moses and Jesus — to establish religion and not to be divided therein.[2220] Hard for the polytheists

شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِّنَ الدِّيْنِ مَا وَصّٰى بِهٖ نُوْحًا وَّالَّذِيْٓ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهٖٓ إِبْرٰهِيْمَ وَمُوْسٰى وَعِيْسٰٓى أَنْ أَقِيْمُوا الدِّيْنَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوْا فِيْهِ ۭ كَبُرَ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ مَا تَدْعُوْهُمْ إِلَيْهِ ۭ

2219 So transcendent is the Divine Being, and so far above all material conceptions, that a likeness of Him cannot be conceived, even metaphorically. The words translated *like Him* literally mean *like a likeness of Him*. He is not only above all material limitations, but even above *the limitation of metaphor*.

2220 Even so early did the Qur'ān announce that the religion preached by the

is that to which thou callest them. Allāh chooses for Himself whom He pleases, and guides to Himself him who turns (to Him).

اَللّٰهُ يَجْتَبِيْٓ اِلَيْهِ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَيَهْدِيْٓ اِلَيْهِ مَنْ يُّنِيْبُ ۝١٣

14 And they were not divided until after knowledge had come to them, out of envy among themselves. And had not a word gone forth from thy Lord for an appointed term, the matter would surely have been judged between them. And those who were made to inherit the Book after them are surely in disquieting doubt about it.[2221]

وَمَا تَفَرَّقُوْٓا اِلَّا مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًۢا بَيْنَهُمْ ۗ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِنْ رَّبِّكَ اِلٰٓى اَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى لَّقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۗ وَاِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْرِثُوا الْكِتٰبَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِهِمْ لَفِيْ شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مُرِيْبٍ ۝١٤

15 To this then go on inviting, and be steadfast as thou art commanded, and follow not their low desires, and say: I believe in what Allāh has revealed of the Book, and I am commanded to do justice between you. Allāh is our Lord and your Lord. For us are our deeds; and for you your deeds. There is no contention between us and you. Allāh will gather us together, and to Him is the eventual coming.[2222]

فَلِذٰلِكَ فَادْعُ ۚ وَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَآ اُمِرْتَ ۚ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ اَهْوَآءَهُمْ ۚ وَقُلْ اٰمَنْتُ بِمَآ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ مِنْ كِتٰبٍ ۚ وَاُمِرْتُ لِاَعْدِلَ بَيْنَكُمْ ۗ اَللّٰهُ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ ۗ لَنَآ اَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ اَعْمَالُكُمْ ۗ لَا حُجَّةَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۗ اَللّٰهُ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا ۚ وَاِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيْرُ ۝١٥

16 And those who dispute about Allāh after obedience has been rendered to Him, their plea is null with their Lord, and upon them is

وَالَّذِيْنَ يُحَآجُّوْنَ فِي اللّٰهِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا اسْتُجِيْبَ لَهٗ حُجَّتُهُمْ دَاحِضَةٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ وَّلَهُمْ

Prophet was not a new religion, but, so far as its basic principles were concerned, it was the same religion as was preached by Noah and Abraham and Moses and Jesus. The basic principle of Islām — entire submission to One God only — is, in fact, the basic principle of the common religion of humanity.

2221 The personal pronoun *them* in *those who were made to inherit the Book after them* refers to the prophets. The people who were made to inherit the Book after the prophets, rejected the very message with which these prophets came. But they are told that their punishment is postponed till an appointed term. Such was the Divine law — *a word gone forth from thy Lord* — that the struggle against Truth gathers strength at first and seems to have the upper hand for a time, but it ultimately comes to naught, thus showing that an unseen hand works in support of the Truth.

2222 The argument was so simple and sound. The Prophet told the followers of earlier revelation that he was a believer *in what Allāh had revealed of the Book*, in all revelation that came before him, and the basic principles of his revelation were the same as those of the earlier revelation. The whole thing was so clear that there could not be any dispute. There is a clear ray of hope in the concluding verses — *Allāh will gather us* — that they will ultimately accept the Truth.

wrath, and for them is severe chastisement.[2223]

عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ ﴿١٦﴾

17 Allāh is He Who revealed the Book with truth, and the Balance;[2224] and what will make thee know that perhaps the Hour is nigh.

اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنزَلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمِيزَانَ ۗ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّ السَّاعَةَ قَرِيبٌ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Those who believe not in it would hasten it on, and those who believe are in fear from it, and they know that it is the Truth. Now surely those who dispute concerning the Hour are far astray.

يَسْتَعْجِلُ بِهَا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهَا ۖ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مُشْفِقُونَ مِنْهَا وَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهَا الْحَقُّ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُمَارُونَ فِي السَّاعَةِ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ بَعِيدٍ ﴿١٨﴾

19 Allāh is Benignant to His servants; He gives sustenance to whom He pleases; and He is the Strong, the Mighty.

اللَّهُ لَطِيفٌ بِعِبَادِهِ يَرْزُقُ مَن يَشَاءُ ۖ وَهُوَ الْقَوِيُّ الْعَزِيزُ ﴿١٩﴾

SECTION 3: **Allāh's Dealing is Just**

20 Whoso desires the tilth of the Hereafter, We give him increase in his tilth; and whoso desires the tilth of this world, We give him thereof; and he has no portion in the Hereafter.

مَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الْآخِرَةِ نَزِدْ لَهُ فِي حَرْثِهِ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِن نَّصِيبٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Or have they associates who have prescribed for them any religion that Allāh does not sanction? And were it not for the word of judgment, it would have been decided between them. And surely for the wrongdoers is a painful chastisement.[2225]

أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ شَرَعُوا لَهُم مِّنَ الدِّينِ مَا لَمْ يَأْذَن بِهِ اللَّهُ ۚ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةُ الْفَصْلِ لَقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۗ وَإِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٢١﴾

2223 The reference in *those who dispute about Allāh after obedience has been rendered to Him* may be to the followers of earlier revelation, because their prophecies required obedience to a Prophet who should appear after them. Or, the meaning may be, after people have begun to enter Islām, and Islām has been established in the land notwithstanding the severest opposition.

2224 The construction is, Allāh revealed the Book and the Balance. The *balance* is that by which things are weighed. Elsewhere it is said: "Surely We sent Our messengers with clear proofs and revealed with them the Book and the Balance that men may conduct themselves with equity" (57:25). The purpose of revealing the *Balance* is thus made clear here. It is that men may conduct them-

2225, see next page.

22 Thou seest the unjust fearing on account of what they have earned, and it must befall them. And those who believe and do good are in the meadows of the Gardens — they have what they please with their Lord. That is the great grace.

تَرَى الظّٰلِمِيْنَ مُشْفِقِيْنَ مِمَّا كَسَبُوْا وَهُوَ وَاقِعٌۢ بِهِمْ ۗ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ فِيْ رَوْضٰتِ الْجَنّٰتِ ۚ لَهُمْ مَّا يَشَآءُوْنَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۗ ذٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَضْلُ الْكَبِيْرُ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 This it is of which Allāh gives the good news to His servants, who believe and do good. Say: I ask of you naught in return for it but love for relatives.[2226] And whoever earns good, We give him more of good therein. Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Grateful.

ذٰلِكَ الَّذِيْ يُبَشِّرُ اللّٰهُ عِبَادَهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ ۗ قُلْ لَّآ اَسْـَٔلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ اَجْرًا اِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبٰى ۗ وَمَنْ يَّقْتَرِفْ حَسَنَةً نَّزِدْ لَهٗ فِيْهَا حُسْنًا ۗ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ شَكُوْرٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Or say they: He has forged a lie against Allāh? So, if Allāh please, He would seal thy heart (against them).[2227] And Allāh blots out the falsehood and confirms the Truth with His words.[2228] Surely He is Knower of what is in the breasts.

اَمْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ افْتَرٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا ۚ فَاِنْ يَّشَاِ اللّٰهُ يَخْتِمْ عَلٰى قَلْبِكَ ۗ وَيَمْحُ اللّٰهُ الْبَاطِلَ وَيُحِقُّ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمٰتِهٖ ۗ اِنَّهٗ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ ﴿٢٤﴾

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selves with equity; in other words that they may be able to carry out the ordinances contained in the Book justly. This is what the Prophet shows by his example. He is not only a preacher but also an exemplar. The ordinances of the Book are given in words, and the Prophet translates them into deeds, so that it is by following his example that men are led aright. The Prophet's example is thus a balance which is as essential for the right guidance of men as the Book. The word *Mīzān* or *Balance* is generally taken here as meaning *'Adl* or *Justice* (IJ), which would mean *the right use of the Book,* which is really shown by the Prophet himself, and thus indicates the Prophet's example. According to others, the *Balance* here means the *Law* (Bd, JB) by which the rights and obligations of men are weighed. Mark how material terms are converted into spiritual usage by the Holy Qur'ān. A right realization of this point removes many of the difficulties in the study of the Holy Book.

2225 The word of judgment indicates a judgment already pronounced, that a respite will be given to the wrongdoers so that they may have an opportunity to reform themselves.

2226 Commentators generally think that the love enjoined here in respect of relationship signifies loving the offspring (*āl*) of the Prophet, but there is nothing in the words which entitles us to place that limitation upon the words. The correct significance of the words is that *I ask of you naught in return for it; what I ask you is to love your own relatives.* The statement that the Prophet did not ask for any reward at all is made very often in the Holy Qur'ān, and the preacher of virtue never asks for any reward. What he asked them was to live in peace and harmony with each other. The Arabs, closely related as they were to each other, were in a state of constant warfare. They are told to give up mutual warfare and to love one another. A somewhat similar statement is made elsewhere: "I ask of you naught in return for it, except that he who will may take a way to his Lord" (25:57). In both cases what the Prophet wanted was not a reward for himself,

2227, 2228, see next page.

25 And He it is Who accepts repentence from His servants and pardons evil deeds, and He knows what you do;

وَهُوَ الَّذِيْ يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهٖ وَيَعْفُوْا عَنِ السَّيِّاٰتِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُوْنَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 And He answers those who believe and do good deeds, and gives them more out of His grace. And for the disbelievers is a severe chastisement.

وَيَسْتَجِيْبُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ وَيَزِيْدُهُمْ مِّنْ فَضْلِهٖ ۚ وَالْكٰفِرُوْنَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيْدٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And if Allāh were to amplify the provision for His servants, they would rebel in the earth; but He sends (it) down by measure, as He pleases. Surely He is Aware, Seer of His servants.

وَلَوْ بَسَطَ اللّٰهُ الرِّزْقَ لِعِبَادِهٖ لَبَغَوْا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَلٰكِنْ يُّنَزِّلُ بِقَدَرٍ مَّا يَشَآءُ ۗ اِنَّهٗ بِعِبَادِهٖ خَبِيْرٌۢ بَصِيْرٌ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 And He it is Who sends down the rain after they have despaired, and He unfolds His mercy. And He is the Friend, the Praiséd One.

وَهُوَ الَّذِيْ يُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا قَنَطُوْا وَيَنْشُرُ رَحْمَتَهٗ ۗ وَهُوَ الْوَلِيُّ الْحَمِيْدُ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and what He has spread forth in both of them of living beings. And He is All-powerful to gather them together, when He will.

وَمِنْ اٰيٰتِهٖ خَلْقُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَمَا بَثَّ فِيْهِمَا مِنْ دَآبَّةٍ ۗ وَهُوَ عَلٰى جَمْعِهِمْ اِذَا يَشَآءُ قَدِيْرٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

SECTION 4: **Believers should be Patient**

30 And whatever misfortune befalls you, it is on account of what your hands have wrought and He pardons much.

وَمَآ اَصَابَكُمْ مِّنْ مُّصِيْبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ اَيْدِيْكُمْ وَيَعْفُوْا عَنْ كَثِيْرٍ ﴿٣٠﴾

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but it was a good for the people themselves, being, in the second case, that they walk in the ways of God or lead godly lives and, in the first, that they love one another. Love of God and love of man are thus the two essentials of religion taught in these two verses. According to some, however, *qurbā* here carries the same significance as *qurbat* or *nearness*, and what is meant is to love the attainment of nearness to God (R).

2227 The sealing of the Prophet's heart cannot imply its being sealed against the Truth — Truth was being revealed to him — but the making of it secure against the abuse of his opponents, for they abused the Prophet and called him an impostor. This significance is, moreover, in accordance with the context, for by blotting out the falsehood and confirming the Truth, the abuses would be stopped, and thus his heart would be made secure against them.

2228 The words here imply the prophecies whose fulfilment would firmly establish the Truth.

31 And you cannot escape in the earth, and besides Allāh you have no protector nor helper.

وَمَآ أَنتُم بِمُعْجِزِينَ فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ﴿٣١﴾

32 And of His signs are the ships, like mountains on the sea.

وَمِنْ ءَايَٰتِهِ ٱلْجَوَارِ فِي ٱلْبَحْرِ كَٱلْأَعْلَٰمِ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 If He will, He stills the wind so that they lie motionless on its back. Surely there are signs in this for every patient, grateful one,

إِن يَشَأْ يُسْكِنِ ٱلرِّيحَ فَيَظْلَلْنَ رَوَاكِدَ عَلَىٰ ظَهْرِهِۦٓ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَءَايَٰتٍ لِّكُلِّ صَبَّارٍ شَكُورٍ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 Or He causes them to perish for what they have earned, and He pardons much ;[2229]

أَوْ يُوبِقْهُنَّ بِمَا كَسَبُوا۟ وَيَعْفُ عَن كَثِيرٍ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 And (that) those who dispute about Our messages may know. There is no refuge for them.

وَيَعْلَمَ ٱلَّذِينَ يُجَٰدِلُونَ فِيٓ ءَايَٰتِنَا مَا لَهُم مِّن مَّحِيصٍ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 So whatever you are given is but a provision of this world's life, and that which Allāh has is better and more lasting for those who believe and rely on their Lord ;

فَمَآ أُوتِيتُم مِّن شَيْءٍ فَمَتَٰعُ ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا ۖ وَمَا عِندَ ٱللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 And those who shun the great sins and indecencies, and whenever they are angry they forgive ;

وَٱلَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَٰٓئِرَ ٱلْإِثْمِ وَٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ وَإِذَا مَا غَضِبُوا۟ هُمْ يَغْفِرُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 And those who respond to their Lord and keep up prayer, and whose affairs are (decided) by counsel among themselves, and who spend out of what We have given them ;[2230]

وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱسْتَجَابُوا۟ لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا۟ ٱلصَّلَوٰةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَٰهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

2229 The ship in these two verses is the ship of the affairs of the disbelievers, which was ultimately to be wrecked, yet Allāh dealt with them mercifully by pardoning most of the wicked things they did. The next verse makes the significance clear by drawing attention to the fact that the statement is a warning to *those who dispute about the messages of Allāh,* that they will find no refuge when their ship is wrecked.

2230 The occurrence in an early Makkan revelation of the words *whose affairs are decided by counsel among themselves* is very significant. The Muslims are here enjoined as usual to observe prayer and to spend out of what Allāh has given them. Yet between these two injunctions, which always go together in the Holy Qur'ān, is placed a third: *And their affairs are decided by counsel among themselves.* It is clear that at this early period the Muslims had no important matters to decide for which they might have stood in need of counsel, yet between two injunctions which are the basis of a true Islamic life, a third is inserted

39 And those who, when great wrong afflicts them, defend themselves.[2231]

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْبَغْيُ هُمْ يَنْتَصِرُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 And the recompense of evil is punishment like it; but whoever forgives and amends, his reward is with Allāh. Surely He loves not the wrongdoers.[2232]

وَجَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِثْلُهَا ۖ فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 And whoever defends himself after his being oppressed, these it is against whom there is no way (of blame).

وَلَمَنِ انْتَصَرَ بَعْدَ ظُلْمِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَا عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ سَبِيلٍ ﴿٤١﴾

42 The way (of blame) is only against those who oppress men and revolt in the earth unjustly. For such there is a painful chastisement.

إِنَّمَا السَّبِيلُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَظْلِمُونَ النَّاسَ وَيَبْغُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 And whoever is patient and forgives — that surely is an affair of great resolution.

وَلَمَنْ صَبَرَ وَغَفَرَ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ لَمِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴿٤٣﴾

SECTION 5 : **Revelation guides aright**

44 And he whom Allāh leaves in error, has no friend after Him. And thou wilt see the iniquitous, when they see the chastisement, saying: Is there any way of return?

وَمَنْ يُضْلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ ۗ وَتَرَى الظَّالِمِينَ لَمَّا رَأَوُا الْعَذَابَ يَقُولُونَ هَلْ إِلَىٰ مَرَدٍّ مِنْ سَبِيلٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

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enjoining that, as a rule, counsel should be taken. The injunction is clearly meant to prepare them for transacting the momentous affairs of State and all matters connected with national weal or woe. In fact, the word *amr,* which I have translated as *affairs,* means *command;* and *amr Allāh,* or *Allāh's command,* often signifies the establishment of the kingdom of God, which stands for an Islamic kingdom. The use of the word *amr,* therefore, here refers to the Islamic kingdom, the affairs of which must be transacted by counsel. In this Islām has laid the basis of Government by parliaments, and the idea found a clear practical expression in the early days of the Caliphate, when the Khalīfah had to refer every important affair to counsel. It is strange indeed that Government by parliament is now looked upon by Europeans as an institution which is quite foreign to Islām and unsuited for the Muslim people.

2231 *Intaṣara* alone signifies *he defended himself against his injurer* (LL); followed by *min,* it signifies the taking of revenge. The first meaning is applicable here, as it is not followed by *min.*

2232 A golden rule relating to forgiveness of evil is given here. The rule laid down is that evil must be requited by punishment proportionate thereto. Note that punishment which is meted out for an evil is called a *sayyi'ah* or *an evil,* because the Arabs speak of the requital of an evil in terms of that evil; see 27/

45 And thou wilt see them brought before it, humbling themselves because of abasement, looking with a faint glance. And those who believe will say: Surely the losers are they who lose themselves and their followers on the Resurrection day. Now surely the iniquitous are in lasting chastisement.

وَتَرٰىهُمْ يُعْرَضُوْنَ عَلَيْهَا خٰشِعِيْنَ مِنَ الذُّلِّ يَنْظُرُوْنَ مِنْ طَرْفٍ خَفِيٍّ ۭ وَقَالَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِنَّ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ الَّذِيْنَ خَسِرُوْٓا اَنْفُسَهُمْ وَاَهْلِيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۭ اَلَآ اِنَّ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ فِيْ عَذَابٍ مُّقِيْمٍ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 And they will have no friends to help them besides Allāh. And he whom Allāh leaves in error cannot find a way.

وَمَا كَانَ لَهُمْ مِّنْ اَوْلِيَآءَ يَنْصُرُوْنَهُمْ مِّنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ ۭ وَمَنْ يُّضْلِلِ اللّٰهُ فَمَا لَهٗ مِنْ سَبِيْلٍ ۭ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 Hearken to your Lord before there comes from Allāh the day which there is no averting. You will have no refuge on that day, nor will it be yours to make a denial.

اِسْتَجِيْبُوْا لِرَبِّكُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّاْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَّا مَرَدَّ لَهٗ مِنَ اللّٰهِ ۭ مَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ مَّلْجَاٍ يَّوْمَىِٕذٍ وَّمَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ نَّكِيْرٍ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 But if they turn away, We have not sent thee as a watcher over them. Thy duty is only to deliver (the message). And surely when We make man taste mercy from Us, he rejoices thereat; and if an evil afflicts them on account of what their hands have sent before, then surely man is ungrateful.

فَاِنْ اَعْرَضُوْا فَمَآ اَرْسَلْنٰكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيْظًا ۭ اِنْ عَلَيْكَ اِلَّا الْبَلٰغُ ۭ وَاِنَّآ اِذَآ اَذَقْنَا الْاِنْسَانَ مِنَّا رَحْمَةً فَرِحَ بِهَا ۚ وَاِنْ تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌۢ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ اَيْدِيْهِمْ فَاِنَّ الْاِنْسَانَ كَفُوْرٌ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 Allāh's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He creates what He pleases. He grants females to whom He pleases and grants males to whom He pleases,

لِلّٰهِ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۭ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَآءُ ۭ يَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَّشَآءُ اِنَاثًا وَّيَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَّشَآءُ الذُّكُوْرَ ۙ ﴿٤٩﴾

Also note that the punishment must be proportionate to the evil. A very just and necessary restriction. And this beautiful maxim is given by a man whose people were in the habit of slaughtering whole tribes for the most trifling fault of one member. Again, forgiveness is not neglected, nor preached in such a manner as to make it impracticable. There is in Islām neither the one extreme of *tooth for tooth* nor the opposite one of *turning the left cheek when the right is smitten* or *giving away the cloak to one who has already wrongfully taken the coat* of his brother; it is the golden and beautiful mean that forgiveness may be exercised, if forgiveness will mend the matter and do good to the wrongdoer himself. The object to be kept in view is to *amend*, whether it is attained by giving proportionate punishment or by exercising forgiveness.

50 Or He grants them both males and females, and He makes whom He pleases, barren. Surely He is Knower, Powerful.[2234]

أَوْ يُزَوِّجُهُمْ ذُكْرَانًا وَّإِنَاثًا ۚ وَيَجْعَلُ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ عَقِيمًا ۗ إِنَّهٗ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 And it is not vouchsafed to a mortal that Allāh should speak to him, except by revelation or from behind a veil, or by sending a messenger and revealing by His permission what He pleases.[2235] Surely He is High, Wise.

وَمَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُّكَلِّمَهُ اللّٰهُ إِلَّا وَحْيًا أَوْ مِنْ وَّرَآئِ حِجَابٍ أَوْ يُرْسِلَ رَسُولًا فَيُوحِيَ بِإِذْنِهٖ مَا يَشَآءُ ۗ إِنَّهٗ عَلِيٌّ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥١﴾

52 And thus[2236] did We reveal to thee an inspired Book[2236a] by Our command. Thou knewest not what the Book was, nor (what) Faith (was), but We made it a light, guiding thereby whom We please of Our servants. And surely thou guidest to the right path —

وَكَذٰلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَآ إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا ۗ مَا كُنْتَ تَدْرِي مَا الْكِتٰبُ وَلَا الْإِيْمَانُ وَلٰكِنْ جَعَلْنٰهُ نُورًا نَّهْدِي بِهٖ مَنْ نَّشَآءُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا ۗ وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِيٓ إِلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٥٢﴾

2234 The birth of a daughter was looked upon by the Arabs as a calamity (see 16:58, 59), this being due to the low position which women held in society. The wonderful change brought about by Islām in the status of wọman is clearly foreshadowed in this early revelation, where the daughter has the precedence over the son.

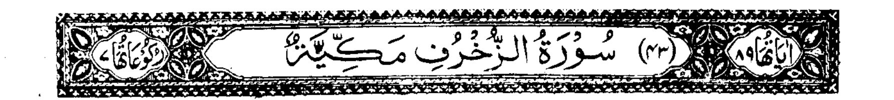
2235 This verse shows how Allāh speaks to a person or makes known His will to him. Three modes of this are stated: (1) By *waḥy*, which word is generally translated as meaning *revelation*. The primary significance of the word *waḥy* is, however, *a hasty suggestion*, and since the different kinds of revelation are spoken of here, the meaning intended must be the primary significance of the word. Hence the inspired word, which enters the hearts of the prophets and of the righteous, is called *waḥy* or *revelation*, because it is like a hasty suggestion made directly to the heart of the inspired one, *ilqā-'un fi-l-rau'i*. It is in this sense that a revelation is spoken of as being granted to the mother of Moses (28:7), and to the apostles of Jesus who were not prophets (5:111). (2) The second mode of Allāh's speaking to His servants is that He speaks from behind a veil — a scene is shown as in a vision carrying a deeper significance, or words are heard by the person spoken to as from behind a veil. (3) The third form of revelation is that in which a messenger — an angel — is chosen by the Almighty to deliver His message to the person to whom He wishes to speak. This is the highest form of revelation, and such is the revelation of the Qur'ān as granted to the Holy Prophet, being recited by Gabriel. This is called *waḥy matluww* or *revelation that is recited*. This revelation is granted only to prophets, while the other two may also be granted to the righteous who are not raised to the dignity of prophethood. It should, however, be borne in mind that in all these cases the recipient of the revelation is granted certain other senses. He sees what others do not see and he hears words which others do not hear. It is, therefore, with what may be called the spiritual senses that he hears and sees and feels things which others do not hear, see, or feel.

2236 *Thus* refers to the last mode of granting revelation, because the Holy Qur'ān is spoken of as having been brought by the *Angel Gabriel* (2:97) or *the faithful spirit* (26:193).

2236a The use of the word *rūḥ* as meaning *inspiration*, and not the *soul*, is conclusive here. The Qur'ān is called the *rūḥ* or *the spirit*, because it gave life to

53 The path of Allāh, to Whom belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth. Now surely to Allāh do all affairs eventually come.	صِرَاطِ اللّٰهِ الَّذِیْ لَهٗ مَا فِی السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ مَا فِی الْاَرْضِ ؕ اَلَاۤ اِلَی اللّٰهِ تَصِیْرُ الْاُمُوْرُ ﴿۵۳﴾

a dead world. It is dead again, and again will life be breathed into it by the Qur'ān.



CHAPTER 43

Zukhruf : GOLD

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 7 *sections*; 89 *verses*)

This is the fourth chapter of the *Ḥā Mīm* group, and is named *Gold* from the mention of *Zukhruf* in v. 35, where it is stated that not gold and silver and worldly embellishments but righteous deeds are acceptable to God; in fact, these are the things which keep men away from the Truth. For the date of revelation, see introductory note to chapter 40.

The chapter opens with a declaration of the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān from Almighty God, as do all the chapters of this group. The Reminder is not withheld from a people, we are here told, on account of their transgressions, because revelation comes to man as a favour from the Merciful God. The second section is devoted to a condemnation of the various sorts of polytheism. The third begins with a mention of Abraham, the father of many a chosen one of God, and after referring to the Prophet's rejection, answers the objection as to why an influential man or a man of wealth was not chosen to convey the Divine message. It is in this connection that we are told that it is not the possession of gold and silver that makes a man great in the sight of God. The fourth follows, stating that the Qur'ān will make the nation rise to real greatness, and, therefore, those who, being misled by evil companions, deny it, will regret their deeds. The fifth shows how a powerful ruler like Pharaoh was destroyed, when he refused to listen to the Truth which was revealed to Moses. The mention of Moses is followed by a reference to Jesus in the sixth section, as the polytheists of Arabia justified their idolatry by the Christian doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus, which is here rejected. The last section contrasts the fate of the two parties, the believers and the disbelievers.

SECTION 1 **Revelation is a Divine Favour**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Beneficent God !

حٰمٓ ۚ (١)

2 By the Book that makes manifest !

وَالْكِتٰبِ الْمُبِيْنِ ۙ (٢)

3 Surely We have made it an Arabic Qur'ān that you may understand.

اِنَّا جَعَلْنٰهُ قُرْءٰنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُوْنَ ۚ (٣)

4 And it is in the Original of the Book with Us, truly elevated, full of wisdom.[2237]

وَاِنَّهٗ فِيْٓ اُمِّ الْكِتٰبِ لَدَيْنَا لَعَلِيٌّ حَكِيْمٌ ۭ (٤)

5 Shall We then turn away the Reminder from you altogether because you are a prodigal people ?[2238]

اَفَنَضْرِبُ عَنْكُمُ الذِّكْرَ صَفْحًا اَنْ كُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا مُّسْرِفِيْنَ (٥)

6 And how many a prophet did We send among the ancients !

وَكَمْ اَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ نَّبِيٍّ فِي الْاَوَّلِيْنَ (٦)

7 And no prophet came to them but they mocked him.

وَمَا يَاْتِيْهِمْ مِّنْ نَّبِيٍّ اِلَّا كَانُوْا بِهٖ يَسْتَهْزِءُوْنَ (٧)

8 Then We destroyed those stronger than these in prowess, and the example of the ancients has gone before.[2239]

فَاَهْلَكْنَآ اَشَدَّ مِنْهُمْ بَطْشًا وَّمَضٰى مَثَلُ الْاَوَّلِيْنَ (٨)

9 And if thou ask them, Who created the heavens and the earth ? they would say : The Mighty, the Knowing One, has created them,

وَلَىِٕنْ سَاَلْتَهُمْ مَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ لَيَقُوْلُنَّ خَلَقَهُنَّ الْعَزِيْزُ الْعَلِيْمُ ۙ (٩)

2237 *Umm al-Kitāb* literally signifies *mother* or *original of the Book,* and the opening chapter of the Qur'ān is also known by this name, because, in its essence, it contains the whole of the Qur'ān. But here it signifies the original source — the knowledge of God — from which the Qur'ān comes, and the meaning is that the Qur'ān cannot be destroyed because it exists in Divine Knowledge. The words, in fact, contain a prophecy, uttered at a time when the Prophet was alone and helpless, that the Qur'ān will be exalted in the world, for that is its position in Divine Knowledge. Another explanation of the words is that they refer to the clear prophecies of the advent of the Holy Prophet as stated in the Bible, e.g., Deut. 18: 15-18.

2238 Dhikr may be translated here as meaning either the *reminder* or *eminence*. The meaning in the first case is that Allāh would not refrain from admonishing a people who have become extravagant, and in the second case that He intends to raise a people to eminence who are so extravagant that there is no hope for their regeneration.

2239 We shall destroy them, we are here told, as stronger opponents of truth were destroyed before them.

10 Who made the earth a resting-place for you, and made in it ways for you that you might go aright.

الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ فِيهَا سُبُلًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

11 And Who sends down water from the cloud according to a measure, then We raise to life thereby a dead land; even so will you be brought forth.[2240]

وَالَّذِي نَزَّلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً بِقَدَرٍ فَأَنشَرْنَا بِهِ بَلْدَةً مَّيْتًا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ تُخْرَجُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12 And Who created pairs of all things, and made for you ships and cattle on which you ride,

وَالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَزْوَاجَ كُلَّهَا وَجَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنَ الْفُلْكِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ مَا تَرْكَبُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 That you may sit firm on their backs, then remember the favour of your Lord, when you are firmly seated thereon, and say: Glory be to Him Who made this subservient to us and we were not able to do it,

لِتَسْتَوُوا عَلَىٰ ظُهُورِهِ ثُمَّ تَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ رَبِّكُمْ إِذَا اسْتَوَيْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَتَقُولُوا سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَنَا هَٰذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَهُ مُقْرِنِينَ ﴿١٣﴾

14 And surely to our Lord we must return.

وَإِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا لَمُنقَلِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 And they assign to Him a part of His servants.[2240a] Man, to be sure, is clearly ungrateful.

وَجَعَلُوا لَهُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ جُزْءًا ۚ إِنَّ الْإِنسَانَ لَكَفُورٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾

SECTION 2 : **Polytheism condemned**

16 Or has He taken daughters to Himself of what He creates and chosen you to have sons?[2240b]

أَمِ اتَّخَذَ مِمَّا يَخْلُقُ بَنَاتٍ وَأَصْفَاكُم بِالْبَنِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

2240 Attention is called here to the laws prevailing in the physical world to impress the need of similar laws in the spiritual world. As rain descending from heaven quickens a dead earth, so Divine revelation would regenerate or raise to life people who, sunk in ignorance and superstitions, were spiritually, morally, and intellectually a dead people.

2240a The reference here is to the Christian doctrine of assigning a son to God, and in the next verse to the idolatrous doctrine of ascribing daughters to God.

2240b This subject is also dealt with in 16:57, 58, and 37:149-153. In the latter place there is clear mention of their calling the angels daughters of God: "Or did We create the angels females, while they witnessed" (37:150). Similar words occur further on in v. 19. The next verse shows how untrue they were to themselves, as they ascribed daughters to God but disliked daughters for themselves.

17 And when one of them is given news of that of which he sets up a likeness for the Beneficent, his face becomes black and he is full of rage.

وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُمْ بِمَا ضَرَبَ لِلرَّحْمٰنِ مَثَلًا ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Is one decked with ornaments and unable to make plain speech in disputes (a partner with God)?[2241]

أَوَمَنْ يُنَشَّؤُا فِي الْحِلْيَةِ وَهُوَ فِي الْخِصَامِ غَيْرُ مُبِينٍ ﴿١٨﴾

19 And they make the angels, who are the servants of the Beneficent, females.[2241a] Did they witness their creation? Their evidence will be recorded and they will be questioned.

وَجَعَلُوا الْمَلٰٓئِكَةَ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عِبٰدُ الرَّحْمٰنِ إِنٰثًا ۚ أَشَهِدُوا خَلْقَهُمْ ۚ سَتُكْتَبُ شَهٰدَتُهُمْ وَيُسْـَٔلُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 And they say: If the Beneficent had pleased, we should not have worshipped them. They have no knowledge of this; they only lie.

وَقَالُوا لَوْ شَآءَ الرَّحْمٰنُ مَا عَبَدْنٰهُمْ ۗ مَا لَهُمْ بِذٰلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ۚ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Or have We given them a Book before it so that they hold fast to it?

أَمْ اٰتَيْنٰهُمْ كِتٰبًا مِّنْ قَبْلِهِ فَهُمْ بِهِ مُسْتَمْسِكُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 Nay, they say: We found our fathers on a course, and surely we are guided by their footsteps.

بَلْ قَالُوٓا إِنَّا وَجَدْنَآ اٰبَآءَنَا عَلٰٓى أُمَّةٍ وَّإِنَّا عَلٰٓى اٰثٰرِهِمْ مُّهْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 And thus, We sent not before thee a warner in a town, but its wealthy ones said: Surely we found our fathers following a religion, and we follow their footsteps.

وَكَذٰلِكَ مَآ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فِي قَرْيَةٍ مِّنْ نَّذِيرٍ إِلَّا قَالَ مُتْرَفُوهَآ ۙ إِنَّا وَجَدْنَآ اٰبَآءَنَا عَلٰٓى أُمَّةٍ وَّإِنَّا عَلٰٓى اٰثٰرِهِمْ مُّقْتَدُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 (The warner) said: And even if I bring to you a better guide than that which you found your fathers following? They said: We surely disbelieve in that with which you are sent.

قٰلَ أَوَلَوْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِأَهْدٰى مِمَّا وَجَدْتُّمْ عَلَيْهِ اٰبَآءَكُمْ ۗ قَالُوٓا إِنَّا بِمَآ أُرْسِلْتُمْ بِهِ كٰفِرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 So We exacted retribution from them, then see what was the end of the rejectors!

فَانْتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَانْظُرْ كَيْفَ كَانَ عٰقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

2241 The reference in this verse is to the idols which were bedecked with ornaments. The inability of the idols to speak is adduced by Abraham as an argument against their divinity (21:63), and the same inability of the idols to answer the prayers of their devotees is advanced as an argument against the divinity of the golden calf (20:89). It should be borne in mind that the two doctrines, taking the angels as daughters of God and worship of female divinities

2241a, see next page.

SECTION 3: **Allāh's Choice of a Prophet**

26 And when Abraham said to his sire and his people: I am clear of what you worship,

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرٰهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِۦٓ إِنَّنِى بَرَآءٌ مِّمَّا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 Save Him Who created me, for surely He will guide me.

إِلَّا الَّذِى فَطَرَنِى فَإِنَّهُۥ سَيَهْدِينِ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 And he made it a word to continue in his posterity that they might return.[2242]

وَجَعَلَهَا كَلِمَةًۢ بَاقِيَةً فِى عَقِبِهِۦ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 Nay! I let these and their fathers enjoy till there came to them the Truth and a Messenger making manifest.

بَلْ مَتَّعْتُ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ وَءَابَآءَهُمْ حَتّٰى جَآءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ وَرَسُولٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 And when the Truth came to them they said: This is enchantment, and surely we are disbelievers in it.

وَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمُ الْحَقُّ قَالُوا هٰذَا سِحْرٌ وَإِنَّا بِهِۦ كٰفِرُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And they say: Why was not this Qur'ān revealed to a man of importance in the two towns?[2243]

وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ هٰذَا الْقُرْءَانُ عَلٰى رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٣١﴾

32 Do they apportion the mercy of thy Lord? We portion out among them their livelihood in the life of this world, and We exalt some of them above others in rank, that some of them may take others in service. And the mercy of thy Lord is better than that which they amass.[2244]

أَهُمْ يَقْسِمُونَ رَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ ۚ نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُم مَّعِيشَتَهُمْ فِى الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجٰتٍ لِّيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُم بَعْضًا سُخْرِيًّا ۗ وَرَحْمَتُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

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were in some way connected with each other in the Arab mind. This is not only clear from what is stated here and in 37:149-153 but also from another early revelation. After mentioning the three female idols *Lāt*, *'Uzzā* and *Manāt*, and denouncing their worship (53:19-23), the Holy Qur'ān goes on to speak of the doctrine of the angels being taken as daughters of God (53:27), thus showing the close relation in which the two doctrines stood.

2241a See 625 where it is shown that every Arab tribe had its own female divinity.

2242 This shows that the Arabs possessed enduring traditions that their great ancestor Abraham was a preacher of Unity.

2243 The two towns referred to are Makkah and Ṭā'if. They would not follow any but an important man of the world, a man possessing much wealth or high rank. Moral greatness possessed no value in their eyes.

2244 Human society is based on differences in rank. It is only through this difference that society can be organized and developed into a State, whether it be

33 And were it not that all people would become one (disbelieving) community, We would provide for those who disbelieve in the Beneficent, roofs of silver for their houses and stairs (of silver) by which they ascend,[2245]

وَلَوْلَآ اَنْ يَّكُوْنَ النَّاسُ اُمَّةً وَّاحِدَةً لَّجَعَلْنَا لِمَنْ يَّكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمٰنِ لِبُيُوْتِهِمْ سُقُفًا مِّنْ فِضَّةٍ وَّ مَعَارِجَ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُوْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 And (of silver) the doors of their houses and the couches on which they recline,

وَلِبُيُوْتِهِمْ اَبْوَابًا وَّ سُرُرًا عَلَيْهَا يَتَّكِـُٔوْنَ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 And of gold. And all this is naught but a provision of this world's life ; and the Hereafter is with thy Lord only for the dutiful.

وَ زُخْرُفًا ؕ وَاِنْ كُلُّ ذٰلِكَ لَمَّا مَتَاعُ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ؕ وَالْاٰخِرَةُ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿٣٥﴾

SECTION 4 : **Opposition to Truth is punished**

36 And whoever turns himself away from the remembrance of the Beneficent, We appoint for him a devil, so he is his associate.[2246]

وَمَنْ يَّعْشُ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمٰنِ نُقَيِّضْ لَهٗ شَيْطٰنًا فَهُوَ لَهٗ قَرِيْنٌ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 And surely they hinder them from the (right) path, and they think that they are guided aright.

وَ اِنَّهُمْ لَيَصُدُّوْنَهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيْلِ وَ يَحْسَبُوْنَ اَنَّهُمْ مُّهْتَدُوْنَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 Until when he comes to Us, he says : O would that between me and thee there were the distance of the East and the West ![2247] so evil is the associate !

حَتّٰۤى اِذَا جَآءَنَا قَالَ يٰلَيْتَ بَيْنِيْ وَبَيْنَكَ بُعْدَ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ فَبِئْسَ الْقَرِيْنُ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 And as you did wrong, it will profit you naught this day that you are sharers in the chastisement.

وَلَنْ يَّنْفَعَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ اِذْ ظَّلَمْتُمْ اَنَّكُمْ فِى الْعَذَابِ مُشْتَرِكُوْنَ ﴿٣٩﴾

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socialistic Russia or capitalist England and America. From these differences in the external conditions of men, the conclusion is drawn that differences must exist in the spiritual sphere too, and some people are chosen to guide others. Allāh's choice for prophethood does not, however, depend on wealth, but on internal worth.

2245 Gold and silver have no worth or value in the sight of Allāh, and He would grant these things to disbelievers to any extent they desire, were it not that most people would be misled by these worldly temptations. The verse undoubtedly draws a picture of the modern condition of the world, where man's whole energy is devoted to the acquisition of wealth and more wealth and material gains and more material gains, and he is shutting his eyes altogether to the moral values of life, with the result that the world to-day stands on the brink of an abyss of utter destruction.

2246 As v. 37 shows, the devil here is the evil companion who leads man to evil.

2247 The word which I translate *the East and the West* is *mashriqain,* which would literally signify *the two Easts.* But the dual number in such cases often

40 Canst thou then make the deaf to hear or guide the blind and him who is in clear error?

أَفَأَنْتَ تُسْمِعُ الصُّمَّ أَوْ تَهْدِي الْعُمْيَ وَمَنْ كَانَ فِي ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 So if We take thee away, still We shall exact retribution from them,

فَإِمَّا نَذْهَبَنَّ بِكَ فَإِنَّا مِنْهُمْ مُّنْتَقِمُوْنَ ﴿٤١﴾

42 Or We shall show thee that which We promise them —[2248] surely We are Possessors of power over them.

أَوْ نُرِيَنَّكَ الَّذِي وَعَدْنٰهُمْ فَإِنَّا عَلَيْهِمْ مُّقْتَدِرُوْنَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 So hold fast to that which has been revealed to thee; surely thou art on the right path.

فَاسْتَمْسِكْ بِالَّذِي أُوْحِيَ إِلَيْكَ ۚ إِنَّكَ عَلٰى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيْمٍ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 And surely it is a reminder for thee and thy people, and you will be questioned.

وَإِنَّهُ لَذِكْرٌ لَّكَ وَلِقَوْمِكَ ۚ وَسَوْفَ تُسْـَٔلُوْنَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 And ask those of Our messengers whom We sent before thee: Did We ever appoint gods to be worshipped besides the Beneficent?

وَسْـَٔلْ مَنْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رُّسُلِنَا أَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ دُوْنِ الرَّحْمٰنِ اٰلِهَةً يُّعْبَدُوْنَ ﴿٤٥﴾

SECTION 5: **Pharaoh's Opposition to Moses**

46 And truly We sent Moses with Our messages to Pharaoh and his chiefs, so he said: I am the messenger of the Lord of the worlds.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوْسٰى بِاٰيٰتِنَا إِلٰى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَإِيْهِ فَقَالَ إِنِّيْ رَسُوْلُ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 But when he brought them Our signs, lo! they laughed at them.

فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ بِاٰيٰتِنَآ إِذَا هُمْ مِّنْهَا يَضْحَكُوْنَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And We showed them not a sign but it was greater than its fellow,[2250] and We seized them with chastisement that they might turn.

وَمَا نُرِيْهِمْ مِّنْ اٰيَةٍ إِلَّا هِيَ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ أُخْتِهَا ۫ وَأَخَذْنٰهُمْ بِالْعَذَابِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُوْنَ ﴿٤٨﴾

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denotes the thing mentioned with its opposite. Thus *mashriqain* means *the place of sunrise* and *the place of sunset* (LL).

2248 V. 41 describes the general law of the punishment of the wicked; even if the Prophet dies, the wicked will meet their doom. But that the general statement should not give rise to any misconception, we are immediately told that the Prophet would see the discomfiture of his enemies with his own eyes.

2250 The meaning is that great signs were shown, each sign being greater

49 And they said: O enchanter, call on thy Lord for us, as He has made the covenant with thee; we shall surely follow guidance.[2251]

وَقَالُوا يَٰٓأَيُّهَ السَّاحِرُ ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ بِمَا عَهِدَ عِندَكَ ۚ إِنَّنَا لَمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 But when We removed from them the chastisement, lo! they broke the pledge.

فَلَمَّا كَشَفْنَا عَنْهُمُ الْعَذَابَ إِذَا هُمْ يَنكُثُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 And Pharaoh proclaimed amongst his people, saying: O my people, is not the kingdom of Egypt mine and these rivers flowing beneath me? Do you not see?

وَنَادَىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ فِي قَوْمِهِ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ أَلَيْسَ لِي مُلْكُ مِصْرَ وَهَٰذِهِ الْأَنْهَٰرُ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِي ۖ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٥١﴾

52 Rather I am better than this (fellow) who is contemptible, and can hardly express himself clearly.

أَمْ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْ هَٰذَا الَّذِي هُوَ مَهِينٌ ۙ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُبِينُ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 Why, then, have bracelets of gold not been bestowed on him,[2252] or angels come along with him in procession?[2253]

فَلَوْلَا أُلْقِيَ عَلَيْهِ أَسْوِرَةٌ مِّن ذَهَبٍ أَوْ جَاءَ مَعَهُ الْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ مُقْتَرِنِينَ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 So he incited his people to levity and they obeyed him. Surely they were a transgressing people.

فَاسْتَخَفَّ قَوْمَهُ فَأَطَاعُوهُ ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 Then when they displeased Us, We exacted retribution from them, so We drowned them all together.

فَلَمَّا آسَفُونَا انتَقَمْنَا مِنْهُمْ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

56 And We made them a thing past and an example for later generations.

فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ سَلَفًا وَمَثَلًا لِّلْآخِرِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

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than the one which preceded it. Just as the word *akh* means *brother* or *an associate* or *a like*, or *a fellow*, its fem. *ukht* means *sister*, or *a like* or *a fellow* (LL). According to R, *ukht* here means *the sign that preceded it.*

2251 See Exod. ch. 8, from which it appears that every time a sign was shown Pharaoh entreated Moses to pray for the removal of the punishment, promising that he would not in that case oppose him.

2252 Pharaoh's suggestion is that, if Moses were the messenger of an Almighty God, he should have been a king, bracelets of gold signifying abundance of wealth. It is shown here that Pharaoh's objection to Moses was similar to the objection of the Quraish to the Holy Prophet.

2253 That is, Moses should have come with angels, as a king comes with his armies.

SECTION 6 : **Jesus as Prophet**

57 And when the son of Mary is mentioned as an example, lo! thy people raise a clamour thereat.[2254]

وَلَمَّا ضُرِبَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَثَلًا إِذَا قَوْمُكَ مِنْهُ يَصِدُّونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 And they say: Are our gods better, or is he? They set it forth to thee only by way of disputation. Nay, they are a contentious people.

وَقَالُوٓا ءَأَٰلِهَتُنَا خَيْرٌ أَمْ هُوَ ۚ مَا ضَرَبُوهُ لَكَ إِلَّا جَدَلًا ۚ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ خَصِمُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 He was naught but a servant on whom We bestowed favour and We made him an example for the Children of Israel;[2255]

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا عَبْدٌ أَنْعَمْنَا عَلَيْهِ وَجَعَلْنَٰهُ مَثَلًا لِّبَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 And if We pleased, We could make among you angels to be (Our) vicegerents in the land.

وَلَوْ نَشَآءُ لَجَعَلْنَا مِنكُم مَّلَٰٓئِكَةً فِى الْأَرْضِ يَخْلُفُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

61 And this (revelation) is surely knowledge of the Hour,[2256] so have no doubt about it and follow me. This is the right path.

وَإِنَّهُ لَعِلْمٌ لِّلسَّاعَةِ فَلَا تَمْتَرُنَّ بِهَا وَاتَّبِعُونِ ۚ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٌ مُّسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٦١﴾

2254 The Qur'ān in many places condemns the doctrine of attributing children to the Almighty. Such a condemnation is contained in this very chapter in the section preceding the last. But when the case of Jesus was cited, the disbelievers objected to the respect shown to him, while their own idols were condemned. This is the significance of the words occurring in the next verse: Are our gods better, or is he? Why should not the same honour be shown to their national gods as was shown to the god of another nation; for was not Jesus accepted as God by the Christians?

2255 This verse contains the answer to the objection referred to in v. 57. Jesus was not honoured because the Christians took him for God or Son of God, which was in fact their own error, but because he was a righteous servant of Allāh on whom He had bestowed favours. Not only was Jesus the recipient of Divine favours, but he was also *an example of virtue* for the Israelites to whom he was sent as a prophet, a model whom they could imitate in righteousness. On the other hand, the idols whom the Arabs took for gods were mere stones and could do no good to their worshippers. Moreover, the idol-worshippers represented even their great men as sunk in immorality. As an instance, take the Puranas of the Hindus, where even such Hindu gods as Shiva are represented as deeply sunk in immorality.

2256 The *Hour* signifies here the departure of prophethood from the house of Israel. Such is the clear significance of the parable of the vineyard in Matt. 21:33, Mark 12:1, and Luke 20:9, which ends with these remarkable words: "Therefore I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21:43). Prophethood had long remained in the house of Israel, and, as history shows, Jesus was the last prophet of the Mosaic dispensation. The Qur'ān is here called the knowledge of the Hour in the sense that its revelation was a clear indication that prophethood was now being taken away from the house of Israel and given to another people, as Jesus himself had said. Some take the personal pronoun *hū* as referring to

62 And let not the devil hinder you; surely he is your open enemy.

وَلَا يَصُدَّنَّكُمُ الشَّيْطَٰنُ ۖ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 And when Jesus came with clear arguments, he said: I have come to you indeed with wisdom, and to make clear to you some of that about which you differ. So keep your duty to Allāh and obey me.

وَلَمَّا جَآءَ عِيسَىٰ بِالْبَيِّنَٰتِ قَالَ قَدْ جِئْتُكُم بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَلِأُبَيِّنَ لَكُم بَعْضَ الَّذِى تَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ ۖ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُونِ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 Surely Allāh is my Lord and your Lord, so serve Him. This is the right path.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ رَبِّى وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ ۚ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٌ مُّسْتَقِيمٌ ﴿٦٤﴾

65 But parties among them differed, so woe to those who did wrong for the chastisement of a painful day!

فَاخْتَلَفَ الْأَحْزَابُ مِنۢ بَيْنِهِمْ ۖ فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 Wait they for aught but the Hour,[2257] that it should come on them all of a sudden, while they perceive not?

هَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا السَّاعَةَ أَن تَأْتِيَهُم بَغْتَةً وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 Friends on that day will be foes one to another, except those who keep their duty.

الْأَخِلَّآءُ يَوْمَئِذٍۭ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ إِلَّا الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٦٧﴾

SECTION 7: **The two Parties**

68 O My servants, there is no fear for you this day, nor will you grieve —

يَٰعِبَادِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ وَلَآ أَنتُمْ تَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 Those who believed in Our messages and submitted (to Us),

الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا وَكَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 Enter the Garden, you and your wives,[2258] being made happy.

ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنتُمْ وَأَزْوَٰجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

71 Sent round to them are golden bowls and drinking-cups, and therein is that which (their) souls yearn for and the eyes delight in, and therein you will abide.

يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِم بِصِحَافٍ مِّن ذَهَبٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ ۖ وَفِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِيهِ الْأَنفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ الْأَعْيُنُ ۖ وَأَنتُمْ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

Jesus, but even then the meaning would be that Jesus was sent to give people the knowledge that he was the last prophet of the Israelite dispensation.

2257 The *Hour* here signifies the doom of the Quraish.

2258 It is with their wives that the faithful are told to enter paradise. In spite of such clear statements in the Holy Qur'ān, it is alleged that Islām denies a soul to woman!

72 And this is the Garden, which you are made to inherit on account of what you did.

وَتِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِيْٓ أُوْرِثْتُمُوْهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٧٢﴾

73 For you therein is abundant fruit to eat thereof.

لَكُمْ فِيْهَا فَاكِهَةٌ كَثِيْرَةٌ مِّنْهَا تَأْكُلُوْنَ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 Surely the guilty will abide in the chastisement of hell.

إِنَّ الْمُجْرِمِيْنَ فِيْ عَذَابِ جَهَنَّمَ خٰلِدُوْنَ ﴿٧٤﴾

75 It is not abated for them and they will therein despair.

لَا يُفَتَّرُ عَنْهُمْ وَهُمْ فِيْهِ مُبْلِسُوْنَ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 And We wronged them not but they were themselves the wrongdoers.

وَمَا ظَلَمْنٰهُمْ وَلٰكِنْ كَانُوْا هُمُ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 And they cry: O Mālik,[2260] let thy Lord make an end of us. He will say: You shall stay (here).

وَنَادَوْا يٰمٰلِكُ لِيَقْضِ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ ۖ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ مّٰكِثُوْنَ ﴿٧٧﴾

78 Certainly We bring the Truth to you, but most of you are averse to the Truth.

لَقَدْ جِئْنٰكُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَلٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَكُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كٰرِهُوْنَ ﴿٧٨﴾

79 Or have they settled an affair? But it is We Who settle (affairs).[2261]

أَمْ أَبْرَمُوْٓا أَمْرًا فَإِنَّا مُبْرِمُوْنَ ﴿٧٩﴾

80 Or do they think that We hear not their secrets and their private counsels? Aye, and Our messengers with them write down.[2262]

أَمْ يَحْسَبُوْنَ أَنَّا لَا نَسْمَعُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوٰىهُمْ ۚ بَلٰى وَرُسُلُنَا لَدَيْهِمْ يَكْتُبُوْنَ ﴿٨٠﴾

81 Say: The Beneficent has no son; so I am the foremost of those who serve (God).[2263]

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمٰنِ وَلَدٌ ۖ فَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْعٰبِدِيْنَ ﴿٨١﴾

82 Glory to the Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of the Throne of Power, from what they describe!

سُبْحٰنَ رَبِّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ عَمَّا يَصِفُوْنَ ﴿٨٢﴾

83 So let them talk and sport until they meet their day which they are promised.

فَذَرْهُمْ يَخُوْضُوْا وَيَلْعَبُوْا حَتّٰى يُلٰقُوْا يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِيْ يُوْعَدُوْنَ ﴿٨٣﴾

2260 *Mālik* means literally *Master*. Here it signifies the angel appointed over those in hell.

2261 The disbelievers are told that they should not think that they have settled the affair of the Holy Prophet by their plans to kill him, for it is Allāh Who really settles all affairs.

2262 The words contain a clear reference to the secret plans against the Holy Prophet.

2263 *In* means *if*, but it is also used to indicate *negation*, carrying the same significance as *mā*. In this sense it is often followed by *illā*, as in 4:159, 58:2 and 67:20, but is sometimes used in that sense without being followed by *illā*, as in

84 And He it is Who is God in the heavens and God in the earth. And He is the Wise, the Knowing.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَٰهٌ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَٰهٌ ۚ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٨٤﴾

85 And blessed is He Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and all between them ; and with Him is the knowledge of the Hour, and to Him you will be returned.

وَتَبَارَكَ الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَعِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿٨٥﴾

86 And those whom they call upon besides Him control not intercession, but he who bears witness to the Truth and they know (him).[2264]

وَلَا يَمْلِكُ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ الشَّفَاعَةَ إِلَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٦﴾

87 And if thou wert to ask them who created them, they would say : Allāh. How are they then turned back ?

وَلَئِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ فَأَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٨٧﴾

88 And his cry — O my Lord, these are a people who believe not ![2265]

وَقِيلِهِ يَا رَبِّ إِنَّ هَٰؤُلَاءِ قَوْمٌ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٨٨﴾

89 So turn away from them and say, Peace ! They will soon come to know.[2266]

فَاصْفَحْ عَنْهُمْ وَقُلْ سَلَامٌ ۚ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨٩﴾

10:68, 21:111 and 72:25. That it here means *mā* or *not* is corroborated by 19:89-93: "And they say, The Beneficent has taken to himself a son . . . and it is not worthy of the Beneficent that He should take to Himself a son. There is none in the heavens and the earth but will come to the Beneficent as a servant". See 1571, where it is shown that the word *Raḥmān* negatives the very idea on which the doctrine of sonship is based. Even if *in* is taken as meaning *if*, the words do not mean that, if God had a son, the Prophet would be the foremost of those who serve that son. The significance in this case would be that, when a man serves God, he may metaphorically be called a son of God, and therefore the Holy Prophet, being the foremost of those who serve, would be a son in that sense, but he refused to be called a son of God because the use of such metaphorical words had given rise to grievous errors.

2264 The bearer of witness to the Truth is no other than the Holy Prophet, and they knew well that he was the most truthful of men.

2265 After years of hard work among them and after being subjected to every kind of persecution, and, lastly, finding them planning against his very life, the Holy Prophet still prays to Allāh not to inflict punishment upon his opponents. He, however, unburdens his mind in the cry: "O my Lord, these are a people who believe not". An unparalleled example of heroic fortitude under trials and loving sympathy for fellow-men !

2266 The turning away from them and saying: "Peace!" are clear prophecies of the Flight. It should be noted that early Makkan revelation contains undeniable prophecies of all the important later events in the life of the Holy Prophet. The fact that a particular event is mentioned in a certain revelation does not settle the date of that revelation, for the Holy Book is full of prophetical statements.

سُورَةُ الدُّخَانِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٤٤) — اٰيَاتُهَا ٥٩ — رُكُوْعَاتُهَا ٣

CHAPTER 44

Al-Dukhān : THE DROUGHT

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 3 *sections;* 59 *verses*)

This is the fifth chapter of the *Ḥā Mīm* group. It is known as *The Drought*, from the prophecy of the drought contained in v. 10. This prophecy is followed by another indicating that a severer punishment would follow, if they did not repent. The case of Pharaoh, who was drowned because he hardened his heart, is then cited. The remaining two sections of the chapter are devoted to a description of the condition of the righteous and the wicked. The chapter is, as it were, an explanation of the nature of the doom which awaited the opponents.

SECTION 1 **Lighter Punishment followed by Severer**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Beneficent God !

حٰمٓ ﴿١﴾

2 By the Book that makes manifest!

وَالْكِتٰبِ الْمُبِيْنِ ﴿٢﴾

3 We revealed it on a blessed night —[2267] truly We are ever warning.

اِنَّآ اَنْزَلْنٰهُ فِيْ لَيْلَةٍ مُّبٰرَكَةٍ اِنَّا كُنَّا مُنْذِرِيْنَ ﴿٣﴾

4 Therein is made clear every affair full of wisdom —[2268]

فِيْهَا يُفْرَقُ كُلُّ اَمْرٍ حَكِيْمٍ ﴿٤﴾

5 A command from Us — truly We are ever sending messengers —

اَمْرًا مِّنْ عِنْدِنَا ؕ اِنَّا كُنَّا مُرْسِلِيْنَ ﴿٥﴾

6 A mercy from thy Lord — truly He is the Hearing, the Knowing,

رَحْمَةً مِّنْ رَّبِّكَ ؕ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ ﴿٦﴾

2267 The revelation of the Holy Qur'ān on *a blessed night* has a deeper meaning beneath it than the mere fact that the revelation began on the blessed night which is elsewhere called *lailat al-Qadr* (97 : 1), one of the last ten nights in the month of Ramaḍān. The *night* stands for a time of darkness, and hence a time of ignorance, when true knowledge had disappeared from the world. A prophet's advent is always preceded by such darkness, and when the Holy Prophet made his appearance, such darkness prevailed in all countries of the world. This night is called a blessed night because in it the world received the greatest manifestation of Divine light.

2268 Divine revelation distinguishes truth from falsehood and reveals the treasures of wisdom to men.

7 The Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, if you would be sure.

رَبِّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ۘ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّوْقِنِيْنَ ۝٧

8 There is no God but He; He gives life and causes death — your Lord and the Lord of your fathers of yore.

لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ يُحْيٖ وَيُمِيْتُ ۭ رَبُّكُمْ وَرَبُّ اٰبَآىِٕكُمُ الْاَوَّلِيْنَ ۝٨

9 Nay, in doubt they sport.

بَلْ هُمْ فِيْ شَكٍّ يَّلْعَبُوْنَ ۝٩

10 So wait for the day when the heaven brings a clear drought,[2269]

فَارْتَقِبْ يَوْمَ تَاْتِي السَّمَآءُ بِدُخَانٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ۝١٠

11 Enveloping men. This is a painful chastisement.

يَّغْشَى النَّاسَ ۭ هٰذَا عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ۝١١

12 Our Lord, remove from us the chastisement — surely we are believers.

رَبَّنَا اكْشِفْ عَنَّا الْعَذَابَ اِنَّا مُؤْمِنُوْنَ ۝١٢

13 When will they be reminded? And a Messenger has indeed come, making clear;

اَنّٰى لَهُمُ الذِّكْرٰى وَقَدْ جَآءَهُمْ رَسُوْلٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ۝١٣

14 Yet they turned away from him and said: One taught (by others), a madman!

ثُمَّ تَوَلَّوْا عَنْهُ وَقَالُوْا مُعَلَّمٌ مَّجْنُوْنٌ ۝١٤

15 We shall remove the chastisement a little, (but) you will surely return (to evil).

اِنَّا كَاشِفُوا الْعَذَابِ قَلِيْلًا اِنَّكُمْ عَآىِٕدُوْنَ ۝١٥

16 On the day when We seize (them) with the most violent seizing; surely We shall exact retribution.[2270]

يَوْمَ نَبْطِشُ الْبَطْشَةَ الْكُبْرٰى ۚ اِنَّا مُنْتَقِمُوْنَ ۝١٦

2269 *Dukhān* means *smoke*, or *mischief*, or *dearth*, or *drought*, or *hunger* (LL). The commentators agree on the basis of highly trustworthy reports that its meaning here is *drought*. According to T, *dukhān* means *jadab*, i.e., dearth or drought, and *jū'* or *famine*, for (the drought brought on such misery that) the hungry man beheld smoke between him and the sky. Others, however, say the real reason why *hunger* is called *dukhān* is that because of the dry earth in a drought dust rises, creating a dusty atmosphere, which is likened to *smoke* (LL). The chapter, as the whole tenor of it shows, belongs to the early Makkan period. The suggestion that this verse and those that follow, up to the 16th, or according to some only vv. 15 and 16, belong to Madīnah, is entirely without foundation. The statements made in these verses are all prophetical, and such is also the statement of v. 15, *We shall remove the punishment a little*, because the removal of the drought was followed by the "violent seizing", which brought on the conquest of Makkah. The Ḥadīth has the following reference to it: "When the Prophet invited the Quraish to Islām, they rejected him and opposed him; so he prayed, O Allāh, help me against them with seven years like the seven years of Joseph. So famine and distress overtook them and all their resources were exhausted, until they ate dead bodies, and a man used to look to heaven, and he saw between him and it something like smoke on account of hard affliction" (B. 65: xliv, 4).

2270 The prophecy here seems to refer to the constant defeats in battle

17 And certainly We tried before them Pharaoh's people and a noble messenger came to them,

وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَجَآءَهُمْ رَسُوْلٌ كَرِيْمٌ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Saying: Deliver to me the servants of Allāh.[2271] Surely I am a faithful messenger to you.

اَنْ اَدُّوْٓا اِلَيَّ عِبَادَ اللّٰهِ ؕ اِنِّيْ لَكُمْ رَسُوْلٌ اَمِيْنٌ ﴿١٨﴾

19 And exalt not yourselves against Allāh. Surely I bring to you a clear authority.

وَّ اَنْ لَّا تَعْلُوْا عَلَى اللّٰهِ ۚ اِنِّيْٓ اٰتِيْكُمْ بِسُلْطٰنٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿١٩﴾

20 And I take refuge with my Lord and your Lord, lest you stone me to death.

وَ اِنِّيْ عُذْتُ بِرَبِّيْ وَ رَبِّكُمْ اَنْ تَرْجُمُوْنِ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 And if you believe not in me, leave me alone.

وَ اِنْ لَّمْ تُؤْمِنُوْا لِيْ فَاعْتَزِلُوْنِ ﴿٢١﴾

22 Then he called upon his Lord: These are a guilty people.

فَدَعَا رَبَّهٗٓ اَنَّ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ قَوْمٌ مُّجْرِمُوْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 So go forth with My servants by night; surely you will be pursued,

فَاَسْرِ بِعِبَادِيْ لَيْلًا اِنَّكُمْ مُّتَّبَعُوْنَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 And leave the sea behind calm.[2272] Surely they are a host to be drowned.

وَ اتْرُكِ الْبَحْرَ رَهْوًا ؕ اِنَّهُمْ جُنْدٌ مُّغْرَقُوْنَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 How many the gardens and springs they left behind!

كَمْ تَرَكُوْا مِنْ جَنّٰتٍ وَّ عُيُوْنٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 And cornfields and noble places!

وَّ زُرُوْعٍ وَّ مَقَامٍ كَرِيْمٍ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And goodly things wherein they rejoiced!

وَّ نَعْمَةٍ كَانُوْا فِيْهَا فٰكِهِيْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 Thus (it was). And We made other people inherit them.

كَذٰلِكَ ۫ وَ اَوْرَثْنٰهَا قَوْمًا اٰخَرِيْنَ ﴿٢٨﴾

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that were to be suffered by the Quraish, beginning with the battle of Badr, and resulting in the final overthrow of their power by the seizure of Makkah. Ibn Mas'ūd says that by *violent seizing* is meant the *day of Badr* (B. 65: xliv, 4). The discomfiture of the power of the Quraish began with Badr, and that power was utterly broken with the conquest of Makkah.

2271 Moses wanted the Israelites to be allowed to leave Egypt.

2272 *Rahw* has several significances. It means *an intervening space between two things* (T), the sea or the river in this case being an intervening space between the Israelites and the Egyptians. It also means *calm* (T), it being implied that there was no storm in the sea when it was left by the Israelites, so that the Egyptians, finding it calm and motionless, followed the Israelites. Or *rahw* may signify *moving along easily*, referring to the Israelites going along without fear of being overtaken.

29 So the heaven and the earth wept not for them, nor were they respited.[2273]

فَمَا بَكَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّمَآءُ وَالْاَرْضُ وَمَا كَانُوْا مُنْظَرِيْنَ ﴿٢٩﴾

SECTION 2: **Good and Evil Rewarded**

30 And We indeed delivered the Children of Israel from the abasing chastisement,

وَلَقَدْ نَجَّيْنَا بَنِيْٓ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ الْمُهِيْنِ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 From Pharaoh. Surely he was haughty, prodigal.

مِنْ فِرْعَوْنَ ؕ اِنَّهٗ كَانَ عَالِيًا مِّنَ الْمُسْرِفِيْنَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 And certainly We chose them above the nations, having knowledge.

وَلَقَدِ اخْتَرْنٰهُمْ عَلٰى عِلْمٍ عَلَى الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 And We gave them signs wherein was clear blessing.

وَاٰتَيْنٰهُمْ مِّنَ الْاٰيٰتِ مَا فِيْهِ بَلٰٓؤٌا مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 These do indeed say :

اِنَّ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ لَيَقُوْلُوْنَ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 There is naught but our first death and we shall not be raised again.

اِنْ هِيَ اِلَّا مَوْتَتُنَا الْاُوْلٰى وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُنْشَرِيْنَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 So bring our fathers (back), if you are truthful.

فَاْتُوْا بِاٰبَآئِنَآ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 Are they better or the people of Tubba',[2274] and those before them? We destroyed them, for surely they were guilty.

اَهُمْ خَيْرٌ اَمْ قَوْمُ تُبَّعٍ ۙ وَّالَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ؕ اَهْلَكْنٰهُمْ ؗ اِنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا مُجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 And We did not create the heavens and the earth and that which is between them in sport.

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا لٰعِبِيْنَ ﴿٣٨﴾

2273 The weeping for a dead man signifies the remembering of his good qualities or actions, which often bring tears to the eyes. *The heaven and the earth wept not for them* because they had neither the love of God in their hearts, nor had they done anything for the good of men, so that their good qualities should have been remembered either in heaven or on earth.

2274 *Tubba'* is a surname of the kings of Yaman, but the name Tubba' was given only to those kings of Yaman who were rulers of Saba' and Ḥaḍramaut and the Ḥimyar (LA). Generally Tubba' is taken to be the title of the kings of the Ḥimyar. R.M. quotes I'Ab as saying that the particular Tubba' spoken of here was a prophet. It is generally believed that he was a believer in God, while his people were disbelievers.

39 We created them not but with truth, but most of them know not.

مَا خَلَقْنٰهُمَآ اِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَ لٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿۳۹﴾

40 Surely the day of Decision is the term for them all,

اِنَّ يَوْمَ الْفَصْلِ مِيْقَاتُهُمْ اَجْمَعِيْنَ ﴿۴۰﴾

41 The day when friend will avail friend in naught, nor will they be helped —

يَوْمَ لَا يُغْنِيْ مَوْلًى عَنْ مَّوْلًى شَيْـًٔا وَّ لَا هُمْ يُنْصَرُوْنَ ﴿۴۱﴾

42 Save those on whom Allāh has mercy. Surely He is the Mighty, the Merciful.

اِلَّا مَنْ رَّحِمَ اللّٰهُ ؕ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿۴۲﴾

SECTION 3 : **Good and Evil Rewarded**

43 Surely the tree of Zaqqūm[2274a]

اِنَّ شَجَرَتَ الزَّقُّوْمِ ﴿۴۳﴾

44 Is the food of the sinful,

طَعَامُ الْاَثِيْمِ ﴿۴۴﴾

45 Like molten brass ; it seethes in (their) bellies

كَالْمُهْلِ ۚ يَغْلِيْ فِي الْبُطُوْنِ ﴿۴۵﴾

46 Like boiling water.

كَغَلْيِ الْحَمِيْمِ ﴿۴۶﴾

47 Seize him, then drag him into the midst of hell ;

خُذُوْهُ فَاعْتِلُوْهُ اِلٰى سَوَآءِ الْجَحِيْمِ ﴿۴۷﴾

48 Then pour on his head of the torment of boiling water —

ثُمَّ صُبُّوْا فَوْقَ رَاْسِهٖ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْحَمِيْمِ ﴿۴۸﴾

49 Taste — thou art forsooth the mighty, the honourable ![2275]

ذُقْ ۚ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْكَرِيْمُ ﴿۴۹﴾

50 Surely this is what you doubted.

اِنَّ هٰذَا مَا كُنْتُمْ بِهٖ تَمْتَرُوْنَ ﴿۵۰﴾

51 Those who keep their duty are indeed in a secure place —

اِنَّ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ فِيْ مَقَامٍ اَمِيْنٍ ﴿۵۱﴾

52 In gardens and springs,

فِيْ جَنّٰتٍ وَّ عُيُوْنٍ ﴿۵۲﴾

53 Wearing fine and thick silk, facing one another —

يَّلْبَسُوْنَ مِنْ سُنْدُسٍ وَّ اِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُّتَقٰبِلِيْنَ ﴿۵۳﴾

54 Thus (shall it be). And We shall join them to pure, beautiful ones.[2275a]

كَذٰلِكَ ۟ وَ زَوَّجْنٰهُمْ بِحُوْرٍ عِيْنٍ ﴿۵۴﴾

55 They call therein for every fruit in security —

يَدْعُوْنَ فِيْهَا بِكُلِّ فَاكِهَةٍ اٰمِنِيْنَ ﴿۵۵﴾

2274a See 2111.

2275 Those who considered themselves mighty and honourable in the land and tried their utmost to exterminate the Truth were ultimately brought low in the land in this very life and thus tasted the consequences of their arrogance.

2275a See 2356.

56 They taste not therein death, except the first death; and He will save them from the chastisement of hell —

57 A grace from thy Lord. This is the great achievement.

58 So We have made it easy in thy tongue that they may mind.

59 Wait then; surely they (too) are waiting.

لَا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا الْمَوْتَ إِلَّا الْمَوْتَةَ
الْأُولَىٰ ۚ وَوَقَاهُمْ عَذَابَ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٥٦﴾
فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكَ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ
الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿٥٧﴾
فَإِنَّمَا يَسَّرْنَاهُ بِلِسَانِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾
فَارْتَقِبْ إِنَّهُم مُّرْتَقِبُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

سُورَةُ الْجَاثِيَةِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٤٥) — اٰيَاتُهَا ٣٧ — رُكُوْعَاتُهَا ٤

CHAPTER 45

Al-Jāthiyah : THE KNEELING

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 4 *sections*; 37 *verses*)

This is the sixth chapter of the *Ḥā Mīm* group. Its title is taken from v. 28, which speaks of every nation ultimately *kneeling* before God. The first two sections speak of revelation. The revelation is from a Mighty and Wise God, and there are many signs of its truth, but the disbelievers still reject it. The signs of its truth are mentioned in the second section, among these being the promise of conquests to those who would follow it and the fulfilment of earlier prophecy respecting it. The third section refers to judgment and the disbelievers' denial of it, because of the hardness of their hearts. The fourth speaks of the doom of the disbelievers, and of the believers taking their place.

SECTION 1 **Denial of Revelation**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

1 Beneficent God!

حٰمٓ ﴿١﴾

2 The revelation of the Book is from Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise.

تَنْزِيْلُ الْكِتٰبِ مِنَ اللهِ الْعَزِيْزِ الْحَكِيْمِ ﴿٢﴾

3 Surely in the heavens and the earth are signs for believers.

إِنَّ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَاٰيٰتٍ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿٣﴾

4 And in your creation and in the animals He spreads abroad are signs for a people who are sure;

وَفِيْ خَلْقِكُمْ وَمَا يَبُثُّ مِنْ دَآبَّةٍ اٰيٰتٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُّوْقِنُوْنَ ﴿٤﴾

5 And (in) the variation of the night and the day and (in) the sustenance which Allāh sends down from the heaven, then gives life thereby to the earth after its death, and (in) the changing of the winds, are signs for a people who understand.

وَاخْتِلَافِ الَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَمَآ أَنْزَلَ اللهُ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مِنْ رِّزْقٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَتَصْرِيْفِ الرِّيٰحِ اٰيٰتٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يَّعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿٥﴾

6 These are the messages of Allāh, which We recite to thee with truth. In what announcement will they then believe after Allāh and His signs ?[2275b]

تلك ايت الله نتلوها عليك بالحق فباي حديث بعد الله و ايته يؤمنون ⑥

7 Woe to every sinful liar !

ويل لكل افاك اثيم ⑦

8 Who hears the messages of Allāh recited to him then persists in haughtiness, as though he had not heard them. So announce to him a painful chastisement.

يسمع ايت الله تتلى عليه ثم يصر مستكبرا كان لم يسمعها فبشره بعذاب اليم ⑧

9 And when he comes to know of any of Our messages, he takes them for a jest. For such is an abasing chastisement.

و اذا علم من ايتنا شيئا اتخذها هزوا اولئك لهم عذاب مهين ⑨

10 In front of them is hell, and that which they have earned will avail them naught, nor those whom they take for protectors besides Allāh, and for them is a grievous chastisement.

من وراىهم جهنم و لا يغني عنهم ما كسبوا شيئا و لا ما اتخذوا من دون الله اولياء و لهم عذاب عظيم ⑩

11 This is guidance ; and those who disbelieve in the messages of their Lord, for them is a painful chastisement of an evil (kind).

هذا هدى و الذين كفروا بايت ربهم لهم عذاب من رجز اليم ⑪

SECTION 2 : **Truth of the Revelation**

12 Allāh is He Who made subservient to you the sea that the ships may glide therein by His command, and that you may seek of His grace, and that you may give thanks.

الله الذي سخر لكم البحر لتجري الفلك فيه بامره و لتبتغوا من فضله و لعلكم تشكرون ⑫

13 And He has made subservient to you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, all, from Himself. Surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect.

و سخر لكم ما في السموت و ما في الارض جميعا منه ان في ذلك لايت لقوم يتفكرون ⑬

2275b *After Allāh and His signs*, i.e., after the word of Allāh and His signs have come to them.

14 Tell those who believe to forgive those who fear not the days of Allāh[2276] that He may reward a people for what they earn.

قُل لِّلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يَغْفِرُوا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يَرْجُونَ أَيَّامَ اللَّهِ لِيَجْزِيَ قَوْمًا بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Whoever does good it is for himself, and whoever does evil, it is against himself ; then to your Lord you will be brought back.

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ أَسَاءَ فَعَلَيْهَا ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ تُرْجَعُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

16 And certainly We gave the Children of Israel the Book and judgment and prophethood and provided them with good things, and made them excel the nations.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ وَرَزَقْنَاهُم مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 And we gave them clear arguments in the Affair.[2277] So they differed not until after knowledge had come to them, out of envy among themselves. Surely thy Lord will judge between them on the day of Resurrection concerning that wherein they differed.

وَآتَيْنَاهُم بَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ ۖ فَمَا اخْتَلَفُوا إِلَّا مِن بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِي بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Then We made thee follow a course in the Affair, so follow it, and follow not the low desires of those who know not.

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَىٰ شَرِيعَةٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ فَاتَّبِعْهَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

19 Surely they can avail thee naught against Allāh. And surely the wrongdoers are friends of each other, and Allāh is the Friend of the dutiful.

إِنَّهُمْ لَن يُغْنُوا عَنكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا ۚ وَإِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۖ وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 These are clear proofs for men, and a guidance and a mercy for a people who are sure.

هَٰذَا بَصَائِرُ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Or do those who do evil deeds think that We shall make them as

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ اجْتَرَحُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ

2276 By *the days of Allāh* are meant the favours which are bestowed on the righteous ; see 1297. These words make it clear that there is an assurance given to the faithful in the two previous verses that they will be triumphant in this world, and rule the land as well as the sea.

2277 The *Affair* or *Amr* here signifies *the prophethood of Muḥammad,* regarding which the Israelites were given the clearest prophecies (Bd). See the next verse, where the Holy Prophet is plainly addressed as having been given this *Affair.*

those who believe and do good — their life and their death being equal?[2278] Evil is what they judge!

أَنْ نَّجْعَلَهُمْ كَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ ۙ سَوَآءً مَّحْيَاهُمْ وَمَمَاتُهُمْ ؕ سَآءَ مَا يَحْكُمُوْنَ ﴿٢١﴾

SECTION 3: **Denial of Judgment**

22 And Allāh created the heavens and the earth with truth, and that every soul may be rewarded for what it has earned, and they will not be wronged.

وَخَلَقَ اللّٰهُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَلِتُجْزٰى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 Seest thou him who takes his desire for his god, and Allāh leaves him in error knowingly,[2279] and seals his hearing and his heart and puts a covering on his sight? Who can then guide him after Allāh? Will you not mind?

اَفَرَءَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ اِلٰهَهٗ هَوٰىهُ وَاَضَلَّهُ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى عِلْمٍ وَّخَتَمَ عَلٰى سَمْعِهٖ وَقَلْبِهٖ وَجَعَلَ عَلٰى بَصَرِهٖ غِشٰوَةً ؕ فَمَنْ يَّهْدِيْهِ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ اللّٰهِ ؕ اَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 And they say: There is naught but our life of the world; we die and we live and nothing destroys us but time, and they have no knowledge of that; they only conjecture.

وَقَالُوْا مَا هِيَ اِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوْتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَآ اِلَّا الدَّهْرُ ۚ وَمَا لَهُمْ بِذٰلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ۚ اِنْ هُمْ اِلَّا يَظُنُّوْنَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And when Our clear messages are recited to them, their only argument is that they say: Bring (back) our fathers, if you are truthful.

وَاِذَا تُتْلٰى عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتُنَا بَيِّنٰتٍ مَّا كَانَ حُجَّتَهُمْ اِلَّآ اَنْ قَالُوا ائْتُوْا بِاٰبَآئِنَآ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 Say: Allāh gives you life, then makes you die, then will He gather you to the day of Resurrection, wherein is no doubt, but most people know not.

قُلِ اللّٰهُ يُحْيِيْكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيْتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يَجْمَعُكُمْ اِلٰى يَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ وَلٰكِنَّ اَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٢٦﴾

2278 The meaning may be that the wicked are not like the righteous, either in life or in death; or, that the wicked will not find themselves in death in a state of ease resembling that which they enjoy in this life. Or, the doing of good is here called life, and the doing of evil death, because good deeds give life to man and evil deeds cause his spiritual death.

2279 The word *knowingly* implies that Allāh knows the heart and mental attitude of men of low desires, and the consequence of their evil deeds is that they remain in error.

SECTION 4: **The Doom**

27 And Allāh's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. And on the day when the Hour comes to pass, on that day will the followers of falsehood perish.

وَلِلّٰهِ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۚ وَيَوْمَ تَقُوْمُ السَّاعَةُ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَّخْسَرُ الْمُبْطِلُوْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 And thou wilt see every nation kneeling down. Every nation will be called to its record.[2280] This day you are requited for what you did.

وَتَرٰى كُلَّ اُمَّةٍ جَاثِيَةً ۚ كُلُّ اُمَّةٍ تُدْعٰٓى اِلٰى كِتٰبِهَا ؕ اَلْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 This is Our record that speaks against you with truth. Surely We wrote what you did.

هٰذَا كِتٰبُنَا يَنْطِقُ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْحَقِّ ؕ اِنَّا كُنَّا نَسْتَنْسِخُ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 Then as to those who believed and did good, their Lord will admit them to His mercy. That is the manifest achievement.

فَاَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ فَيُدْخِلُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ فِيْ رَحْمَتِهٖ ؕ ذٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْمُبِيْنُ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And as to those who disbelieved — were not My messages recited to you? But you were proud and you were a guilty people.

وَاَمَّا الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا ۟ اَفَلَمْ تَكُنْ اٰيٰتِيْ تُتْلٰى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ وَكُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا مُّجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 And when it was said, Surely the promise of Allāh is true and the Hour — there is no doubt about it, you said: We know not what the Hour is. We think (it) only a conjecture and we are not at all sure.

وَاِذَا قِيْلَ اِنَّ وَعْدَ اللّٰهِ حَقٌّ وَّالسَّاعَةُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهَا قُلْتُمْ مَّا نَدْرِيْ مَا السَّاعَةُ ۙ اِنْ نَّظُنُّ اِلَّا ظَنًّا وَّمَا نَحْنُ بِمُسْتَيْقِنِيْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 And the evil of what they did will become manifest to them, and that at which they mocked will encompass them.

وَبَدَا لَهُمْ سَيِّاٰتُ مَا عَمِلُوْا وَحَاقَ بِهِمْ مَّا كَانُوْا بِهٖ يَسْتَهْزِءُوْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 And it will be said: This day We forsake you as you neglected the meeting of this day of yours, and your abode is the Fire, and you have no helpers.

وَقِيْلَ الْيَوْمَ نَنْسٰىكُمْ كَمَا نَسِيْتُمْ لِقَآءَ يَوْمِكُمْ هٰذَا وَمَاْوٰىكُمُ النَّارُ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ نّٰصِرِيْنَ ﴿٣٤﴾

2280 That every nation shall have a book or a record of its deeds shows that nations are also judged according to their deeds. But nations are judged in this life, therefore the day on which every nation is called to its record is the day of its doom. The words — *thou wilt see every nation kneeling down* — hint at a great spiritual awakening being brought about in the world.

35 That is because you made the messages of Allāh a jest and the life of this world deceived you. So on that day they shall not be taken out of it, nor shall they be granted goodwill.

ذٰلِكُمْ بِاَنَّكُمُ اتَّخَذْتُمْ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ هُزُوًا وَّ غَرَّتْكُمُ الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا ۚ فَالْيَوْمَ لَا يُخْرَجُوْنَ مِنْهَا وَ لَا هُمْ يُسْتَعْتَبُوْنَ ﴿۳۵﴾

36 So praise be to Allāh, the Lord of the heavens and the Lord of the earth, the Lord of the worlds!

فَلِلّٰهِ الْحَمْدُ رَبِّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ رَبِّ الْاَرْضِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿۳۶﴾

37 And to Him belongs greatness in the heavens and the earth; and He is the Mighty, the Wise.

وَ لَهُ الْكِبْرِيَآءُ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضِ ۪ وَ هُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ﴿۳۷﴾

PART XXVI

CHAPTER 46

Al-Aḥqāf : THE SANDHILLS

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 4 *sections ;* 35 *verses*)

This is the last chapter of the *Ḥā Mīm* group, and is entitled *The Sandhills,* the title being taken from the tracts of sand which contributed to the destruction of the tribe of 'Ād (v. 21). The fact is mentioned to warn the Arabs that, when the fate of a nation is sealed, it may be brought about on sea, as in the case of Pharaoh and his hosts, or on sand, as in the case of the tribe of 'Ād. For the date of revelation, see introductory note to ch. 40.

The chapter continues the subject-matter of the last chapter, dealing with the truth of revelation in the first section and with the witness of truth in the second. The last two sections, after referring to the fate of 'Ād, contain a warning for those who reject the truth.

SECTION 1 **Truth of Revelation**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Beneficent God !.

حٰمٓ ①

2 The revelation of the Book is from Allāh, the Mighty, the Wise.

تَنْزِيْلُ الْكِتٰبِ مِنَ اللّٰهِ الْعَزِيْزِ الْحَكِيْمِ ②

3 We created not the heavens and the earth and all between them save with truth and for an appointed term.[2281] And those who disbelieve turn away from that whereof they are warned.

مَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضَ وَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَاۤ اِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَ اَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ؕ وَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا عَمَّاۤ اُنْذِرُوْا مُعْرِضُوْنَ ③

4 Say: Have you considered that which you invoke besides Allāh ? Show me what they have created of the earth, or have they a share in the heavens ? Bring me a Book before this or any relics of knowledge, if you are truthful.

قُلْ اَرَءَيْتُمْ مَّا تَدْعُوْنَ مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ اَرُوْنِيْ مَاذَا خَلَقُوْا مِنَ الْاَرْضِ اَمْ لَهُمْ شِرْكٌ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ ؕ اِيْتُوْنِيْ بِكِتٰبٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِ هٰذَاۤ اَوْ اَثٰرَةٍ مِّنْ عِلْمٍ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ ④

2281, see next page.

5 And who is in greater error than he who invokes besides Allāh such as answer him not till the day of Resurrection, and they are heedless of their call?

وَمَنْ اَضَلُّ مِمَّنْ يَّدْعُوْا مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ مَنْ لَّا يَسْتَجِيْبُ لَهٗٓ اِلٰى يَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ وَهُمْ عَنْ دُعَآئِهِمْ غٰفِلُوْنَ ۝٥

6 And when men are gathered together, they will be their enemies, and will deny their worshipping (them).

وَاِذَا حُشِرَ النَّاسُ كَانُوْا لَهُمْ اَعْدَآءً وَّكَانُوْا بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ كٰفِرِيْنَ ۝٦

7 And when Our clear messages are recited to them, those who disbelieve say of the Truth when it comes to them: This is clear enchantment.

وَاِذَا تُتْلٰى عَلَيْهِمْ اٰيٰتُنَا بَيِّنٰتٍ قَالَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا لِلْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ هٰذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ۝٧

8 Nay, they say: He has forged it. Say: If I have forged it, you control naught for me from Allāh.[2282] He knows best what you utter concerning it. He is enough as a witness between me and you. And He is the Forgiving, the Merciful.[2283]

اَمْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ افْتَرٰىهُ قُلْ اِنِ افْتَرَيْتُهٗ فَلَا تَمْلِكُوْنَ لِيْ مِنَ اللّٰهِ شَيْـًٔا هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِمَا تُفِيْضُوْنَ فِيْهِ كَفٰى بِهٖ شَهِيْدًا بَيْنِيْ وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَهُوَ الْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ ۝٨

9 Say: I am not the first of the messengers,[2284] and I know not what will be done with me or with you. I follow naught but that which is revealed to me, and I am but a plain warner.[2285]

قُلْ مَا كُنْتُ بِدْعًا مِّنَ الرُّسُلِ وَمَآ اَدْرِيْ مَا يُفْعَلُ بِيْ وَلَا بِكُمْ اِنْ اَتَّبِعُ اِلَّا مَا يُوْحٰٓى اِلَيَّ وَمَآ اَنَا اِلَّا نَذِيْرٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ۝٩

2281 The Universe had a beginning and it will also have an end.

2282 *From Allāh* here means *from the punishment of Allāh.* If the Qur'ān was a lie which the Prophet had forged, none could avert the punishment which must come upon a forger.

2283 It is noteworthy that, whenever the punishment of the opponents is alluded to, as in the statement *He is enough as a witness between me and you,* the Divine attribute of mercy and forgiveness is also mentioned to indicate that mercy always predominates in the Divine nature.

2284 *Bid'* signifies *a novelty,* or *a thing existing for the first time* (LL). And you say such a one is *bid'* in this affair *when he is the first who has done it* (LL). Prophets had appeared before the Holy Prophet Muḥammad in every country and nation throughout the whole world, and God's sending messengers for the reformation of men was the universal experience of humanity.

2285 The Prophet is made to deny any detailed knowledge as to the ultimate end of one or the other party, but the warning is reaffirmed in the concluding words to show that evildoers must suffer the evil consequences of their deeds. I *know not,* therefore, simply signifies that *he did not know the details.*

10 Say: See you if it is from Allāh, and you disbelieve in it, and a witness from among the Children of Israel has borne witness of one like him,[2286] so he believed, while you are big with pride. Surely Allāh guides not the iniquitous people.

قُلْ اَرَءَيْتُمْ اِنْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ وَكَفَرْتُمْ بِهٖ وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْۢ بَنِيْۤ اِسْرَآءِيْلَ عَلٰى مِثْلِهٖ فَاٰمَنَ وَاسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿١٠﴾

SECTION 2: **Witness of Truth**

11 And those who disbelieve say of those who believe: If it had been a good, they would not have attained it before us. And as they are not guided thereby, they say: It is an old lie.

وَقَالَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَوْ كَانَ خَيْرًا مَّا سَبَقُوْنَاۤ اِلَيْهِ ؕ وَاِذْ لَمْ يَهْتَدُوْا بِهٖ فَسَيَقُوْلُوْنَ هٰذَاۤ اِفْكٌ قَدِيْمٌ ﴿١١﴾

12 And before it was the Book of Moses, a guide and a mercy. And this is a Book verifying (it) in the Arabic language,[2287] that it may warn those who do wrong, and as good news for the doers of good.

وَمِنْ قَبْلِهٖ كِتٰبُ مُوْسٰۤى اِمَامًا وَّرَحْمَةً ؕ وَهٰذَا كِتٰبٌ مُّصَدِّقٌ لِّسَانًا عَرَبِيًّا لِّيُنْذِرَ الَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا ۖۗ وَبُشْرٰى لِلْمُحْسِنِيْنَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 Surely those who say, Our Lord is Allāh, then continue on the right way, on them is no fear, nor shall they grieve.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْا رَبُّنَا اللّٰهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوْا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ ﴿١٣﴾

14 These are the owners of the Garden, abiding therein — a reward for what they did.

اُولٰٓئِكَ اَصْحٰبُ الْجَنَّةِ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ۚ جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٤﴾

2286 The witness from among the Children of Israel, who bore witness of one *like him* is Moses: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, *like unto thee*. . . . And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto My words, which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him" (Deut. 18:18, 19). It is to the concluding statement in the above quotation that attention is called in the words, *see you if it is from Allāh, and you disbelieve in it*.

2287 The words refer to the subject-matter of v. 10, which speaks of Moses' prophecy. The Qur'ān is here declared as fulfilling that prophecy, and the reference to its being in the Arabic language signifies the coming of the Prophet from among the Ishmaelites, who spoke that language, and who were the brethren of the Israelites, this fact being clearly mentioned in the prophecy of Deut. 18:18.

15 And We have enjoined on man the doing of good to his parents. His mother bears him with trouble and she brings him forth in pain. And the bearing of him and the weaning of him is thirty months. Till, when he attains his maturity and reaches forty years,[2287a] he says : My Lord, grant me that I may give thanks for Thy favour, which Thou hast bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do good which pleases Thee ; and be good to me in respect of my offspring. Truly I turn to Thee, and truly I am of those who submit.

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا ۖ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا ۖ وَحَمْلُهُ وَفِصَالُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا ۚ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي ۖ إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿١٥﴾

16 These are they from whom We accept the best of what they do and pass by their evil deeds — among the owners of the Garden. A promise of truth, which they were promised.

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ نَتَقَبَّلُ عَنْهُمْ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا وَنَتَجَاوَزُ عَنْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ فِي أَصْحَابِ الْجَنَّةِ ۖ وَعْدَ الصِّدْقِ الَّذِي كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 And he who says to his parents: Fie on you ! Do you threaten me that I shall be brought forth, when generations have passed away before me ? And they both call for Allāh's aid : Woe to thee ! Believe ; surely the promise of Allāh is true. But he says : This is nothing but stories of the ancients.

وَالَّذِي قَالَ لِوَالِدَيْهِ أُفٍّ لَكُمَا أَتَعِدَانِنِي أَنْ أُخْرَجَ وَقَدْ خَلَتِ الْقُرُونُ مِنْ قَبْلِي وَهُمَا يَسْتَغِيثَانِ اللَّهَ وَيْلَكَ آمِنْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۚ فَيَقُولُ مَا هَٰذَا إِلَّا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 These are they against whom the word proves true, among nations of the jinn and the men that have passed away before them. Surely they are losers.

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلُ فِي أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا خَاسِرِينَ ﴿١٨﴾

19 And for all are degrees according to what they do, and that He may pay them for their deeds and they will not be wronged.

وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجَاتٌ مِمَّا عَمِلُوا ۖ وَلِيُوَفِّيَهُمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 And on the day when those who disbelieve are brought before the

وَيَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا عَلَى النَّارِ

2287a It would appear from this that the spiritual maturity of man usually takes place at the age of forty. Evidence of this is also found in the fact that

Fire: You did away with your good things in your life of the world and you enjoyed them; so this day you are rewarded with the chastisement of abasement because you were unjustly proud in the land and because you transgressed.

اَذْهَبْتُمْ طَيِّبٰتِكُمْ فِيْ حَيَاتِكُمُ الدُّنْيَا وَاسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهَا ۚ فَالْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُوْنِ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَكْبِرُوْنَ فِي الْاَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَفْسُقُوْنَ ﴿٢٠﴾

SECTION 3: **The Fate of 'Ād**

21 And mention the brother of 'Ād; when he warned his people in the sandy plains[2288] — and warners indeed came before him and after him — saying: Serve none but Allāh. Surely I fear for you the chastisement of a grievous day.

وَاذْكُرْ اَخَا عَادٍ ؕ اِذْ اَنْذَرَ قَوْمَهٗ بِالْاَحْقَافِ وَقَدْ خَلَتِ النُّذُرُ مِنْۢ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهٖۤ اَلَّا تَعْبُدُوْۤا اِلَّا اللّٰهَ ؕ اِنِّيْۤ اَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيْمٍ ﴿٢١﴾

22 They said: Hast thou come to us to turn us away from our gods? Then bring us that with which thou threatenest us, if thou art truthful.

قَالُوْۤا اَجِئْتَنَا لِتَاْفِكَنَا عَنْ اٰلِهَتِنَا ۚ فَاْتِنَا بِمَا تَعِدُنَاۤ اِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصّٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 He said: The knowledge is only with Allāh, and I deliver to you that wherewith I am sent, but I see you are an ignorant people.

قَالَ اِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ۖ وَاُبَلِّغُكُمْ مَّاۤ اُرْسِلْتُ بِهٖ وَلٰكِنِّيْۤ اَرٰىكُمْ قَوْمًا تَجْهَلُوْنَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 So when they saw it — a cloud advancing towards their valleys, they said: This is a cloud bringing us rain. Nay, it is that which you sought to hasten, a wind wherein is painful chastisement,

فَلَمَّا رَاَوْهُ عَارِضًا مُّسْتَقْبِلَ اَوْدِيَتِهِمْ ۙ قَالُوْا هٰذَا عَارِضٌ مُّمْطِرُنَا ؕ بَلْ هُوَ مَا اسْتَعْجَلْتُمْ بِهٖ ؕ رِيْحٌ فِيْهَا عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 Destroying every thing by the command of its Lord. So at dawn naught could be seen except their dwellings. Thus do We reward the guilty people.

تُدَمِّرُ كُلَّ شَيْءٍۭ بِاَمْرِ رَبِّهَا فَاَصْبَحُوْا لَا يُرٰۤى اِلَّا مَسٰكِنُهُمْ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْقَوْمَ الْمُجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 And certainly We had given them power in matters in which We

وَلَقَدْ مَكَّنّٰهُمْ فِيْمَاۤ اِنْ مَّكَّنّٰكُمْ فِيْهِ

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the Holy Prophet Muḥammad received the Divine message for the regeneration of mankind at the age of forty.

2288 The brother of a people signifies their prophet, Hūd being the prophet sent to 'Ād. *Aḥqāf* is plural of *ḥiqf*, which signifies *a heap* or *hill of sand that has assumed a bowed form,* and *al-aḥqāf* applies particularly to certain oblong

have not empowered you, and We had given them ears and eyes and hearts, but neither their ears, nor their eyes, nor their hearts availed them aught, since they denied the messages of Allāh, and that which they mocked at encompassed them.

وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُمْ سَمْعًا وَّأَبْصَارًا وَّأَفْئِدَةً فَمَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُمْ سَمْعُهُمْ وَلَآ أَبْصَارُهُمْ وَلَآ أَفْئِدَتُهُم مِّن شَيْءٍ إِذْ كَانُوا يَجْحَدُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَحَاقَ بِهِم مَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ٢٦

SECTION 4 : **A Warning**

27 And certainly We destroyed the towns round about you,[2289] and We repeat the messages that they may turn.

وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا مَا حَوْلَكُم مِّنَ الْقُرَىٰ وَصَرَّفْنَا الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ٢٧

28 Then why did those whom they took for gods besides Allāh to draw (them) nigh (to Him) not help them? Nay, they failed them. And this was their lie and what they forged.

فَلَوْلَا نَصَرَهُمُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ قُرْبَانًا آلِهَةً ۖ بَلْ ضَلُّوا عَنْهُمْ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ إِفْكُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ٢٨

29 And when We turned towards thee a party of the jinn,[2290] who listened to the Qur'ān ; so when they were in its presence, they said : Be silent. Then when it was finished, they turned back to their people warning (them).

وَإِذْ صَرَفْنَآ إِلَيْكَ نَفَرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقُرْآنَ ۚ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوٓا أَنصِتُوا ۚ فَلَمَّا قُضِيَ وَلَّوْا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِم مُّنذِرِينَ ٢٩

30 They said : O our people, we have heard a Book revealed after Moses, verifying that which is before it, guiding to the truth and to a right path.

قَالُوا يَٰقَوْمَنَآ إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَٰبًا أُنزِلَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِيٓ إِلَى الْحَقِّ وَإِلَىٰ طَرِيقٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ٣٠

31 O our people, accept the Inviter to Allāh and believe in Him. He will forgive you some of your sins and protect you from a painful chastisement.

يَٰقَوْمَنَآ أَجِيبُوا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَآمِنُوا بِهِ يَغْفِرْ لَكُم مِّن ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُجِرْكُم مِّنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ٣١

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tracts of sand in the region of Esh-Shihr (LL). Rodwell and Muir locate the 'Ādites in the country round about Ṭā'if ; others in Ḥadramaut. The latter opinion

2289, 2290, see next page.

32 And whoever accepts not the Inviter to Allāh, he cannot escape in the earth, nor has he protectors besides Him. These are in manifest error.

وَمَنْ لَّا يُجِبْ دَاعِيَ اللّٰهِ فَلَيْسَ
بِمُعْجِزٍ فِي الْاَرْضِ وَلَيْسَ لَهٗ مِنْ
دُوْنِهٖٓ اَوْلِيَآءُ ۭ اُولٰٓئِكَ فِيْ ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ۝٣٢

33 See they not that Allāh, Who created the heavens and the earth and was not tired by their creation, is able to give life to the dead? Aye, He is surely Possessor of power over all things.

اَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ
السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ وَلَمْ يَعْيَ
بِخَلْقِهِنَّ بِقٰدِرٍ عَلٰٓى اَنْ يُّحْيِ الْمَوْتٰى ۭ
بَلٰٓى اِنَّهٗ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ۝٣٣

34 And on the day when those who disbelieve are brought before the Fire: Is it not true? They will say: Yea, by our Lord! He will say: Then taste the chastisement, because you disbelieved.

وَيَوْمَ يُعْرَضُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا عَلَى
النَّارِ ۭ اَلَيْسَ هٰذَا بِالْحَقِّ ۭ قَالُوْا بَلٰى
وَرَبِّنَا ۭ قَالَ فَذُوْقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا
كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُوْنَ ۝٣٤

35 So have patience, as men of resolution, the messengers, had patience, and seek not to hasten on for them (their doom). On the day when they see that which they are promised, (it will be) as if they had not tarried save an hour of the day. (Thine is) to deliver. Shall then any be destroyed save the transgressing people?

فَاصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ اُولُوا الْعَزْمِ مِنَ
الرُّسُلِ وَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلْ لَّهُمْ ۭ كَاَنَّهُمْ
يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ مَا يُوْعَدُوْنَ ۙ لَمْ يَلْبَثُوْٓا
اِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّنْ نَّهَارٍ ۭ بَلٰغٌ ۚ فَهَلْ
يُهْلَكُ اِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْفٰسِقُوْنَ ۝٣٥

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is the correct one, as maps of Arabia plainly show Al-Aḥqāf to be situated in Ḥaḍramaut.

2289 The cities of 'Ād, Thamūd and Sheba lay on the borders of Arabia; thus the people living in the metropolis are told how those living around them were aforetime destroyed, and they should take a lesson from their fate.

2290 The jinn spoken of here seem to be the leaders of certain Jewish tribes, because they are spoken of in the next verse as believers in Moses. In fact, they are of the same class as those spoken of in 72:1; see 2580.

CHAPTER 47

MUḤAMMAD

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 4 *sections;* 38 *verses*)

This chapter is entitled *Muḥammad,* and also *Qitāl* or *War.* The first title is due to the fact that this chapter foretells that the condition of those who believe in the Holy Prophet *Muḥammad* will be improved. They were in a very helpless condition at the time of its revelation, having fled from their homes for the safety of their lives, and being threatened by a powerful enemy in their new home. The other title is due to the fact that this chapter shows that the punishment with which the disbelievers were threatened would be brought about by war, in which their ringleaders would perish; others would be made prisoners or vanquished and brought low. War is also a prelude to the spiritual awakening which is to be brought about by Islām a second time.

Opening with the statement that the exertions of those who prevent people from accepting the Truth will be utterly fruitless, the first section goes on to say that this will be accomplished by war. The second section is mainly devoted to the same subject, and further states that Makkah will be subjugated. The third section refers to those who regarded this, the most righteous war in history, as a calamity. The fourth section states that a separation will occur between the truly faithful and the hypocrites.

The revelation of this chapter belongs to a period when war with the Quraish had not yet begun but when circumstances had arisen which showed war to be inevitable. Portions of the chapter may have been revealed during the Holy Prophet's flight from Makkah, but, as a whole, it must be assigned to the first year of the Flight, and therefore it is to be placed before the battle of Badr. The Ḥā Mīm group of Makkan chapters is here followed by three Madīnah chapters, the 47th, 48th and 49th, which show that all difficulties will be overcome by the help of God, and Islām will triumph in the world.

SECTION 1 **Opponents will perish in War**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 Those who disbelieve and turn (men) from Allāh's way, He will destroy their works.[2291]

اَلَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَصَدُّوْا عَنْ سَبِيْلِ
اللّٰهِ اَضَلَّ اَعْمَالَهُمْ ۝١

2 And those who believe and do good, and believe in that which has been revealed to Muḥammad — and it is the Truth from their Lord — He will remove their evil from them and improve their condition.[2292]

وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ
وَاٰمَنُوْا بِمَا نُزِّلَ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَّهُوَ
الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَّبِّهِمْ ۙ كَفَّرَ عَنْهُمْ
سَيِّاٰتِهِمْ وَاَصْلَحَ بَالَهُمْ ۝٢

3 That is because those who disbelieve follow falsehood, and those who believe follow the Truth from their Lord. Thus does Allāh set forth their descriptions for men.[2293]

ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوا اتَّبَعُوا
الْبَاطِلَ وَاَنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّبَعُوا
الْحَقَّ مِنْ رَّبِّهِمْ ؕ كَذٰلِكَ يَضْرِبُ
اللّٰهُ لِلنَّاسِ اَمْثَالَهُمْ ۝٣

4 So when you meet in battle those who disbelieve, smite the necks ; then, when you have overcome them, make (them) prisoners, and afterwards (set

فَاِذَا لَقِيْتُمُ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا فَضَرْبَ
الرِّقَابِ ؕ حَتّٰٓى اِذَآ اَثْخَنْتُمُوْهُمْ فَشُدُّوا

2291 *Aḍalla-hū* is synonymous with *ahlaka-hū* or *aḍā'a-hū* (T, LL), the first meaning *he destroyed him* or *caused him to perish,* and the second *he wasted it* or *made it ineffective.* The significance is that their endeavours to uproot Truth will be brought to naught. This chapter was revealed at a time when the enemies of Islām were at the height of their power, and had apparently uprooted Islām from Makkah, and were preparing to give it a death-blow at Madīnah.

2292 This is another prophecy, a counterpart of the one contained in the previous verse. The Muslims, whose condition, it is announced here, will be bettered, were in a most helpless condition at the time. The majority of them had just fled from their homes, almost penniless, to save their lives and to settle down at Madīnah where, however, they were not left alone, the enemy being determined to crush them by force.

2293 *Amthāl* is the plural of *mathal,* which means a *description, condition, state* or *case,* or a *description by way of comparison,* i.e., *a parable* (LL). V. 1 tells us of the condition of those who tried to uproot Truth, stating that their endeavours will be brought to naught, while v. 2 speaks of those who accept the Truth and states that their material as well as moral condition will be bettered. These are the *conditions* or *descriptions* referred to in v. 3.

them free) as a favour or for ransom till the war lay down its burdens.[2294] That (shall be so). And if Allāh please, He would certainly exact retribution from them, but that He may try some of you by means of others.[2295] And those who are slain in the way of Allāh, He will never allow their deeds to perish.

الْوَثَاقَ ۙ فَإِمَّا مَنًّا بَعْدُ وَإِمَّا فِدَاءً حَتَّىٰ تَضَعَ الْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ۛ وَلَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لَانْتَصَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَلَٰكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَ بَعْضَكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ ۗ وَالَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَلَنْ يُضِلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٤﴾

5 He will guide them and improve their condition.

سَيَهْدِيهِمْ وَيُصْلِحُ بَالَهُمْ ﴿٥﴾

6 And make them enter the Garden, which He has made known to them.[2296]

وَيُدْخِلُهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ عَرَّفَهَا لَهُمْ ﴿٦﴾

7 O you who believe, if you help Allāh, He will help you and make firm your feet.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنْ تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ ﴿٧﴾

8 And those who disbelieve, for them is destruction, and He will destroy their works.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَتَعْسًا لَهُمْ وَأَضَلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٨﴾

9 That is because they hate that which Allāh reveals, so He has rendered their deeds fruitless.

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَرِهُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٩﴾

2294 The word *athkhana* occurring in this passage has been fully explained in 1024. This passage mentions the only case in which prisoners of war can be taken, and thus condemns the practice of slavery, according to which men could be seized anywhere and sold into slavery. Here we are told that prisoners of war can only be taken after meeting an enemy in regular battle, and even in that case they must be set free, either as a favour or after taking ransom. It was the former of these alternatives that the Holy Prophet adopted in most cases; for instance, in the case of the prisoners of the Banī Musṭaliq, in which a hundred families were set at liberty, and in the case of Hawāzin, in which fully six thousand prisoners of war were released merely as an act of favour. Only in the case of the seventy prisoners taken at Badr is there mention of redemption having been taken, but this was when Islām was very weak and the powerful enemy was determined to crush it.

2295 *Intaṣara min-hu* signifies *he exacted retribution from him* (LA), or *he exacted his due completely from him* (T-LL). The meaning is that, if Allāh had pleased, He could have punished the enemies of Islām otherwise than by war, but as He means to punish them by the hands of the Muslims, therefore battles must be fought.

2296 The Garden of the next life is made known to the righteous in this life by making them taste of the spiritual blessings of good deeds in this very life. That a paradise is granted to the righteous in this very life is mentioned

10 Have they not travelled in the land and seen what was the end of those before them? Allāh destroyed them. And for the disbelievers is the like thereof.

أفلم يسيروا في الأرض فينظروا كيف كان عاقبة الذين من قبلهم ۖ دمر الله عليهم ۖ وللكفرين أمثالها ⑩

11 That is because Allāh is the patron of those who believe, and because the disbelievers have no patron.

ذلك بأن الله مولى الذين امنوا وأن الكفرين لا مولى لهم ⑪

SECTION 2 : **Oppressors shall be brought low**

12 Surely Allāh will make those who believe and do good enter Gardens wherein flow rivers. And those who disbelieve enjoy themselves and eat as the cattle eat, and the Fire is their abode.

إن الله يدخل الذين امنوا وعملوا الصلحت جنت تجري من تحتها الأنهر ۖ والذين كفروا يتمتعون ويأكلون كما تأكل الأنعام والنار مثوى لهم ⑫

13 And how many a town, more powerful than thy town which has driven thee out — We destroyed them, so there was no helper for them.[2297]

وكأين من قرية هي أشد قوة من قريتك التي أخرجتك ۚ أهلكنهم فلا ناصر لهم ⑬

14 Is then he who has a clear argument from his Lord like him to whom his evil conduct is made fair-seeming; and they follow their low desires.

أفمن كان على بينة من ربه كمن زين له سوء عمله واتبعوا أهواءهم ⑭

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frequently in the Holy Qur'ān. It should be noted, however, as stated elsewhere, too, that triumph over those who would annihilate Truth is also spoken of as a garden in this life.

2297 The town which had driven away the Holy Prophet was Makkah, and the overthrow of its power is here foretold in the clearest words. It will be seen that the Makkans were not destroyed when their final overthrow came, nor did the Holy Prophet punish them for their crimes and tyrannies against the Muslims. They were dealt with very mercifully — so mercifully indeed that the history of the world does not present another instance of such merciful treatment of a conquered nation of oppressors. By their destruction was thus meant the overthrow of their power.

15 A parable of the Garden which the dutiful are promised: Therein are rivers of water not altering for the worse, and rivers of milk whereof the taste changes not, and rivers of wine delicious to the drinkers, and rivers of honey clarified;[2298] and for them therein are all fruits and protection from their Lord.[2298a] (Are these) like those who abide in the Fire and who are made to drink boiling water, so it rends their bowels asunder?

مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ ۖ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِّن مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ ۚ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّن لَّبَنٍ لَّمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ ۚ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ خَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِّلشَّارِبِينَ ۚ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ مُّصَفًّى ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ ۖ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَالِدٌ فِي النَّارِ وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٥﴾

16 And there are those of them who seek to listen to thee, till, when they go forth from thee, they say to those who have been given knowledge: What was it that he said just now? These are they whose hearts Allāh has sealed and they follow their low desires.

وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَسْتَمِعُ إِلَيْكَ ۚ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا خَرَجُوا مِنْ عِندِكَ قَالُوا لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ مَاذَا قَالَ آنِفًا ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٦﴾

17 And those who follow guidance, He increases them in guidance and grants them their observance of duty

وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَآتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Wait they for aught but the Hour that it should come upon them of a sudden? Now tokens thereof have already come.[2299] But how will they have their reminder, when it comes on them?

فَهَلْ يَنظُرُونَ إِلَّا السَّاعَةَ أَن تَأْتِيَهُم بَغْتَةً ۖ فَقَدْ جَاءَ أَشْرَاطُهَا ۚ فَأَنَّىٰ لَهُمْ إِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ ذِكْرَاهُمْ ﴿١٨﴾

2298 Note that the description given does not mention the actual blessings of paradise, for they are blessings "which no eye has seen nor has any ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive them" (B. 59:8). The blessings mentioned here are plainly called *a parable*, an example which shows what they are like.

2298a Here is another instance of the use of the word *maghfirat*, showing that it does not mean forgiveness of sins, but protection from sin. Among the various blessings of paradise, which its inmates find after admission to paradise is *maghfirat*. It is clear that they could be admitted to paradise only after forgiveness of sins, if they had any, and the commission of sins in paradise is inconceivable.

2299 By the *Hour* is to be understood the hour of their doom, the overthrow of their power, which is clearly spoken of in the previous verses. Tokens of it had already appeared, for they had seen how Islām was daily advancing, and how all their efforts to check its progress had ended in failure.

19 So know that there is no God but Allāh and ask protection for thy sin and for the believing men and the believing women.[2300] And Allāh knows your moving about and your staying (in a place).[2301]

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ
لِذَنْبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتِ ط
وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوٰىكُمْ ﴿١٩﴾

SECTION 3 : **The Weak-hearted Ones**

20 And those who believe say: Why is not a chapter revealed?[2302] But when a decisive chapter is revealed, and fighting is mentioned therein, thou seest those in whose hearts is a disease look to thee with the look of one fainting at death. So woe to them!

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَتْ
سُورَةٌ ۚ فَإِذَا أُنْزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ مُّحْكَمَةٌ
وَّذُكِرَ فِيهَا الْقِتَالُ ۙ رَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ
فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ يَّنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ
نَظَرَ الْمَغْشِيِّ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ ط
فَأَوْلٰى لَهُمْ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Obedience and a gentle word (was proper). Then when the affair is settled, it is better for them if they remain true to Allāh.

طَاعَةٌ وَّقَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ ۚ فَإِذَا عَزَمَ
الْأَمْرُ ۚ فَلَوْ صَدَقُوا اللّٰهَ لَكَانَ
خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ﴿٢١﴾

22 But if you turn away, you are sure to make mischief in the land and cut off the ties of kinship![2303]

فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَنْ
تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَتُقَطِّعُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 Those it is whom Allāh has cursed, so He has made them deaf and blinded their eyes.[2304]

أُولٰٓئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللّٰهُ فَأَصَمَّهُمْ وَ
أَعْمٰى أَبْصَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Do they not reflect on the Qur'ān? Or, are there locks on the hearts?

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْاٰنَ أَمْ عَلٰى
قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا ﴿٢٤﴾

2300 Not only the Prophet but every believer is told here to keep praying to God for being protected from sins, for himself and for all the believers, men as well as women; see also 2194, 2307.

2301 *Moving about* refers to man's going to and fro for the transaction of his affairs, and *staying* to taking rest.

2302 The Muslims had been persecuted beyond all measure; they had been oppressed, slain and turned out of their homes. Hence they naturally desired to be allowed to defend themselves. By *a chapter* is meant *a revelation allowing them to fight.*

2303 It is the hypocrites who are addressed in these words. *Tawallai-tum*

2304, see next page.

25 Surely those who turn back after guidance is manifest to them, the devil embellishes it for them; and lengthens false hopes for them.

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ ارْتَدُّوْا عَلٰٓى اَدْبَارِهِمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهُدَى ۙ الشَّيْطٰنُ سَوَّلَ لَهُمْ ۗ وَاَمْلٰى لَهُمْ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 That is because they say to those who hate what Allāh has revealed: We will obey you in some matters. And Allāh knows their secrets.

ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ قَالُوْا لِلَّذِيْنَ كَرِهُوْا مَا نَزَّلَ اللّٰهُ سَنُطِيْعُكُمْ فِيْ بَعْضِ الْاَمْرِ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ اِسْرَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 But how will it be when the angels cause them to die, smiting their faces and their backs?

فَكَيْفَ اِذَا تَوَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ يَضْرِبُوْنَ وُجُوْهَهُمْ وَاَدْبَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 That is because they follow that which displeases Allāh and are averse to His pleasure, so He makes their deeds fruitless.

ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمُ اتَّبَعُوْا مَآ اَسْخَطَ اللّٰهَ وَكَرِهُوْا رِضْوَانَهٗ فَاَحْبَطَ اَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٢٨﴾

SECTION 4: **An Exhortation**

29 Or do those in whose hearts is a disease think that Allāh will not bring forth their spite?

اَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِيْنَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ اَنْ لَّنْ يُّخْرِجَ اللّٰهُ اَضْغَانَهُمْ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 And if We please, We could show them to thee so that thou shouldst know them by their marks. And certainly thou canst recognize them by the tone of (their) speech. And Allāh knows your deeds.

وَلَوْ نَشَآءُ لَاَرَيْنٰكَهُمْ فَلَعَرَفْتَهُمْ بِسِيْمٰهُمْ ۗ وَلَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ فِيْ لَحْنِ الْقَوْلِ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ اَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And certainly We shall try you, till We know those among you who strive hard, and the steadfast, and manifest your news.

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ حَتّٰى نَعْلَمَ الْمُجٰهِدِيْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَالصّٰبِرِيْنَ ۙ وَنَبْلُوَاْ اَخْبَارَكُمْ ﴿٣١﴾

32 Surely those who disbelieve and hinder (men) from Allāh's way and oppose the Messenger after guidance

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَصَدُّوْا عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَشَآقُّوا الرَّسُوْلَ مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا

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may mean either that *you turn your backs* on the Divine commandment to fight in defence of Truth or *that you are put in authority*.

2304 Note that Allāh blinds the eyes of and makes deaf those who would not turn to the right way. The next verse makes it clear by saying that they do not reflect on the Qur'ān, as if there were locks on their hearts.

تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهُدٰى لَنْ يَّضُرُّوا اللّٰهَ شَيْـًٔا وَ سَيُحْبِطُ اَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿۳۲﴾

is quite clear to them, cannot harm Allāh in any way, and He will make their deeds fruitless.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْۤا اَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَ اَطِيْعُوا الرَّسُوْلَ وَ لَا تُبْطِلُوْۤا اَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴿۳۳﴾

33 O you who believe, obey Allāh and obey the Messenger and make not your deeds vain.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَ صَدُّوْا عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ثُمَّ مَاتُوْا وَ هُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَنْ يَّغْفِرَ اللّٰهُ لَهُمْ ﴿۳۴﴾

34 Surely those who disbelieve and hinder (men) from Allāh's way, then die disbelievers, Allāh will not forgive them.

فَلَا تَهِنُوْا وَ تَدْعُوْۤا اِلَى السَّلْمِ وَ اَنْتُمُ الْاَعْلَوْنَ وَ اللّٰهُ مَعَكُمْ وَ لَنْ يَّتِرَكُمْ اَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴿۳۵﴾

35 And be not slack so as to cry for peace — and you are the uppermost — and Allāh is with you, and He will not bring your deeds to naught.

اِنَّمَا الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَّ لَهْوٌ وَ اِنْ تُؤْمِنُوْا وَ تَتَّقُوْا يُؤْتِكُمْ اُجُوْرَكُمْ وَ لَا يَسْـَٔلْكُمْ اَمْوَالَكُمْ ﴿۳۶﴾

36 The life of this world is but idle sport and play, and, if you believe and keep your duty, He will give you your reward, and He does not ask of you your wealth.

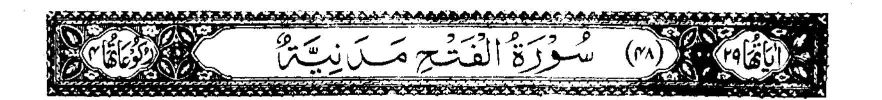
اِنْ يَّسْـَٔلْكُمُوْهَا فَيُحْفِكُمْ تَبْخَلُوْا وَ يُخْرِجْ اَضْغَانَكُمْ ﴿۳۷﴾

37 If He should ask you for it and press you, you will be niggardly,[2305] and He will bring forth your malice.

هٰۤاَنْتُمْ هٰۤؤُلَآءِ تُدْعَوْنَ لِتُنْفِقُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ فَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يَّبْخَلُ وَ مَنْ يَّبْخَلْ فَاِنَّمَا يَبْخَلُ عَنْ نَّفْسِهٖ وَ اللّٰهُ الْغَنِيُّ وَ اَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَآءُ وَ اِنْ تَتَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُوْنُوْۤا اَمْثَالَكُمْ ﴿۳۸﴾

38 Behold! you are those who are called to spend in Allāh's way, but among you are those who are niggardly; and whoever is niggardly, is niggardly against his own soul. And Allāh is Self-Sufficient and you are needy. And if you turn back He will bring in your place another people, then they will not be like you.

2305 In the concluding words of v. 36, it is stated that God *does not ask of men their wealth,* while here they are told *that if He should ask them for it, they would be niggardly.* The two statements do not contradict each other. V. 38 makes it clear that Allāh, being Self-Sufficient, does not stand in need of men's wealth, so He does not ask of them their wealth for His needs — He has no need at all. Yet it is true that great stress is laid on spending wealth, but that is for man's own good. This too is made clear in v. 38 — *whoever is niggardly is niggardly against his own soul. You are needy,* we are further told. Man stands in need of making sacrifices for the good of his own soul and, if he does not make a sacrifice, he will suffer. There is no advancement in this world without a sacrifice, so if man has an urge for advancement, he must spend his wealth.



CHAPTER 48

Al-Fatḥ : THE VICTORY

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 4 *sections*; 29 *verses*)

This chapter is entitled *Al-Fatḥ* or *The Victory,* a very appropriate name, because it deals with the conquests of Islām, from the great moral victory gained at Ḥudaibiyah, mentioned in the opening verse, to the final triumph of Islām over all religions of the world in v. 28. The word *fatḥ* itself occurs several times in this chapter. It is remarkable that although the Muslims had already been victorious in several battles, not one of those victories but a truce, apparently disadvantageous to the Muslims, is made the basis of the triumphant career of Islām. There is an indication in this that the triumph of Islām lay in its moral conquests, the first of these after the Flight being the apparent disadvantage, but the real moral conquest, gained at Ḥudaibiyah. This fact makes clear the connection of this chapter with the last, which speaks of the victory of Islām in battles, this one drawing attention to its real triumph, which lay in moral conquests.

As regards the date of revelation, we have 'Umar's testimony on record that the Holy Prophet recited it for the first time when returning from Ḥudaibiyah (B. 64:37). Hence its revelation belongs to the sixth year of the Hijrah.

The chapter opens by declaring the Ḥudaibiyah truce to be a real victory, and after referring to the disappointment of the hypocrites and the idolaters, concludes with a reference to the aid and allegiance which the faithful rendered to the Holy Prophet. The second section deals with the false excuses of the hypocrites, and separates them from the faithful by not allowing them to join the Muslims in their expeditions. The third section prophesies more victories in battles — that at Khaibar and the conquest of Makkah being clearly hinted at. The fourth section brings the chapter to a close by making the important announcement that Islām will be made triumphant over all other religions of the world.

SECTION 1 **Hudaibiyah Truce was a Victory**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Surely We have granted thee a clear victory,[2306]

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُّبِيْنًا ۝١

2 That Allāh may cover for thee thy (alleged) shortcomings in the past and those to come,[2307] and complete His favour to thee and guide thee on a right path,[2308]

لِيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللّٰهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْۢبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ وَيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهٗ عَلَيْكَ وَيَهْدِيَكَ صِرَاطًا مُّسْتَقِيْمًا ۝٢

3 And that Allāh might help thee with a mighty help.[2309]

وَّيَنْصُرَكَ اللّٰهُ نَصْرًا عَزِيْزًا ۝٣

4 He it is who sent down tranquillity into the hearts of the believers that they might add faith to their faith. And Allāh's are the hosts of the heavens and the earth, and Allāh is ever Knowing, Wise —

هُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَنْزَلَ السَّكِيْنَةَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ لِيَزْدَادُوْٓا اِيْمَانًا مَّعَ اِيْمَانِهِمْ ۗ وَلِلّٰهِ جُنُوْدُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ۝٤

2306 The victory referred to is that gained by the truce at Ḥudaibiyah in 6 A.H. (B. 64:37). The fact that there was no actual fighting at Ḥudaibiyah has led many to think that the words contain a prophecy about the conquest of Makkah, which, however, is referred to later on in the third section of this chapter. The truce at Ḥudaibiyah was surely a real victory for the Muslims, because it opened the way for the propagation of Islām among the disbelievers, and by putting a stop to hostilities gave the opponents an occasion to ponder over the merits of the religion against which they had hitherto struggled in vain on the field of battle. As a result of this truce large numbers came over to Islām, and the words are thus prophetical, and their truth was demonstrated long after their revelation. It may be added here that 'Umar had some misgivings as to the good of the truce concluded at Ḥudaibiyah; he thought that the truce was not honourable for the Muslims, for the conditions to which they yielded were disadvantageous to them. One of the conditions of the truce was that, if anyone from among the Makkans came over to the Holy Prophet, he would return him to the Quraish, though he were a Muslim, while the Quraish were not bound to return anyone who deserted the Prophet and joined the Quraish. The Muslims felt it very hard that one of their brethren should be returned to suffer persecution at the hands of the disbelievers; but, as the Quraish refused to make a truce unless this condition were included, the Holy Prophet accepted it. Immediately afterwards Divine revelation dispelled all those misgivings, and declared the truce to be a great victory leading to glorious results, as it actually proved to be.

2307 For *ghafr* meaning *covering* or *protecting*, see 380. The word *dhanbi-ka* occurring here has been misunderstood as meaning *thy sin*. In the first place *dhanb* means any shortcoming, not necessarily a *sin*; see 393. Secondly, the Prophet never committed a sin and his *istighfār* meant the asking of Divine protection against the commission of sins; see 2194. Even before he was raised to the dignity of prophethood, he was known in Arabia as *al-Amīn* or the faithful one. *Dhanbi-ka* therefore here means not *the sin committed by thee* but *the sin committed against thee*, or *the shortcomings attributed to thee*, as *ithmī* in 5:29 means *not the sin committed by me* but *the sin committed against me*, for which see 687. Other examples of a similar use of *iḍāfah* are met with in the Holy

2308, 2309, see next page.

5 That He may cause the believing men and the believing women to enter Gardens wherein flow rivers to abide therein and remove from them their evil. And that is a grand achievement with Allāh,

لِّيُدْخِلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتِ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِينَ فِيهَا وَيُكَفِّرَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّاٰتِهِمْ ۭ وَكَانَ ذٰلِكَ عِندَ اللّٰهِ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ۝

6 And (that) He may chastise the hypocritical men and the hypocritical women, and the polytheistic men and the polytheistic women, the entertainers of evil thoughts about Allāh. On them is the evil turn, and Allāh is wroth with them and has cursed them and prepared hell for them; and evil is the resort.

وَّيُعَذِّبَ الْمُنٰفِقِينَ وَالْمُنٰفِقٰتِ وَالْمُشْرِكِينَ وَالْمُشْرِكٰتِ الظَّآنِّينَ بِاللّٰهِ ظَنَّ السَّوْءِ ۭ عَلَيْهِمْ دَآئِرَةُ السَّوْءِ ۚ وَغَضِبَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَنَهُمْ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ ۭ وَسَآءَتْ مَصِيرًا ۝

7 And Allāh's are the hosts of the heavens and the earth; and Allāh is ever Mighty, Wise.

وَلِلّٰهِ جُنُودُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۭ وَكَانَ اللّٰهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ۝

Qur'ān. For instance, see 6: 22, where *shurakā'u-kum* does not mean *your partners* but ***the partners set up by you***, and in 16: 27 ***shurakā'ī*** does not mean ***My partners*** but *the partners which you set up with Me*. The *iḍāfah* in *dhanbi-ka* carries a similar significance, and the word means *thy alleged shortcomings*. It is only in this sense that we can speak of *sins in the past* and those *to come*. These were the shortcomings attributed to the Prophet by his enemies, by those who were contemporaneous with him and those who were yet to come after him. Notwithstanding the fact that the Prophet was respected throughout Arabia for his righteousness and truthfulness before he laid claim to prophethood, the twenty years of opposition to the Truth which he brought had poisoned the minds of the Arabs to such an extent that they now drew a very dark picture of him, heaping all kinds of abuses on him. Their poets now indulged in vituperating him, thus poisoning the minds of the masses. The battles that were now being fought had, further, made it impossible for the Muslims to present a true picture of Islām to the Arabs. After several years of conflict, the Ḥudaibiyah truce brought about a change in the relations of the two parties and the truth about the Prophet now began to dawn on their minds. They now saw that the Prophet was not the man of terror as their leaders had pictured to them. They saw the great transformation which he had wrought and the life which he had infused into a dead nation. It was in this sense that God covered the shortcomings and failures which his opponents attributed to him. Their effect on the public mind was removed by the Ḥudaibiyah truce, which gave his enemies an occasion to ponder over the beauties of Islām. In the words *those to come,* there is a reference to the latter-day carpings of the enemies of Islām. As already stated, this chapter deals not only with the immediate triumph of Islām, but prophesies also its ultimate triumph in the whole world (v. 28). Hence there is a promise here that not only would those misunderstandings which already existed be corrected, but even those *that remained behind* and would be spread at a later date by the enemies of Islām, would also be dispelled, and Islām would thus shine in its full lustre not only in Arabia but in the whole world.

2308 The *completion of favours* was accomplished by the spread of Islām, and the *guiding on the right path* signified the right way to success.

2309 Large numbers becoming converts to Islām proved a mighty help in its cause. While proceeding to Ḥudaibiyah the Holy Prophet was accompanied by

8 Surely We have sent thee as a witness and as a bearer of good news and as a warner,

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا ﴿٨﴾

9 That you may believe in Allāh and His Messenger and may aid him and revere him. And (that) you may declare His glory, morning and evening.

لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتُعَزِّرُوهُ وَتُوَقِّرُوهُ ۚ وَتُسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ﴿٩﴾

10 Those who swear allegiance to thee do but swear allegiance to Allāh. The hand of Allāh is above their hands. So whoever breaks (his faith), he breaks it only to his soul's injury. And whoever fulfils his covenant with Allāh, He will grant him a mighty reward.[2310]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۚ فَمَن نَّكَثَ فَإِنَّمَا يَنكُثُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِمَا عَاهَدَ عَلَيْهُ اللَّهَ فَسَيُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٠﴾

SECTION 2 : **The Defaulters**

11 Those of the dwellers of the desert who lagged behind will say to thee :[2311] Our property and our families kept us busy, so ask forgiveness for us. They say with their tongues what is not in their hearts. Say : Then who can control aught for you from Allāh, if He intends to do you harm or if He intends to do you good. Nay, Allāh is ever Aware of what you do.

سَيَقُولُ لَكَ الْمُخَلَّفُونَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ شَغَلَتْنَا أَمْوَالُنَا وَأَهْلُونَا فَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَنَا ۚ يَقُولُونَ بِأَلْسِنَتِهِم مَّا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ ۚ قُلْ فَمَن يَمْلِكُ لَكُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ ضَرًّا أَوْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ نَفْعًا ۚ بَلْ كَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿١١﴾

1,500 men ; two years later, when advancing on Makkah, 10,000 men marched under his banner, which shows how fast Islām spread after the Ḥudaibiyah truce.

2310 The swearing of allegiance referred to here took place before the truce was concluded. The Holy Prophet had started with his men with the object of performing a pilgrimage, but when he reached Ḥudaibiyah, the Makkans opposed his entry into Makkah. Thereupon the companions of the Holy Prophet swore allegiance to him (under a tree as stated in v. 18), that they would defend him at all costs and die fighting at his side (B. 64 : 37). The necessity for this seems to have arisen from the fact that the Quraish advanced to fight the Muslims, who were unprepared for war.

It may be noted here that the companions of the Holy Prophet swore allegiance to him twice at Makkah before the Flight — the swearers being in both cases the citizens of Madīnah. Both these are known by the name of *Bai'at al-'Aqabah*. On the first occasion twelve men only were present, and the swearing of their allegiance implied only their belief in the truth of Islām, the promise given being : "We will not serve anyone but Allāh ; we will not steal ; we will not commit adultery ; we will not kill our children ; we will not slander, and we will not disobey the Prophet in anything that is right" (B. 2 : 10). The second pledge at 'Aqabah, which came a year later, was given by seventy-three

2311, see next page.

12 Nay, you thought that the Messenger and the believers would never return to their families,[2312] and that was made fair-seeming in your hearts, and you thought an evil thought, and you are a people doomed to perish.

بَلْ ظَنَنْتُمْ اَنْ لَّنْ يَّنْقَلِبَ الرَّسُوْلُ
وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ اِلٰٓى اَهْلِيْهِمْ اَبَدًا وَّزُيِّنَ
ذٰلِكَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِكُمْ وَظَنَنْتُمْ ظَنَّ السَّوْءِ ۚ
وَكُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا بُوْرًا ﴿١٢﴾

13 And whoever believes not in Allāh and His Messenger — then surely We have prepared burning Fire for the disbelievers.

وَمَنْ لَّمْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ فَاِنَّآ
اَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكٰفِرِيْنَ سَعِيْرًا ﴿١٣﴾

14 And Allāh's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He forgives whom He pleases and chastises whom He pleases. And Allāh is ever Forgiving, Merciful.

وَلِلّٰهِ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۗ يَغْفِرُ
لِمَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۗ وَ
كَانَ اللّٰهُ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا ﴿١٤﴾

15 Those who lagged behind will say, when you set forth to acquire gains: Allow us to follow you. They desire to change the word of Allāh. Say: You shall not follow us. Thus did Allāh say before.[2313] But they will say: Nay, you are jealous of us. Nay, they understand not but a little.

سَيَقُوْلُ الْمُخَلَّفُوْنَ اِذَا انْطَلَقْتُمْ اِلٰى
مَغَانِمَ لِتَاْخُذُوْهَا ذَرُوْنَا نَتَّبِعْكُمْ ۚ
يُرِيْدُوْنَ اَنْ يُّبَدِّلُوْا كَلٰمَ اللّٰهِ ۗ
قُلْ لَّنْ تَتَّبِعُوْنَا كَذٰلِكُمْ قَالَ اللّٰهُ
مِنْ قَبْلُ ۚ فَسَيَقُوْلُوْنَ بَلْ تَحْسُدُوْنَنَا ۗ
بَلْ كَانُوْا لَا يَفْقَهُوْنَ اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا ﴿١٥﴾

16 Say to those of the dwellers of the desert who lagged behind: You will soon be called against a people of mighty prowess to fight against them until they submit. Then if you obey, Allāh will grant you a good reward; but, if you turn back as you turned

قُلْ لِّلْمُخَلَّفِيْنَ مِنَ الْاَعْرَابِ
سَتُدْعَوْنَ اِلٰى قَوْمٍ اُولِيْ بَاْسٍ شَدِيْدٍ
تُقَاتِلُوْنَهُمْ اَوْ يُسْلِمُوْنَ ۚ فَاِنْ تُطِيْعُوْا
يُؤْتِكُمُ اللّٰهُ اَجْرًا حَسَنًا ۚ وَاِنْ تَتَوَلَّوْا
كَمَا تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلُ يُعَذِّبْكُمْ

Madinites, including two women, who undertook to defend the Holy Prophet, "as we defend our own backs". The third occasion on which an oath of allegiance was taken was the Ḥudaibiyah, and this is known as the *Bai'at al-riḍwān* (see v. 18). Women swore allegiance on one occasion, for which see 2493.

2311 The reference is to those who lagged behind in the Ḥudaibiyah expedition.

2312 Even as late as the sixth year of the Hijrah the Muslims were so weak, as compared with their enemies, that whenever they had to go into the field, the weak-hearted thought that the Muslims were going into the very jaws of death.

2313 The reference here is not to 9:83, which is a much later revelation. It appears that an order similar to that contained in 9:83 was given by the Holy Prophet to the laggards on the occasion of Ḥudaibiyah.

back before, He will chastise you with a painful chastisement.[2314]

عذابا اليما ﴿١٦﴾

17 There is no blame on the blind, nor is there blame on the lame, nor is there blame on the sick. And whoever obeys Allāh and His Messenger, He will cause him to enter Gardens wherein flow rivers. And whoever turns back, He will chastise him with a painful chastisement.

ليس على الاعمى حرج ولا على الاعرج حرج ولا على المريض حرج ومن يطع الله ورسوله يدخله جنت تجري من تحتها الانهر ومن يتول يعذبه عذابا اليما ﴿١٧﴾

SECTION 3 : **More Victories for Islām**

18 Allāh indeed was well pleased with the believers, when they swore allegiance to thee under the tree,[2315] and He knew what was in their hearts, so He sent down tranquillity on them and rewarded them with a near victory,[2316]

لقد رضي الله عن المؤمنين اذ يبايعونك تحت الشجرة فعلم ما في قلوبهم فانزل السكينة عليهم واثابهم فتحا قريبا ﴿١٨﴾

19 And many gains which they will acquire. And Allāh is ever Mighty, Wise.[2317]

ومغانم كثيرة ياخذونها وكان الله عزيزا حكيما ﴿١٩﴾

20 Allāh promised you many gains which you will acquire, then He hastened this on for you, and held back the hands of men from you ; and that it may be a sign for the believers and that He may guide you on a right path,[2318]

وعدكم الله مغانم كثيرة تاخذونها فعجل لكم هذه وكف ايدي الناس عنكم ولتكون اية للمؤمنين ويهديكم صراطا مستقيما ﴿٢٠﴾

2314 The power of the Makkan enemy was now broken, as was proved by the advance on Makkah two years later. Hence, the defaulters are told that they would be called on to join the forces of Islām against another powerful enemy. This appears to be a reference to the wars against the Roman and Persian empires in the time of the early Caliphs, again referred to in v. 21.

2315 It should be noted that the 1,500 men who swore allegiance at Ḥudaibiyah are here declared to be those with whom Allāh is well pleased. These words should set at rest the doubts of the adherents of a great schism in Islām as to the sincerity of the companions of the Holy Prophet. The Prophet was sitting under a tree when allegiance was sworn to him at Ḥudaibiyah (B. 65 : xlviii, 5).

2316 The near victory prophesied here was obtained at Khaibar, soon after the return from Ḥudaibiyah.

2317 These *many gains* predict the later conquests of the Muslims, beginning with the conquest of Makkah which made the Muslims masters of Arabia, and then extending to other countries, both in the East and the West.

2318 What was hastened on was the Ḥudaibiyah truce, which is called "a clear victory" in the very first verse of this chapter. By this truce *the hands of*

21 And others which you have not yet been able to achieve — Allāh has surely encompassed them. And Allāh is ever Powerful over all things.[2319]

وَّ اُخۡرٰی لَمۡ تَقۡدِرُوۡا عَلَیۡهَا قَدۡ اَحَاطَ اللّٰهُ بِهَا ؕ وَ کَانَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰی کُلِّ شَیۡءٍ قَدِیۡرًا ﴿۲۱﴾

22 And if those who disbelieve fight with you, they will certainly turn (their) backs, then they will find no protector nor helper.

وَ لَوۡ قٰتَلَکُمُ الَّذِیۡنَ کَفَرُوۡا لَوَلَّوُا الۡاَدۡبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا یَجِدُوۡنَ وَلِیًّا وَّ لَا نَصِیۡرًا ﴿۲۲﴾

23 (Such has been) the course of Allāh that has run before, and thou wilt not find a change in Allāh's course.

سُنَّةَ اللّٰهِ الَّتِیۡ قَدۡ خَلَتۡ مِنۡ قَبۡلُ ۚۖ وَ لَنۡ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللّٰهِ تَبۡدِیۡلًا ﴿۲۳﴾

24 And He it is Who held back their hands from you and your hands from them in the valley of Makkah after He had given you victory over them. And Allāh is ever Seer of what you do.[2320]

وَ هُوَ الَّذِیۡ کَفَّ اَیۡدِیَهُمۡ عَنۡکُمۡ وَ اَیۡدِیَکُمۡ عَنۡهُمۡ بِبَطۡنِ مَکَّةَ مِنۡۢ بَعۡدِ اَنۡ اَظۡفَرَکُمۡ عَلَیۡهِمۡ ؕ وَ کَانَ اللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعۡمَلُوۡنَ بَصِیۡرًا ﴿۲۴﴾

25 It is they who disbelieved and debarred you from the Sacred Mosque — and the offering withheld from reaching its goal. And were it not for the believing men and the believing women, whom, not having known, you might have trodden down, and thus something hateful might have afflicted you on their account without knowledge — so that Allāh may admit to His mercy whom He pleases. Had they been apart, We would surely have chastised those who disbelieved from among them with a painful chastisement.[2321]

هُمُ الَّذِیۡنَ کَفَرُوۡا وَ صَدُّوۡکُمۡ عَنِ الۡمَسۡجِدِ الۡحَرَامِ وَ الۡهَدۡیَ مَعۡکُوۡفًا اَنۡ یَّبۡلُغَ مَحِلَّهٗ ؕ وَ لَوۡ لَا رِجَالٌ مُّؤۡمِنُوۡنَ وَ نِسَآءٌ مُّؤۡمِنٰتٌ لَّمۡ تَعۡلَمُوۡهُمۡ اَنۡ تَطَـُٔوۡهُمۡ فَتُصِیۡبَکُمۡ مِّنۡهُمۡ مَّعَرَّةٌۢ بِغَیۡرِ عِلۡمٍ ۚ لِیُدۡخِلَ اللّٰهُ فِیۡ رَحۡمَتِهٖ مَنۡ یَّشَآءُ ۚ لَوۡ تَزَیَّلُوۡا لَعَذَّبۡنَا الَّذِیۡنَ کَفَرُوۡا مِنۡهُمۡ عَذَابًا اَلِیۡمًا ﴿۲۵﴾

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men were *held back* from the Muslims, i.e., the Muslims were not persecuted any more. So persecution having ceased, people began to enter Islām in large numbers. This was moreover an indication that the promised conquests of Islām were not only conquests of countries but also conquests of hearts.

2319 This reference is to the great Muslim conquests under the successors of the Holy Prophet. The vanquishment of the enemy is plainly spoken of in the next verse.

2320 This is again a reference to the Ḥudaibiyah truce. Thrice already had the disbelievers attacked Madīnah with very strong forces to crush Islām, and the Muslims had repulsed them every time, inflicting severe loss on them. This is referred to in the words, *after He had given you victory over them.* Yet they

2321, see next page.

26 When those who disbelieved harboured disdain in their hearts, the disdain of Ignorance, but Allāh sent down His tranquillity on His Messenger and on the believers and made them keep the word of observance of duty, and they were entitled to it and worthy of it. And Allāh is ever Knower of all things.

إِذْ جَعَلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ
الْحَمِيَّةَ حَمِيَّةَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ
سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِ وَعَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَأَلْزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوَىٰ وَكَانُوا
أَحَقَّ بِهَا وَأَهْلَهَا ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ
بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٢٦﴾

SECTION 4 : **Ultimate Triumph of Islām**

27 Allāh indeed fulfilled the vision for His Messenger with truth. You shall certainly enter the Sacred Mosque, if Allāh please, in security, your heads shaved and hair cut short, not fearing. But He knows what you know not, so He has ordained a near victory before that.[2322]

لَقَدْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ الرُّؤْيَا
بِالْحَقِّ ۚ لَتَدْخُلُنَّ الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ
إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ آمِنِينَ ۙ مُحَلِّقِينَ
رُءُوسَكُمْ وَمُقَصِّرِينَ ۙ لَا تَخَافُونَ ۖ
فَعَلِمَ مَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا فَجَعَلَ مِنْ دُونِ
ذَٰلِكَ فَتْحًا قَرِيبًا ﴿٢٧﴾

offered terms which were humiliating to the Muslims and the Prophet accepted them to avoid bloodshed, so deeply did he love peace. Thus the hands of both sides were held back. Authentic reports state clearly that 'Umar openly gave vent to his injured feelings (B. 54:15). The chief terms of the agreement were: (1) That the Muslims should return without performing a pilgrimage. (2) That they should be allowed to perform a pilgrimage next year, but should not stay for more than three days. (3) That if a disbeliever, being converted, went over to the Muslims, he should be returned, but if a Muslim went over to the disbelievers he should not be given back to the Muslims (B. 54:15). The last term of the agreement was specially dissatisfying to the Muslims; but it shows the strong conviction which the Holy Prophet had in the truth of Islām, for he was confident that none of his companions would go over to disbelief and join the Quraish and also that those who became converts to Islām would not desert it on account of persecution. Thus it happened that the converts to Islām from among the Makkans, not being allowed to settle at Madīnah, formed an independent colony of their own (B. 54:15), proving thereby the genuineness of their convictions and the strength of their faith.

2321 One of the reasons given here for the truce is that the welfare of the Muslims demanded it, inasmuch as there were Muslims at Makkah who were unknown even to their brethren at Madīnah, and that, if a battle had taken place, they would have suffered along with the enemy. This shows how Islām was making silent progress at Makkah itself, even without the guidance of a preacher, and in spite of persecution.

2322 The Holy Prophet's journey to Makkah to perform a pilgrimage with 1,500 of his companions was undertaken on the basis of the vision stated here. In a vision, the Prophet had seen himself and his companions performing a

28 He it is Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of Truth that He may make it prevail over all religions. And Allāh is enough for a witness.[2323]

هُوَ الَّذِیْٓ اَرْسَلَ رَسُوْلَهٗ بِالْهُدٰی
وَدِیْنِ الْحَقِّ لِیُظْهِرَهٗ عَلَی الدِّیْنِ
كُلِّهٖ ؕ وَكَفٰی بِاللّٰهِ شَهِیْدًا ﴿۲۸﴾

29 Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh, and those with him are firm of heart against the disbelievers,[2324] compassionate among themselves. Thou seest them bowing down, prostrating themselves, seeking Allāh's grace and pleasure. Their marks are on their faces in consequence of prostration. That is their description in the Torah — and their description in the Gospel — like seed-produce that puts forth its sprout, then strengthens it, so it becomes stout and stands firmly on its stem, delighting the sowers that He may enrage the disbelievers on account of them. Allāh has promised such of them as believe and do good, forgiveness and a great reward.

مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَالَّذِیْنَ مَعَهٗٓ
اَشِدَّآءُ عَلَی الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَآءُ بَیْنَهُمْ
تَرٰىهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا یَّبْتَغُوْنَ فَضْلًا
مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَرِضْوَانًا ؗ سِیْمَاهُمْ فِیْ
وُجُوْهِهِمْ مِّنْ اَثَرِ السُّجُوْدِ ؕ ذٰلِكَ
مَثَلُهُمْ فِی التَّوْرٰىةِ ۛۚ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِی
الْاِنْجِیْلِ ۛ۫ كَزَرْعٍ اَخْرَجَ شَطْـَٔهٗ
فَاٰزَرَهٗ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوٰی عَلٰی
سُوْقِهٖ یُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِیَغِیْظَ بِهِمُ
الْكُفَّارَ ؕ وَعَدَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا
وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ مِنْهُمْ مَّغْفِرَةً
وَّاَجْرًا عَظِیْمًا ﴿۲۹﴾

pilgrimage. Convinced of the truth of his vision, he set out with about 1,500 of his companions with the object of performing a pilgrimage. The Makkans, however, opposed him at Ḥudaibiyah, and a truce was there arranged, according to which the Holy Prophet had to return without performing a pilgrimage. The truth of the vision is therefore asserted here. It is made clear that the Prophet's return did not falsify the vision, which had to be, and was, fulfilled next year. This was the answer which the Holy Prophet gave to 'Umar when he objected to returning without performing a pilgrimage (B. 54:15). The *near victory* referred to here as coming *before that*, i.e., before the vision was fulfilled by the actual performance of the pilgrimage during the following year, is the conquest of Khaibar which happened in the month of Ṣafar in the seventh year of the Hijrah.

2323 This prophecy of the prevalence of Islām over all other religions is a prophecy which extends into the distant future, while Arabia saw its fulfilment in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. The prevalence of Islām does not, however, mean the political supremacy of its adherents at all times, nor does the prophecy signify that other religions would at any time entirely disappear. It only indicates that the superiority of the religion of Islām over all other religions will at last be established, and Islām will be the religion of the majority of the nations of the earth. No other scripture prophesies the triumph of the religion it preaches in such unmistakable terms. See also 9:33; 61:9.

2324 *Ashiddā'* is plural of *shadīd*, which means *firm, strong, powerful,* as well as *brave, firm of heart* (LA, Q, LL). *Shiddat*, the root word, also signifies *firmness of heart* (T). The translation *fierce*, or *vehement*, adopted in English translations, is not correct here. The Muslims stood firm against the disbelievers but they were never fierce or hard in their treatment towards them.

آياتها ١٨ (٤٩) سُوْرَةُ الْحُجُرٰتِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ ركوعاتها ٢

CHAPTER 49

Al-Ḥujurāt : THE APARTMENTS

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 2 *sections ;* 18 *verses*)

The chapter takes its title from v. 4, which enjoins the Muslims not to call out to the Prophet from behind the private *apartments.* It was revealed to teach good manners as well as good morals when large masses began to enter Islām and deputation after deputation came to Madīnah. The Holy Prophet was not only the spiritual head of a people ; he was also a Prophet who had to direct his people in their religious and temporal affairs. He had to decide their cases and to make laws for them ; to lead them to prayer, to bow before God and into the field to fight against a powerful enemy ; and, therefore, it was necessary that the new converts to Islām should appreciate the value of his time. It, however, teaches respect not only for the Prophet's privacy but also for each other's privacy.

The chapter was revealed at Madīnah in the year 9 A.H. The opening verses are unanimously taken to refer to the time of the visit of the deputation of the Banī Tamīm. As the previous chapter speaks of victories for the Muslims, and as victory brings ease, this chapter denounces the vices of a civilized society living in ease and comfort. Opening with an injunction as to the manners to be observed towards the Holy Prophet, the section is concluded with a direction requiring the Muslims to make peace between Muslims. The second section teaches the Muslims some of the social virtues, and enjoins them to avoid certain vices which are the bane of society, showing that brotherhood in Islām is not based on the distinctions of tribes and families, but on piety and righteousness.

SECTION 1 **Respect for the Prophet**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

1 O you who believe, be not forward in the presence of Allāh and His Messenger, and keep your duty to Allāh. Surely Allāh is Hearing, Knowing.[2325]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١﴾

2 O you who believe, raise not your voices above the Prophet's voice, nor speak loudly to him as you speak loudly one to another, lest your deeds become null, while you perceive not.[2326]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَنْ تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٢﴾

3 Surely those who lower their voices before Allāh's Messenger are they whose hearts Allāh has proved for dutifulness. For them is forgiveness and a great reward.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَغُضُّونَ أَصْوَاتَهُمْ عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ امْتَحَنَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۚ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٣﴾

4 Those who call out to thee from behind the private apartments, most of them have no sense.[2327]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُنَادُونَكَ مِنْ وَرَاءِ الْحُجُرَاتِ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾

5 And if they had patience till thou come out to them, it would be better for them. And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ صَبَرُوا حَتَّىٰ تَخْرُجَ إِلَيْهِمْ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٥﴾

6 O you who believe, if an unrighteous man brings you news, look carefully into it, lest you harm a people in ignorance, then be sorry for what you did.[2328]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَإٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَنْ تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ ﴿٦﴾

2325 The *presence of Allāh* means the *presence of His commandments*. The words imply the utmost obedience.

2326 The Qur'ān not only inculcates high morals but also regulates social conduct, because its teachings are intended for all grades of men. When large numbers of men began to enter Islām such directions became necessary, and they will always be needed by the masses in any society. A loud voice is expressive of arrogance or resentment.

2327 As already pointed out, when the masses began to enter Islām many of them were ignorant even of the ordinary social rules, and they called out to the Prophet with loud voices while he was within his house. The practice is deprecated because it meant disrespect to the Holy Prophet.

2328 Such a direction was expedient when a condition of war necessitated prompt action to be taken against the enemy. But even the exigencies of war

7 And know that among you is Allāh's Messenger. Were he to obey you in many a matter, you would surely fall into distress; but Allāh has endeared the faith to you and has made it seemly in your hearts, and He has made hateful to you disbelief and transgression and disobedience. Such are those who are rightly guided —

وَ اعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ فِيْكُمْ رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ ؕ لَوْ
يُطِيْعُكُمْ فِيْ كَثِيْرٍ مِّنَ الْاَمْرِ لَعَنِتُّمْ
وَلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ حَبَّبَ اِلَيْكُمُ الْاِيْمَانَ
وَ زَيَّنَهٗ فِيْ قُلُوْبِكُمْ وَ كَرَّهَ اِلَيْكُمُ
الْكُفْرَ وَ الْفُسُوْقَ وَ الْعِصْيَانَ ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ
هُمُ الرّٰشِدُوْنَ ۙ﴿۷﴾

8 A grace from Allāh and a favour. And Allāh is Knowing, Wise.

فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَ نِعْمَةً ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ
عَلِيْمٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿۸﴾

9 And if two parties of the believers quarrel, make peace between them. Then if one of them does wrong to the other, fight that which does wrong, till it return to Allāh's command. Then, if it returns, make peace between them with justice and act equitably. Surely Allāh loves the equitable.[2329]

وَ اِنْ طَآئِفَتٰنِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ اقْتَتَلُوْا
فَاَصْلِحُوْا بَيْنَهُمَا ۚ فَاِنْۢ بَغَتْ اِحْدٰىهُمَا
عَلَى الْاُخْرٰى فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِيْ تَبْغِيْ حَتّٰى
تَفِيْٓءَ اِلٰٓى اَمْرِ اللّٰهِ ۚ فَاِنْ فَآءَتْ
فَاَصْلِحُوْا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَ اَقْسِطُوْا ؕ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِيْنَ ﴿۹﴾

10 The believers are brethren so make peace between your brethren, and keep your duty to Allāh that mercy may be had on you.

اِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ اِخْوَةٌ فَاَصْلِحُوْا بَيْنَ
اَخَوَيْكُمْ وَ اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُوْنَ ﴿۱۰﴾

SECTION 2: **Respect for Muslim Brotherhood**

11 O you who believe, let not people laugh at people, perchance they may be better than they; nor let women (laugh) at women, perchance they may be better than they. Neither find fault with your own people, nor call one another by nick-names. Evil is a bad name after faith; and whoso

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا يَسْخَرْ قَوْمٌ
مِّنْ قَوْمٍ عَسٰٓى اَنْ يَّكُوْنُوْا خَيْرًا
مِّنْهُمْ وَ لَا نِسَآءٌ مِّنْ نِّسَآءٍ عَسٰٓى
اَنْ يَّكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ ۚ وَ لَا تَلْمِزُوْٓا
اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَ لَا تَنَابَزُوْا بِالْاَلْقَابِ ؕ

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were to be carried out with the utmost carefulness, so that friendly people should not suffer loss.

2329 It is related that the occasion of the revelation of this verse was a quarrel between the Aus and the Khazraj, the two chief tribes of Madīnah; but this does not mean that the verse is applicable only to that case. The verse, in fact, requires the Muslims not to be indifferent when one party of them quarrels with another. In such cases they must bring every kind of pressure within their reach to bear upon the party in error. It is the duty of every Muslim to maintain the unity of Islām. An attitude of indifference towards *fatwās* of *kufr*, directed

turns not, these it is that are the iniquitous.[2330]

بِئْسَ الِاسْمُ الْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ ۚ
وَمَنْ لَمْ يَتُبْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12 O you who believe, avoid most of suspicion, for surely suspicion in some cases is sin ; and spy not nor let some of you backbite others. Does one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother ? You abhor it ! And keep your duty to Allāh, surely Allāh is Oft-returning (to mercy), Merciful.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا
مِنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ ۖ وَلَا
تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبْ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا ۚ
أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ
مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

13 O mankind, surely We have created you from a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other. Surely the noblest of you with Allāh is the most dutiful of you. Surely Allāh is Knowing, Aware.[2331]

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ
وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ
لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ۚ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

14 The dwellers of the desert say : We believe. Say : You believe not, but say, We submit ; and faith has not yet entered into your hearts. And if you obey Allāh and His Messenger, He will not diminish aught of your deeds. Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.[2332]

قَالَتِ الْأَعْرَابُ آمَنَّا ۖ قُلْ لَمْ تُؤْمِنُوا
وَلَٰكِنْ قُولُوا أَسْلَمْنَا وَلَمَّا يَدْخُلِ
الْإِيمَانُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ ۖ وَإِنْ تُطِيعُوا
اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَا يَلِتْكُمْ مِنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ
شَيْئًا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٤﴾

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against their own brethren by ignorant Mullās, has dealt a fatal blow to the union of Muslim brotherhood, and, if the Muslims do not raise their voice against these *fatwās*, they must never hope to make any progress towards real union.

2330 This verse and those that follow deal with some of the evils which are most rampant in civilized society, and which corrupt a society to its core. These evils mostly arise with wealth ; for, living in ease, people are most concerned with seeking each other's faults, and thus mutual hatred takes the place of brotherly love and friendly concord.

2331 The principle of the brotherhood of man laid down here is on the broadest basis. The address here is not to believers, as in the two previous verses, but to men in general, who are told that they are all, as it were, members of one family, and their divisions into nations, tribes and families should not lead to estrangement from, but to a better knowledge of, each other. Superiority of one over another in this vast brotherhood does not depend on nationality, wealth, or rank, but on the careful observance of duty, or moral greatness.

2332 Here the Muslims are enjoined to deal kindly and leniently, even with those who, being novices, were not yet really grounded in the faith, though they were members of the Muslim brotherhood. Faith had not yet entered into their

15 The believers are those only who believe in Allāh and His Messenger, then they doubt not, and struggle hard with their wealth and their lives in the way of Allāh. Such are the truthful ones.

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ
وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَرْتَابُوا وَجَاهَدُوا
بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

16 Say: Would you apprise Allāh of your religion? and Allāh knows what is in the heavens and what is in the earth. And Allāh is Knower of all things.

قُلْ أَتُعَلِّمُونَ اللَّهَ بِدِينِكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ
يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ
وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٦﴾

17 They presume to lay thee under an obligation by becoming Muslims. Say: Lay me not under an obligation by your Islām; rather Allāh lays you under an obligation by guiding you to the faith, if you are truthful.

يَمُنُّونَ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ أَسْلَمُوا ۖ قُلْ لَا
تَمُنُّوا عَلَيَّ إِسْلَامَكُمْ ۖ بَلِ اللَّهُ يَمُنُّ
عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ هَدَاكُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ إِنْ
كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Surely Allāh knows the unseen of the heavens and the earth. And Allāh is Seer of what you do.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَ
الْأَرْضِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

hearts, but they were to be regarded as Muslims. The solidarity of Islām is being shattered to-day by narrow-minded Mullās who, on one pretext or another, issue *fatwās* of *kufr* against this or that party of Muslims.

CHAPTER 50

QĀF

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 3 *sections*; 45 *verses*)

This chapter takes its name from its initial letter *Qāf*, calling attention to the greatness of the power of the Divine Being, and deals with the Resurrection, both with the spiritual resurrection of this life and the greater Resurrection of the life after death. The first section draws attention to the testimony of nature, and to there being a lesson in the fate of former peoples; the second shows that every action has a consequence and these consequences are made manifest on the day of Judgment; and the third states that the good and the bad must each receive their due, and that a resurrection will be brought about in this life as well as in the Hereafter. In fact, the judgment and resurrection of this life are inseparably mingled with the Judgment and Resurrection of the next throughout this chapter.

From here to the 56th chapter, there is a group of seven Makkan chapters, all belonging to the early Makkan period, and all laying stress on the ultimate triumph of Truth and the fact that Divine Judgment would soon come to pass.

SECTION 1 **The Resurrection**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Almighty (God)![2333] By the glorious Qur'ān![2334]

قٓ ۚ وَالْقُرْاٰنِ الْمَجِيْدِ ①

2 Nay, they wonder that a warner has come to them from among themselves; so the disbelievers say: This is a wonderful thing!

بَلْ عَجِبُوْٓا اَنْ جَآءَهُمْ مُّنْذِرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَقَالَ الْكٰفِرُوْنَ هٰذَا شَيْءٌ عَجِيْبٌ ②

3 When we die and become dust — that is a far return.

ءَاِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا ۚ ذٰلِكَ رَجْعٌۢ بَعِيْدٌ ③

2333 The letter *Qāf* stands for the name *Qādir* (or *Qadīr*) of the Divine Being, meaning *Omnipotent* or *All-Powerful*, or for *al-Qiyāmat*, the *Resurrection*.

2334 An expression of wonder at the disbelief of people. The whole of the Qur'ān is spoken of as one book even at this early period. Here the Qur'ān is

4 We know indeed what the earth diminishes of them and with Us is a book that preserves.[2335]

قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا تَنْقُصُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْهُمْ ۚ وَعِنْدَنَا كِتٰبٌ حَفِيظٌ ﴿٤﴾

5 Nay, they reject the Truth when it comes to them, so they are in a state of confusion.[2336]

بَلْ كَذَّبُوا بِالْحَقِّ لَمَّا جَآءَهُمْ فَهُمْ فِيْٓ أَمْرٍ مَّرِيجٍ ﴿٥﴾

6 Do they not look at the sky above them? — how We have made it and adorned it and it has no gaps.

أَفَلَمْ يَنْظُرُوْٓا إِلَى السَّمَآءِ فَوْقَهُمْ كَيْفَ بَنَيْنٰهَا وَزَيَّنّٰهَا وَمَا لَهَا مِنْ فُرُوجٍ ﴿٦﴾

7 And the earth, We have spread it out, and cast therein mountains, and We have made to grow therein of every beautiful kind —

وَالْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنٰهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْۢبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍۭ بَهِيجٍ ﴿٧﴾

8 To give sight and as a reminder to every servant who turns (to Allāh).

تَبْصِرَةً وَّذِكْرٰى لِكُلِّ عَبْدٍ مُّنِيبٍ ﴿٨﴾

9 And We send down from the clouds water abounding in good, then We cause to grow thereby gardens and the grain that is reaped,

وَنَزَّلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً مُّبٰرَكًا فَأَنْۢبَتْنَا بِهٖ جَنّٰتٍ وَّحَبَّ الْحَصِيدِ ﴿٩﴾

10 And the tall palm-trees having flower spikes piled one above another —

وَالنَّخْلَ بٰسِقٰتٍ لَّهَا طَلْعٌ نَّضِيدٌ ﴿١٠﴾

11 A sustenance for the servants, and We give life thereby to a dead land. Thus is the rising.[2337]

رِّزْقًا لِّلْعِبَادِ ۙ وَأَحْيَيْنَا بِهٖ بَلْدَةً مَّيْتًا ۚ كَذٰلِكَ الْخُرُوجُ ﴿١١﴾

12 Before them the people of Noah rejected (the Truth) and (so did) the dwellers of al-Rass and Thamūd

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ وَّأَصْحٰبُ الرَّسِّ وَثَمُودُ ﴿١٢﴾

13 And 'Ād and Pharaoh and Lot's brethren,

وَعَادٌ وَّفِرْعَوْنُ وَإِخْوَانُ لُوطٍ ﴿١٣﴾

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called *Majīd* or *Glorious;* elsewhere it is called *Karīm* or *Honoured* (56:77) and *Ḥakīm* or *Full of wisdom* (36:2).

2335 *What the earth diminishes* is the body, dust going to dust. *The book that preserves* is the record of the deeds which a man has done. The consequences of deeds are preserved in their entirety and out of them grows a new life in the Resurrection.

2336 Their confusion is due to the rejection of truth. They were in a state of confusion as to what name to give to the Prophet — they called him first a dreamer, then a poet, then a madman, then an enchanter, then a forger and liar, and so on.

2337 The *khurūj,* or *rising,* here includes both the spiritual resurrection of a dead people in this life and also the greater Resurrection in a life after death.

14 And the dwellers of the grove and the people of Tubba'.[2337a] They all rejected the messengers, so My threat came to pass.

وَّاَصْحٰبُ الْاَيْكَةِ وَقَوْمُ تُبَّعٍ ؕ كُلٌّ كَذَّبَ الرُّسُلَ فَحَقَّ وَعِيْدِ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Were We then fatigued with the first creation? Yet they are in doubt about a new creation.[2338]

اَفَعَيِيْنَا بِالْخَلْقِ الْاَوَّلِ ؕ بَلْ هُمْ فِيْ لَبْسٍ مِّنْ خَلْقٍ جَدِيْدٍ ﴿١٥﴾

SECTION 2 : **The Resurrection**

16 And certainly We created man, and We know what his mind suggests to him — and We are nearer to him than his life-vein.

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْاِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهٖ نَفْسُهٗ ۚۖ وَنَحْنُ اَقْرَبُ اِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيْدِ ﴿١٦﴾

17 When the two receivers receive, sitting on the right and on the left,

اِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِّيٰنِ عَنِ الْيَمِيْنِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ قَعِيْدٌ ﴿١٧﴾

18 He utters not a word but there is by him a watcher at hand.[2339]

مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ اِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيْبٌ عَتِيْدٌ ﴿١٨﴾

19 And the stupor of death comes in truth; that is what thou wouldst shun.

وَجَآءَتْ سَكْرَةُ الْمَوْتِ بِالْحَقِّ ؕ ذٰلِكَ مَا كُنْتَ مِنْهُ تَحِيْدُ ﴿١٩﴾

20 And the trumpet is blown. That is the day of threatening.

وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّوْرِ ؕ ذٰلِكَ يَوْمُ الْوَعِيْدِ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 And every soul comes, with it a driver and a witness.[2340]

وَجَآءَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّعَهَا سَآئِقٌ وَّشَهِيْدٌ ﴿٢١﴾

22 Thou wast indeed heedless of this, but now We have removed from thee thy veil, so thy sight is sharp this day.[2341]

لَقَدْ كُنْتَ فِيْ غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هٰذَا فَكَشَفْنَا عَنْكَ غِطَآءَكَ فَبَصَرُكَ الْيَوْمَ حَدِيْدٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

2337a For the dwellers of al-Rass, see 1786; for dwellers of the grove, 1347; for Tubba', 2274.

2338 The meaning is that Allāh did not lack power in dealing with the former generations so that they should doubt His power in dealing with a new one. Or, the first creation is the physical creation of man, and the second creation his spiritual regeneration.

2339 The three verses impress upon man that all his deeds and words bear fruit, that nothing is said or done in vain. The *yamīn*, or the *right side*, represents the *good*, and the *shimāl*, or the *left side*, the *evil* (T).

2340 The *driver* signifies the *impeller to evil*, and the *witness* the *caller to Truth*.

2341 This verse shows clearly that the consequences of evil actions which remain hidden from the eye of man in this life are made manifest after death. This is the significance of the sight being made sharp, so that man will then see what he is unable to see here. Such is hell, according to the teachings of the

23 And his companion will say: This is what is ready with me.[2341a]

وقال قرينه هذا ما لدي عتيد ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Cast into hell every ungrateful, rebellious one,[2342]

ألقيا في جهنم كل كفار عنيد ﴿٢٤﴾

25 Forbidder of good, exceeder of limits, doubter,

مناع للخير معتد مريب ﴿٢٥﴾

26 Who sets up another god with Allāh, so cast him into severe chastisement.

الذي جعل مع الله إلها آخر فألقياه في العذاب الشديد ﴿٢٦﴾

27 His companion will say: Our Lord, I did not cause him to rebel but he himself went far in error.

قال قرينه ربنا ما أطغيته ولكن كان في ضلال بعيد ﴿٢٧﴾

28 He will say: Dispute not in My presence, and indeed I gave you warning beforehand.

قال لا تختصموا لدي وقد قدمت إليكم بالوعيد ﴿٢٨﴾

29 My sentence cannot be changed, nor am I in the least unjust to the servants.

ما يبدل القول لدي وما أنا بظلام للعبيد ﴿٢٩﴾

SECTION 3: **The Resurrection**

30 On the day when We say to hell: Art thou filled up? And it will say: Are there any more?[2342a]

يوم نقول لجهنم هل امتلأت وتقول هل من مزيد ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And the Garden is brought near for those who guard against evil — (it is) not distant.[2342b]

وأزلفت الجنة للمتقين غير بعيد ﴿٣١﴾

32 This is what you are promised — for every one turning (to Allāh), keeping (the limits) —

هذا ما توعدون لكل أواب حفيظ ﴿٣٢﴾

Qur'ān, viz., the hidden consequences of evil deeds, when made manifest to a man, become his hell.

2341a By *qarīn*, or the *companion*, is meant the *evil companion*, or the *devil*, at whose suggestion man commits evil deeds. *What is ready* is the record of man's evil deeds, which will be palpably manifest to him on the day of Resurrection.

2342 The dual form used in *alqiyā* is either due to the address being to the two, the driver and the witness of v. 21, or the dual is used simply to give emphasis to the order, as if it conveyed a repetition of the order (Kf).

2342a It is a metaphorical expression. One people after another continue in their wickedness without taking a lesson from the fate of the previous people. It is also an expression of man's desire to have more and more of wealth and material comfort.

2342b If man used his inner sight, he could see that the keeping from evil and the doing of good brought him nearer and nearer to true happiness, for which the Garden stands here, in this very life.

33 Who fears the Beneficent in secret, and comes with a penitent heart :

مَنْ خَشِيَ الرَّحْمٰنَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَجَآءَ بِقَلْبٍ مُّنِيْبٍ ۝٣٣

34 Enter it in peace. That is the day of abiding.

ادْخُلُوْهَا بِسَلٰمٍ ذٰلِكَ يَوْمُ الْخُلُوْدِ ۝٣٤

35 For them therein is all they wish, and with Us is yet more.[2343]

لَهُمْ مَّا يَشَآءُوْنَ فِيْهَا وَلَدَيْنَا مَزِيْدٌ ۝٣٥

36 And how many a generation We destroyed before them who were mightier in prowess than they ! so they went about in the lands. Is there a place of refuge ?

وَكَمْ اَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِّنْ قَرْنٍ هُمْ اَشَدُّ مِنْهُمْ بَطْشًا فَنَقَّبُوْا فِي الْبِلَادِ هَلْ مِنْ مَّحِيْصٍ ۝٣٦

37 Surely there is a reminder in this for him who has a heart or he gives ear and is a witness.

اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَذِكْرٰى لِمَنْ كَانَ لَهٗ قَلْبٌ اَوْ اَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيْدٌ ۝٣٧

38 And certainly We created the heavens and the earth and what is between them in six periods, and no fatigue touched Us.[2343a]

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِيْ سِتَّةِ اَيَّامٍ وَّمَا مَسَّنَا مِنْ لُّغُوْبٍ ۝٣٨

39 So bear with what they say, and celebrate the praise of thy Lord before the rising of the sun and before the setting.

فَاصْبِرْ عَلٰى مَا يَقُوْلُوْنَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوْعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ الْغُرُوْبِ ۝٣٩

40 And glorify Him in the night and after prostration.[2343b]

وَمِنَ الَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَاَدْبَارَ السُّجُوْدِ ۝٤٠

41 And listen on the day when the crier cries from a near place —

وَاسْتَمِعْ يَوْمَ يُنَادِ الْمُنَادِ مِنْ مَّكَانٍ قَرِيْبٍ ۝٤١

42 The day when they hear the cry

يَوْمَ يَسْمَعُوْنَ الصَّيْحَةَ بِالْحَقِّ ذٰلِكَ

2343 This is to show that the doing of good gives man all that he desires. But as his desires are limited, he is told that God will give him more than he desires. This is explained by some as meaning the sight of the Divine Being, which is the highest blessing of the next life.

2343a The Bible says: "And He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made" (Gen. 2:2). The act of taking rest applies to one who is tired, and hence the Qur'ān negatives any such idea in relation to God, Who does not stand in need of rest; hence it says: *No fatigue touched Us*. For the creation of the heavens and the earth in six periods or six days, see 894a.

2343b *Sujūd* or *prostration* here stands for prayer. The significance is that one should not get tired of glorifying God; prayer is in its entirety a glorification of God, but even after prayer, one should continue the glorification of God.

in truth. That is the day of coming forth.[2343c]

يَوْمُ الْخُرُوجِ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 Surely We give life and cause to die, and to Us is the eventual coming —

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِ وَنُمِيتُ وَإِلَيْنَا الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 The day when the earth cleaves asunder from them, hastening forth. That is a gathering easy to Us.

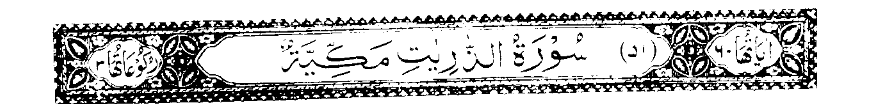
يَوْمَ تَشَقَّقُ الْأَرْضُ عَنْهُمْ سِرَاعًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ حَشْرٌ عَلَيْنَا يَسِيرٌ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 We know best what they say, and thou art not one to compel them. So remind by means of the Qur'ān him who fears My threat.[2343d]

نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ ۖ وَمَا أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِجَبَّارٍ ۖ فَذَكِّرْ بِالْقُرْآنِ مَنْ يَخَافُ وَعِيدِ ﴿٤٥﴾

2343c The *munād*, or the *crier*, is the Prophet; see 3:192, where the Prophet is plainly spoken of as being the crier: "Our Lord, surely we have heard a crier calling to the Faith, saying, Believe in your Lord". This cry was a distant cry at first, but, as we are told in the previous verse, it will be a cry from a near place in the end, so that people will listen to it in truth, as we are told here. Note that the spiritual resurrection to be brought about in this life by the Prophet is spoken of in the whole of this *sūrah*, along with the greater Resurrection of the next life.

2343d The words, *thou art not one to compel them*, refer plainly to the spiritual resurrection, which the Prophet desired to see immediately; he is told that he will see the dead coming to life but he could not compel people to accept the truth. The cleaving asunder of the earth in the previous verse and their hastening forth to life spiritual and their gathering in Islām were all witnessed in the lifetime of the Prophet, and may be witnessed again in the near future. Note that this spiritual resurrection does not mean that there would be no Resurrection after death. On the other hand, it is treated as an evidence of the greater Resurrection, and that is the reason why both resurrections are spoken of in the same words.



CHAPTER 51

Al-Dhāriyāt : THE SCATTERERS

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH : 3 *sections* ; 60 *verses*)

The title of this chapter is taken from the mention of *The Scatterers* of Truth in the first verse. Attention is drawn in the first section to the gradual advancement of Truth, which was daily gaining ground, and stress is laid upon the certainty of the judgment of the rejectors. The second section, opening with the announcement of the birth of a son to Abraham, which stands really for the birth of a new nation of righteous people, deals with the fate of some previous nations who were judged because of their evil deeds. The third again, after an exhortation to seek refuge in Allāh, warns the opponents that their turn of good fortune is about to be ended and they shall be judged. It is an early Makkan revelation.

SECTION 1 **Falsehood is doomed**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

1 By those scattering broadcast !

وَ الذّٰرِيٰتِ ذَرْوًا ۙ﴿۱﴾

2 And those bearing the load !

فَالْحٰمِلٰتِ وِقْرًا ۙ﴿۲﴾

3 And those running easily !

فَالْجٰرِيٰتِ يُسْرًا ۙ﴿۳﴾

4 And those distributing the Affair ! —

فَالْمُقَسِّمٰتِ اَمْرًا ۙ﴿۴﴾

5 What you are promised is surely true,

اِنَّمَا تُوْعَدُوْنَ لَصَادِقٌ ۙ﴿۵﴾

6 And the Judgment will surely come to pass.[2344]

وَّ اِنَّ الدِّيْنَ لَوَاقِعٌ ؕ﴿۶﴾

2344 In the first four verses of this chapter attention is called to certain facts by means of what is generally understood to be an oath, for which see 2099, while the two verses that follow indicate the conclusion to which those facts lead. It is generally considered that by "those scattering broadcast" are meant the winds that raise up dust before the coming of a cloud ; by the "bearers of the load"

7 By the heaven full of paths ![2345]

وَالسَّمَآءِ ذَاتِ الْحُبُكِ ﴿٧﴾

8 Surely you are of varying opinion —

إِنَّكُمْ لَفِي قَوْلٍ مُّخْتَلِفٍ ﴿٨﴾

9 He is turned away from it who would be turned away.[2346]

يُؤْفَكُ عَنْهُ مَنْ أُفِكَ ﴿٩﴾

10 Cursed be the liars !

قُتِلَ الْخَرّٰصُونَ ﴿١٠﴾

11 Who are in an abyss, neglectful;

الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي غَمْرَةٍ سَاهُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12 They ask : When is the day of Judgment ?

يَسْئَلُونَ أَيَّانَ يَوْمُ الدِّينِ ﴿١٢﴾

13 (It is) the day when they are tried at the Fire.

يَوْمَ هُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ يُفْتَنُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

14 Taste your persecution ! This is what you would hasten on.[2348]

ذُوقُوا فِتْنَتَكُمْ هٰذَا الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تَسْتَعْجِلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Surely the dutiful are amidst Gardens and fountains,

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنّٰتٍ وَّعُيُونٍ ﴿١٥﴾

16 Taking that which their Lord gives them. Surely they were before that the doers of good.

اٰخِذِينَ مَآ اٰتٰهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَبْلَ ذٰلِكَ مُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 They used to sleep but little at night.

كَانُوا قَلِيلًا مِّنَ الَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 And in the morning they asked (Divine) protection.

وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

---

the clouds that carry rain ; by the "easy runners" the winds that carry the clouds along, and by the "distributors" the winds that distribute the rain. Attention is drawn in this description to a similar arrangement in the spiritual world by which Truth gradually advances. The seed of Truth is scattered broadcast in the first stage, while the bearing of the load or becoming pregnant with Truth is the second stage, the third being the strong desire to accept it, which makes one run for it without difficulty, while the fourth is its distribution to others.

But we may as well say that attention is herein drawn to more manifest facts, to the scattering of Truth broadcast through the Holy Prophet and his faithful followers, which led to some bearing the load of it as if they had become pregnant with Truth, while others ran easily towards the acceptance of Truth. But they were not satisfied with mere acceptance ; they went to and fro to deliver to others the Truth and the Light, which they had received. In the existence of these groups of workers in the cause of Truth there was a clear sign that the triumph of Islām would soon be established in the land.

2345 The description of heaven as *full of paths* is a scientific truth certainly unknown to the world 1,300 years ago. The *paths* in the heavens are the *orbits* of the various planets, and of the stars themselves ; compare 36 : 40, where it is stated that "all float on in an orbit".

2346 Only those are turned away from the Truth who *themselves* turn away.

2348 For *fitnah* meaning persecution, see 241. Tasting of persecution signifies receiving punishment for *their persecution of the Muslims.*

19 And in their wealth there was a due share for the beggar and for one who is denied (good).[2349]

وَفِيْٓ اَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ لِّلسَّآئِلِ وَالْمَحْرُوْمِ ⑲

20 And in the earth are signs for those who are sure,

وَفِي الْاَرْضِ اٰيٰتٌ لِّلْمُوْقِنِيْنَ ⑳

21 And in yourselves — do you not see ?[2350]

وَفِيْٓ اَنْفُسِكُمْ ۭ اَفَلَا تُبْصِرُوْنَ ㉑

22 And in the heavens is your sustenance and that which you are promised.[2351]

وَفِي السَّمَآءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوْعَدُوْنَ ㉒

23 So by the Lord of the heavens and the earth! it is surely the truth, just as you speak.[2352]

فَوَرَبِّ السَّمَآءِ وَالْاَرْضِ اِنَّهٗ لَحَقٌّ مِّثْلَ مَآ اَنَّكُمْ تَنْطِقُوْنَ ㉓

SECTION 2 : **The Fate of previous Nations**

24 Has the story of Abraham's honoured guests reached thee ?[2352a]

هَلْ اَتٰىكَ حَدِيْثُ ضَيْفِ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ الْمُكْرَمِيْنَ ㉔

25 When they came to him, they said : Peace! Peace! said he. Strangers!

اِذْ دَخَلُوْا عَلَيْهِ فَقَالُوْا سَلٰمًا ۭ قَالَ سَلٰمٌ ۚ قَوْمٌ مُّنْكَرُوْنَ ㉕

26 Then he turned aside to his family and brought a fat calf.

فَرَاغَ اِلٰٓى اَهْلِهٖ فَجَآءَ بِعِجْلٍ سَمِيْنٍ ㉖

27 So he placed it before them. He said : Will you not eat ?

فَقَرَّبَهٗٓ اِلَيْهِمْ قَالَ اَلَا تَاْكُلُوْنَ ㉗

28 So he conceived a fear of them. They said : Fear not. And they gave him the good news of a boy possessing knowledge.

فَاَوْجَسَ مِنْهُمْ خِيْفَةً ۭ قَالُوْا لَا تَخَفْ ۭ وَبَشَّرُوْهُ بِغُلٰمٍ عَلِيْمٍ ㉘

2349 The word *maḥrūm* is understood by some to mean *a poor man who does not beg*, and by others, *one who has not the faculty of speech*, like the dog and the cat (LL). Note that the poor are here spoken of as having a *share* in the wealth of the rich. The State is bound to take that share and make it over to the poor. But it is only a share, not the whole.

2350 They could see signs showing that Truth was gaining ground.

2351 *That which is promised* may mean the spiritual sustenance as contrasted with *rizq* or the physical sustenance. Or, it may refer to the Judgment, of which they were warned again and again.

2352 Note the high degree of certainty, the unshakable faith in the ultimate triumph of the Truth at this early period. Just as men's speaking to each other is a reality, even so is God's speaking to man.

2352a See 1187, 1188.

29 Then his wife came up in grief, and she smote her face and said: A barren old woman!

فَأَقْبَلَتِ امْرَأَتُهُ فِي صَرَّةٍ فَصَكَّتْ وَجْهَهَا وَقَالَتْ عَجُوزٌ عَقِيمٌ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 They said: Thus says thy Lord. Surely He is the Wise, the Knowing.

قَالُوا كَذٰلِكِ قَالَ رَبُّكِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿٣٠﴾

PART XXVII

31 He said: What is your errand, O messengers!

قَالَ فَمَا خَطْبُكُمْ أَيُّهَا الْمُرْسَلُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 They said: We have been sent to a guilty people

قَالُوا إِنَّا أُرْسِلْنَا إِلٰى قَوْمٍ مُّجْرِمِينَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 That we may send upon them stones of clay,

لِنُرْسِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ حِجَارَةً مِّنْ طِينٍ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 Marked from thy Lord for the prodigal.[2352b]

مُّسَوَّمَةً عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ لِلْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 Then We brought forth such believers as were there.

فَأَخْرَجْنَا مَنْ كَانَ فِيهَا مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 And We found there but a (single) house of Muslims.[2352c]

فَمَا وَجَدْنَا فِيهَا غَيْرَ بَيْتٍ مِّنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 And We left therein a sign for those who fear the painful chastisement.

وَتَرَكْنَا فِيهَا آيَةً لِّلَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ الْعَذَابَ الْأَلِيمَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 And in Moses, when We sent him to Pharaoh with clear authority.

وَفِي مُوسٰى إِذْ أَرْسَلْنٰهُ إِلٰى فِرْعَوْنَ بِسُلْطٰنٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 But he turned away on account of his might and said: An enchanter or a madman!

فَتَوَلّٰى بِرُكْنِهِ وَقَالَ سٰحِرٌ أَوْ مَجْنُونٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 So We seized him and his hosts and hurled them into the sea, and he was blameable.

فَأَخَذْنٰهُ وَجُنُودَهُ فَنَبَذْنٰهُمْ فِي الْيَمِّ وَهُوَ مُلِيمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 And in 'Ād, when We sent upon them the destructive wind.

وَفِي عَادٍ إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّيحَ الْعَقِيمَ ﴿٤١﴾

42 It spared naught that it came against, but it made it like ashes.

مَا تَذَرُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ أَتَتْ عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا جَعَلَتْهُ كَالرَّمِيمِ ﴿٤٢﴾

2352b For the punishment sent on Lot's people, see 918. The stones were marked, i.e., they were destined for them.

2352c It is said to be the house of Lot himself. A Muslim is one who submits himself to God, and in this sense all prophets and their righteous followers were Muslims.

43 And in Thamūd, when it was said to them: Enjoy yourselves for a while.

وَفِي ثَمُودَ إِذْ قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَمَتَّعُوا حَتَّىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 But they revolted against the commandment of their Lord, so the punishment overtook them, while they saw.[2352d]

فَعَتَوْا عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصّٰعِقَةُ وَهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 So they were unable to rise up, nor could they defend themselves;

فَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا مِنْ قِيَامٍ وَمَا كَانُوا مُنْتَصِرِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 And the people of Noah before. Surely they were a transgressing people.

وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فٰسِقِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

SECTION 3: **Judgment is sure**

47 And the heaven, We raised it high with power, and We are Makers of the vast extent.

وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَيْنٰهَا بِأَيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And the earth, We have spread it out. How well We prepared it!

وَالْأَرْضَ فَرَشْنٰهَا فَنِعْمَ الْمٰهِدُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 And of everything We have created pairs that you may be mindful.

وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 So flee to Allāh. Surely I am a plain warner to you from Him.

فَفِرُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ ۖ إِنِّي لَكُمْ مِنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 And do not set up with Allāh another god. Surely I am a plain warner to you from Him.

وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلٰهًا آخَرَ ۖ إِنِّي لَكُمْ مِنْهُ نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ ﴿٥١﴾

52 Thus there came not a messenger to those before them but they said: An enchanter or a madman!

كَذٰلِكَ مَا أَتَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا قَالُوا سَاحِرٌ أَوْ مَجْنُونٌ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 Have they charged each other with this? Nay, they are an inordinate people.

أَتَوَاصَوْا بِهِ ۚ بَلْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ طَاغُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 So turn away from them, for thou art not to blame;[2353]

فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ فَمَا أَنْتَ بِمَلُومٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

2352d See 915; it was an earthquake.

2353 *Turning away from them* means to pay no heed to their abuses and to disregard their reviling. The words that follow make this clear, for the Prophet is enjoined to continue to remind, for there will be some who will believe, and these will profit by the reminder.

55 And remind, for reminding profits the believers.

وَّ ذَكِّرْ فَاِنَّ الذِّكْرٰى تَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿۵۵﴾

56 And I have not created the jinn and the men except that they should serve Me.

وَ مَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَ الْاِنْسَ اِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ ﴿۵۶﴾

57 I desire no sustenance from them, nor do I desire that they should feed Me.

مَاۤ اُرِيْدُ مِنْهُمْ مِّنْ رِّزْقٍ وَّ مَاۤ اُرِيْدُ اَنْ يُّطْعِمُوْنِ ﴿۵۷﴾

58 Surely Allāh is the Bestower of sustenance, the Lord of Power, the Strong.

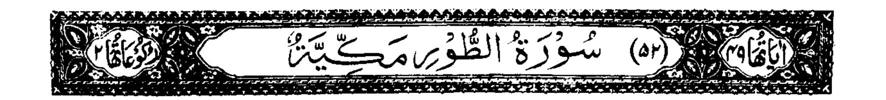
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِيْنُ ﴿۵۸﴾

59 Surely the lot of the wrongdoers is as was the lot of their companions, so let them not ask Me to hasten on.

فَاِنَّ لِلَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا ذَنُوْبًا مِّثْلَ ذَنُوْبِ اَصْحٰبِهِمْ فَلَا يَسْتَعْجِلُوْنِ ﴿۵۹﴾

60 Woe, then, to those who disbelieve because of that day of theirs which they are promised!

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْ يَّوْمِهِمُ الَّذِيْ يُوْعَدُوْنَ ﴿۶۰﴾



CHAPTER 52

Al-Ṭūr : THE MOUNTAIN

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 2 *sections*; 49 *verses*)

The name of this chapter is taken from the first verse, where the mention of *The Mountain* is an indication of a similarity between the Holy Prophet and the Israelite Lawgiver. As Moses received a call on a mountain, Mt. Sinai, it was in a mountain cave, *Ḥirā'*, that the Prophet received a call. This similarity is carried further in the opening verses by mentioning the Book which furnished a guidance in both cases and the House which was visited by the people. Punishment must therefore befall the opponents of the Prophet just as it befell the opponents of Moses. In the first section along with this punishment of the wicked is mentioned the reward to be granted to the faithful. The second section continues the subject of the punishment of the opponents, giving a plain hint towards the end that the opponents will be punished in this life as well. The chapter belongs to a very early Makkan period.

SECTION 1 **Success of the Faithful**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

1 By the Mountain !

2 And a Book written

3 On unfolded vellum !

4 And the frequented House,

5 And the elevated canopy,

6 And the swollen sea !

7 The chastisement of thy Lord will surely come to pass—[2354]

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

وَالطُّوْرِ ۙ ①

وَكِتٰبٍ مَّسْطُوْرٍ ۙ ②

فِيْ رَقٍّ مَّنْشُوْرٍ ۙ ③

وَّالْبَيْتِ الْمَعْمُوْرِ ۙ ④

وَالسَّقْفِ الْمَرْفُوْعِ ۙ ⑤

وَالْبَحْرِ الْمَسْجُوْرِ ۙ ⑥

اِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ لَوَاقِعٌ ۙ ⑦

2354 The first six verses draw attention to a set of parallel facts in the revelations of Moses and Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allāh be on them!). The mount in the one case is Mt. Sinai, and in the other the mount Ḥirā', the Book stands for the Torah in the one case and the Qur'ān in the other ; the House

8 There is none to avert it ;

مَّا لَهٗ مِنْ دَافِعٍ ﴿٨﴾

9 On the day when the heaven will be in a state of commotion,

يَّوْمَ تَمُوْرُ السَّمَآءُ مَوْرًا ﴿٩﴾

10 And the mountains will pass away, fleeing.[2355]

وَّ تَسِيْرُ الْجِبَالُ سَيْرًا ﴿١٠﴾

11 Woe on that day to the deniers,

فَوَيْلٌ يَّوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِيْنَ ﴿١١﴾

12 Who amuse themselves by vain talk.

الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ فِيْ خَوْضٍ يَّلْعَبُوْنَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 The day when they are driven to hell-fire with violence.

يَوْمَ يُدَعُّوْنَ اِلٰى نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ دَعًّا ﴿١٣﴾

14 This is the Fire, which you gave the lie to.

هٰذِهِ النَّارُ الَّتِيْ كُنْتُمْ بِهَا تُكَذِّبُوْنَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Is it magic or do you not see ?

اَفَسِحْرٌ هٰذَآ اَمْ اَنْتُمْ لَا تُبْصِرُوْنَ ﴿١٥﴾

16 Burn in it, then bear (it) patiently, or bear (it) not, it is the same to you. Your are requited only for what you did.

اِصْلَوْهَا فَاصْبِرُوْٓا اَوْ لَا تَصْبِرُوْا سَوَآءٌ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ اِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 The dutiful will be surely in Gardens and bliss,

اِنَّ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ فِيْ جَنّٰتٍ وَّ نَعِيْمٍ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Rejoicing because of what their Lord has given them ; and their Lord saved them from the chastisement of the burning Fire.

فٰكِهِيْنَ بِمَآ اٰتٰىهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ ۚ وَوَقٰىهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ عَذَابَ الْجَحِيْمِ ﴿١٨﴾

19 Eat and drink with pleasure for what you did,

كُلُوْا وَاشْرَبُوْا هَنِيْٓـئًا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١٩﴾

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that is frequented and the elevated canopy refer, on the one hand, to the tabernacle raised by Moses for the Israelites as a sacred place, where they worshipped God and offered sacrifices, and on the other to the Sacred House at Makkah, which was to be the centre of the Muslims of all nations, all countries, and all ages, and where they were to offer sacrifices. The swollen sea represents the sea which brought destruction to Pharaoh and his hosts, while the Holy Prophet's enemies are told in the next verse that the punishment of their Lord would as surely overtake them on land as it overtook the enemies of Moses in the swollen sea. But note that the word *baḥr* signifies *land* as well as *sea,* and this word occurring in a saying of the Holy Prophet is explained as meaning their *city* and *land* (N). The whole passage draws attention to the close similarity of the revelations of Moses and the Holy Prophet, and warns the disbelievers that their power will be brought to naught, as it was in the case of Pharaoh. Here again we have the Prophet's likeness to Moses spoken of in a very early revelation.

2355 The great transformation that was to be brought about by the Prophet, the sweeping away of the old order of superstition, ignorance and vice, and its replacement by light, learning and righteousness, the overthrow of a wicked generation and the ushering in of a new era is here represented as the *commotion of the heaven* and the *passing away of the mountains ;* see 1604.

20 Reclining on thrones set in lines, and We shall join them to pure; beautiful ones.[2356]

مُتَّكِـِٕيْنَ عَلٰى سُرُرٍ مَّصْفُوْفَةٍ ۚ وَ زَوَّجْنٰهُمْ بِحُوْرٍ عِيْنٍ ﴿۲۰﴾

21 And those who believe and whose offspring follow them in faith — We unite with them their offspring[2357] and We shall deprive them of naught of their work. Every man is pledged for what he does.[2358]

وَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَ اتَّبَعَتْهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ بِاِيْمَانٍ اَلْحَقْنَا بِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَ مَاۤ اَلَتْنٰهُمْ مِّنْ عَمَلِهِمْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ ؕ كُلُّ امْرِئٍۢ بِمَا كَسَبَ رَهِيْنٌ ﴿۲۱﴾

2356 The word *ḥūr* occurs four times in the Holy Qur'ān, and on two of these occasions, here and in 44:54, the form adopted is *zawwajnā-kum bi-ḥūr-in 'īn*, and in 55:72 and 56:22 there is no mention of *tazwīj*. While *zawwaj-tu-hū imra't-an* (doubly transitive without a particle) means *I gave him in marriage a woman* (LL), *zawwaja shai-an bi-shai-in* (made doubly transitive with particle *bi*) means *he coupled a thing with a thing* or *united it to it as its fellow* or *like* (LL). It is added, quoting 44:54 and 52:20, "the meaning is not the *tazwīj* commonly known (i.e., marriage), for there will be no such *tazwīj* in paradise". Along with it is quoted 81:7, *wa idha-l-nufūsu zuwwijat,* which is translated as meaning *and when the souls shall be coupled*, or *paired*, or *united with their fellows*, or according to some "when each sect, or party, shall be united with those whom it has followed" (LL). As regards the word *ḥūr*, it is a plural of *aḥwar* (applied to a man) and of *ḥaurā'* (applied to a woman), signifying *one having eyes characterized by* the quality termed *ḥawar*, which means *intense whiteness of the white of the eye and intense blackness of the black thereof*. The word *aḥwar* (singular of *ḥūr*) also signifies *pure* or *clear intellect* (LL). The other word, *'īn*, is plural of *a'yan* (meaning *a man wide in the eyes*) and of *'ainā'* (meaning *a woman beautiful and wide in the eye*). The latter word also signifies *a good* or *beautiful word*, or *saying* (LL). It may be noted that whiteness is also a symbol of perfect and unsullied purity, and hence the two words *ḥūr* and *'īn* really stand for *purity* and *beauty*; and therefore, instead of *white-eyed* and *large-eyed* ones, I adopt the words *pure and beautiful ones*, as being more expressive of the true significance.

To realize the true significance of these words, two points must be borne in mind. The first is that paradise is a place for faithful women as well as for faithful men, and hence the Holy Qur'ān often speaks of the faithful as being in paradise with their wives; see for instance 36:56, where the faithful are spoken of as sitting on thrones with their wives, or 13:23 and 40:8, where they are spoken of as being in paradise along with their wives and offspring. The second is that the blessings of paradise are alike for women and men, there being not the least difference in this respect between the two sexes. The question then is what is meant by *ḥūr 'īn* here. It has already been explained in 2110 that the Holy Qur'ān does not speak of any conjugal relations being maintained in a physical sense in the life to come. Moreover, it has been shown on various occasions that, where the blessings of paradise are spoken of, these are nothing but physical manifestations of the spiritual blessings which the doers of good enjoy in this life too. There are gardens, trees, rivers, milk, honey, fruits and numerous other blessings spoken of as being met with in paradise, but that all these are not things of this life has been shown more than once in these footnotes, and a saying of the Holy Prophet already quoted makes it clear that the blessings of paradise *are not the things of this life*. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: *Allāh says I have prepared for My righteous servants what no eye has seen and no ear has heard and what the heart of man has not conceived* (B. 59:8). The Holy Qur'ān also speaks of them in similar words: *No soul knows what is hidden for it*

2357, 2358, see next page.

22 And We shall aid them with fruit and flesh, as they desire.

وَاَمْدَدْنٰهُمْ بِفَاكِهَةٍ وَّلَحْمٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُوْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 They pass therein from one to another a cup, wherein is neither vanity, nor sin.[2359]

يَتَنَازَعُوْنَ فِيْهَا كَاْسًا لَّا لَغْوٌ فِيْهَا وَلَا تَاْثِيْمٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 And round them go boys of theirs as if they were hidden pearls.[2360]

وَيَطُوْفُ عَلَيْهِمْ غِلْمَانٌ لَّهُمْ كَاَنَّهُمْ لُؤْلُؤٌ مَّكْنُوْنٌ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And they will advance to each other, questioning —

وَاَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ يَّتَسَآءَلُوْنَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 Saying: Surely we feared before on account of our families.[2361]

قَالُوْٓا اِنَّا كُنَّا قَبْلُ فِيْٓ اَهْلِنَا مُشْفِقِيْنَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 But Allāh has been gracious to us and He has saved us from the chastisement of the hot wind.

فَمَنَّ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْنَا وَوَقٰىنَا عَذَابَ السَّمُوْمِ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 Surely We called upon Him before. Surely, He is the Benign, the Merciful.

اِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلُ نَدْعُوْهُ ؕ اِنَّهٗ هُوَ الْبَرُّ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿٢٨﴾

(32:17). These clear statements need no comment, and they establish beyond the shadow of a doubt that whatever blessings are spoken of as existing in paradise, the one thing sure about them is that they are not things of this world. Hence even the *white-eyed, large-eyed ones*, or *the pure, beautiful ones*, the *ḥūr 'īn*, of this verse, are not actually the beautiful women of this life. These are heavenly blessings, which the righteous women shall have along with the righteous men, for v. 17 plainly says that those who keep their duty will find these blessings, and therefore the ***pure, beautiful ones*** are as much a blessing meant for the righteous women as for the righteous men.

The question may still be asked, why are these blessings described in words which apply to women? The fact is that the reward spoken of here is one having special reference to the *purity of character* and the *beautiful deeds* of the righteous, and it is *womanhood*, not *manhood*, that stands for a symbol of *purity* and *beauty*. Moreover, it should be noted that in Arabic *ṣāliḥāt* and *ṭayyibāt* signify *good deeds* and *pure things* as well as *good women* and *pure women*, and this is another reason why the reward of *good* and *pure* deeds is spoken of in terms which apply to women. But note also that both *ḥūr* and *'īn* are plurals of words applying to men as well as to women, as also to qualities and deeds.

2357 Those who have done great deeds of sacrifice are united with their offspring; because even their children follow their footsteps and do the deeds their fathers did, reaping the benefit of those deeds.

2358 Note the clear doctrine of man's responsibility for his actions.

2359 This cup is therefore entirely of a different nature from what is known in this life.

2360 It should be noted that the boys spoken of as hidden pearls in this verse may either be the offspring of the faithful mentioned in v. 21, or these may be heavenly blessings of a nature similar to what is said of *ḥūr* in 2356.

2361 This is another clear statement showing that righteous women will be in paradise along with righteous men. The difference of sex counts for nothing in the sight of Allāh.

SECTION 2: **Opponents are doomed**

29 So remind for, by the grace of thy Lord thou art no soothsayer, nor madman.

فَذَكِّرْ فَمَآ أَنْتَ بِنِعْمَتِ رَبِّكَ بِكَاهِنٍ وَّلَا مَجْنُوْنٍ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 Or say they: A poet — we wait for him the evil accidents of time.

أَمْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ شَاعِرٌ نَّتَرَبَّصُ بِهٖ رَيْبَ الْمَنُوْنِ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 Say: Wait, I too wait along with you.

قُلْ تَرَبَّصُوْا فَإِنِّيْ مَعَكُمْ مِّنَ الْمُتَرَبِّصِيْنَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 Or do their understandings bid them this? Or are they an inordinate people?

أَمْ تَأْمُرُهُمْ أَحْلَامُهُمْ بِهٰذَآ أَمْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ طَاغُوْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 Or say they: He has forged it. Nay, they have no faith.

أَمْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ تَقَوَّلَهٗ ۚ بَلْ لَّا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 Then let them bring a saying like it, if they are truthful.[2362]

فَلْيَأْتُوْا بِحَدِيْثٍ مِّثْلِهٖٓ إِنْ كَانُوْا صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 Or were they created without a (creative) agency? Or are they the creators?[2363]

أَمْ خُلِقُوْا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمُ الْخٰلِقُوْنَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Nay, they are sure of nothing.

أَمْ خَلَقُوا السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضَ ۚ بَلْ لَّا يُوْقِنُوْنَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 Or have they the treasures of thy Lord with them? Or have they absolute authority?[2364]

أَمْ عِنْدَهُمْ خَزَآئِنُ رَبِّكَ أَمْ هُمُ الْمُصَيْطِرُوْنَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 Or have they the means by which they listen? Then let their listener bring a clear authority.[2365]

أَمْ لَهُمْ سُلَّمٌ يَّسْتَمِعُوْنَ فِيْهِ ۚ فَلْيَأْتِ مُسْتَمِعُهُمْ بِسُلْطٰنٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿٣٨﴾

2362 If their calling it a forgery or the work of a poet or a madman is true, why are they unable to bring a saying like the one that is brought by the Prophet? So early did the Qur'ān challenge its opponents to produce the like of it. See 36, as to the uniqueness of the Holy Qur'ān.

2363 Or without a cause, or without a purpose.

2364 That is, their authority or power in the land would soon be brought to naught.

2365 This verse shows that the Arab astrologers and diviners pretended that they could listen to the secrets of the future, but their conjectures about the future failed to make any impression, as they did not turn out true. The word used here is *sullam*, which I translate as *means*. It signifies primarily a *ladder*, the Arabs believing that their diviners could ascend to the higher regions, and there obtain news of the future (R). This throws light upon the statements made in 15:17, 37:8, 67:5, 72:8. From what is said further on in v. 41, and elsewhere, challenging them to put down their pretended knowledge of the unseen in writing, a challenge repeatedly given but never accepted, it is clear that the diviners themselves knew that what they said was no more than mere conjecture.

39 Or has He daughters and you have sons?

أَمْ لَهُ الْبَنٰتُ وَلَكُمُ الْبَنُوْنَ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 Or askest thou a reward from them so that they are over-burdened by a debt?

أَمْ تَسْـَٔلُهُمْ أَجْرًا فَهُمْ مِّنْ مَّغْرَمٍ مُّثْقَلُوْنَ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 Or possess they the unseen, so they write (it) down?[2366]

أَمْ عِنْدَهُمُ الْغَيْبُ فَهُمْ يَكْتُبُوْنَ ﴿٤١﴾

42 Or do they intend a plot? But those who disbelieve will be the ensnared ones in the plot.[2367]

أَمْ يُرِيْدُوْنَ كَيْدًا ۚ فَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا هُمُ الْمَكِيْدُوْنَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 Or have they a god other than Allāh? Glory be to Allāh from what they set up (with Him)!

أَمْ لَهُمْ إِلٰهٌ غَيْرُ اللّٰهِ ۚ سُبْحٰنَ اللّٰهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 And if they were to see a portion of the heaven coming down, they would say: Piled-up clouds![2367a]

وَإِنْ يَّرَوْا كِسْفًا مِّنَ السَّمَآءِ سَاقِطًا يَّقُوْلُوْا سَحَابٌ مَّرْكُوْمٌ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 Leave them then till they meet that day of theirs wherein they are smitten with punishment:

فَذَرْهُمْ حَتّٰى يُلٰقُوْا يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِيْ فِيْهِ يُصْعَقُوْنَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 The day when their struggle will avail them naught, nor will they be helped.[2368]

يَوْمَ لَا يُغْنِيْ عَنْهُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْـًٔا وَّلَا هُمْ يُنْصَرُوْنَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And surely for those who do wrong there is a chastisement besides that; but most of them know not.[2369]

وَإِنَّ لِلَّذِيْنَ ظَلَمُوْا عَذَابًا دُوْنَ ذٰلِكَ وَلٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٤٧﴾

2366 Here we have a clear proof that from the very beginning the Qur'ān was written down as it was revealed. This chapter is one of the very early revelations, and here we find the opponents challenged to write down prophecies relating to the future, the suggestion clearly being that the prophecies of the Qur'ān relating to the future were handed over to them in a written form.

2367 Mark the clear language in which their vanquishment and the overthrow of their power is spoken of. But *kaid* also means *war;* see LL, which gives this significance of the word on the authority of the best Arabic lexicons, and many commentators say that there is a reference here to the battle of Badr. Thus Kf interprets the words *hum al-makīdūn,* the concluding words, as meaning *they it is to whom the consequences of their war will return and their own plans will destroy them, and this was so, as they were slain on the day of Badr.*

2367a By a *portion of the heaven coming down upon them* is meant a punishment from heaven, which they repeatedly demanded: "Or thou cause the heaven to come down upon us in pieces" (17:92); "So cause a portion of the heaven to fall on us" (26:187).

2368 Mark the clearness and force with which the prophecy is continued. The reference to war and their vanquishment in it is made clearer here.

2369 The two kinds of punishment with which the opponents were threatened are spoken of distinctly in this verse, viz., a punishment which was to overtake them in this very life in the form of famines and the wars which were

48 And wait patiently for the judgment of thy Lord, for surely thou art before Our eyes,[2370] and celebrate the praise of thy Lord, when thou risest,

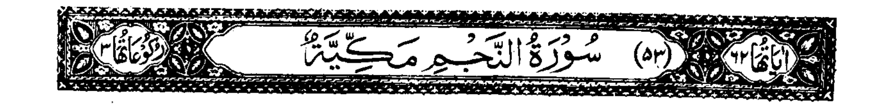
وَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ فَإِنَّكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ حِيْنَ تَقُوْمُ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 And in the night, give Him glory, too, and at the setting of the stars.

وَمِنَ الَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْهُ وَإِدْبَارَ النُّجُوْمِ ﴿٤٩﴾

to result in the complete overthrow of their power, and a punishment in the form of spiritual torment in another life.

2370 The judgment of the Lord signifies the punishment of the wicked. The Prophet is not to have any fear, for he is spoken of as being *before Our eyes.*



CHAPTER 53

Al-Najm: THE STAR

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 3 *sections; 62 verses*)

The word *Star,* which gives its name to this chapter, occurs in the first verse. The last chapter deals with the success of the faithful and the destruction of their enemies and this speaks of the eminence to which the Holy Prophet would rise. The first section states that the Prophet does not err, and would rise to the highest eminence to which man can rise. The second section states that nothing can avail against Truth, while the third refers to Allāh's power as manifested in the destruction of falsehood. The date of the revelation of this chapter may be assigned to the fifth year of the call.

SECTION 1 **Eminence to be attained by the Prophet**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ ۝

1 By the star when it sets![2371]

وَ النَّجۡمِ اِذَا ہَوٰی ۝۱

2371 The words may be interpreted variously, according to the meaning of *najm* and *hawā* that is adopted. The best-known significance of *najm* is *star,* and when used as a proper noun it signifies *the Pleiades,* and *hawā* may signify, *going down low* (R). The Arabs believed that when *al-Najm* (the Pleiades) rose in the morning, disasters and calamities came to an end. Thus we have under the word *najm*: "The Arabs believed that between its rising in the morning and its disappearance there are diseases and plagues and calamities for men and camels and fruits" (R). In the setting of the star the opponents are warned of the calamities which would soon overtake them; their star of fortune was about to set.

There is, however, a less-known significance of the word *najm.* It sometimes means ***a portion of the Qur'ān*** (Bd, Rz, Kf). Kf says: "***Or najm indicates one of the portions of the Qur'ān, and it was revealed in portions, during twenty years. Hawā means when it descends or is revealed***". R gives the following interpretation: "***And it is said that by this*** (i.e., ***najm***) ***is meant the Qur'ān as revealed in portions, one part after another.*** And by His saying ***hawā*** is meant ***its revelation;*** and the same interpretation must be adopted in His saying ***bi-mawāqi'l-nujūm***" (56:75). The meaning is that every portion of the Qur'ān when it is revealed is an evidence that the Prophet errs not — he is in the right. Thus there is a reference here to the internal evidence which is offered in every portion of the Qur'ān that it is the Truth.

2 Your companion errs not, nor does he deviate.[2372]

مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوٰى ﴿٢﴾

3 Nor does he speak out of desire.

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوٰى ﴿٣﴾

4 It is naught but revelation that is revealed —[2373]

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُّوحٰى ﴿٤﴾

5 One Mighty in Power has taught him,[2374]

عَلَّمَهُ شَدِيدُ الْقُوٰى ﴿٥﴾

6 The Lord of Strength. So he attained to perfection,[2375]

ذُوْ مِرَّةٍ فَاسْتَوٰى ﴿٦﴾

7 And he is in the highest part of the horizon.[2376]

وَهُوَ بِالْأُفُقِ الْأَعْلٰى ﴿٧﴾

8 Then he drew near, drew nearer yet,[2377]

ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلّٰى ﴿٨﴾

9 So he was the measure of two bows or closer still.[2378]

فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنٰى ﴿٩﴾

2372 By *your companion* is meant *the Prophet*, who had led among this very people a life of unblemished purity. There are two statements made here; erring on his part is negatived in the first to show that he had a true knowledge or he did not err in theory, and *deviation* from the right course is negatived in the second to show that he acted according to that knowledge, or his practice accorded with the theory. This verse is a conclusive proof that according to the Holy Qur'ān the Prophet was perfectly sinless.

2373 The personal pronoun *huwa* (*it*) occurring here refers to the *najm* or portion of the Qur'ān spoken of in the first verse. The Qur'ān was not his word, for he spoke not of his own desire; it was the word of God.

2374 It is not correct to take the *One Mighty in Power* as meaning Gabriel. The One Who taught him was God Himself as plainly stated elsewhere: "The Beneficent has taught the Qur'ān" (55:1, 2).

2375 *Istawā* means *he became full-grown and mature in body and intellect*, or *he attained the completion of his make and intellect* (LL). There is no mention of Gabriel; the personal pronoun, therefore, does not refer to him. It is the Holy Prophet that is spoken of here as having attained to perfection because the Almighty Himself was his Teacher.

2376 The Prophet's being in the highest part of the horizon is in reference to the resplendence of his light, which was to illuminate all corners of the world — a prophecy, in fact, that he will shine out in the full brilliance of his light as the midday sun.

2377 *Tadallā* signifies *he was lowly* or *humble* (LL), but it also means *al-dunuwu'* or *being near* (R). According to LA, the meaning is *zāda fi-l-qurb*, *he increased in nearness*. The verse points out that the Prophet attained the utmost nearness unto God which it is possible for man to attain.

2378 The *qāb* of a *qaus* is *the portion of a bow that is between the part that is grasped by the hand and the curved extremity* (LL). According to Qatādah, its meaning is *from one extremity of the bow to the other extremity* (AH). According to Ḥasan and Mujāhid, the *qāb* is *from the chord to the middle of the bow near the place grasped by the hand* (AH). N and LA favour *measure* (*qadr*) as the meaning of *qāb*, and the latter quotes the Arab proverb *baina-humā qāba qausain*, i.e., *between them two is the measure of a bow*, which is a proverb to indicate close relationship between two persons. There is another proverb, *ramau-nā'an qaus-in wāḥid-in*, meaning *they shot at us from one bow*, denoting *agreement* (LL). Whatever significance of the word *qāb* may be adopted, the mention of a single *qāb* for two bows indicates *close union*. The two bows seem

10 So He revealed to His servant what He revealed.[2379]

فَأَوْحَىٰٓ إِلَىٰ عَبْدِهِۦ مَآ أَوْحَىٰ ﴿١٠﴾

11 The heart was not untrue in seeing what he saw.

مَا كَذَبَ ٱلْفُؤَادُ مَا رَأَىٰ ﴿١١﴾

12 Do you then dispute with him as to what he saw ?[2380]

أَفَتُمَٰرُونَهُۥ عَلَىٰ مَا يَرَىٰ ﴿١٢﴾

13 And certainly he saw Him in another descent,

وَلَقَدْ رَءَاهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ ﴿١٣﴾

14 At the farthest lote-tree.[2381]

عِندَ سِدْرَةِ ٱلْمُنتَهَىٰ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Near it is the Garden of Abode.

عِندَهَا جَنَّةُ ٱلْمَأْوَىٰٓ ﴿١٥﴾

16 When that which covers covered the lote-tree ;

إِذْ يَغْشَى ٱلسِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَىٰ ﴿١٦﴾

17 The eye turned not aside, nor did it exceed the limit.

مَا زَاغَ ٱلْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَىٰ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Certainly he saw of the greatest signs of his Lord.

لَقَدْ رَأَىٰ مِنْ ءَايَٰتِ رَبِّهِ ٱلْكُبْرَىٰٓ ﴿١٨﴾

19 Have you then considered Lāt and 'Uzzā,

أَفَرَءَيْتُمُ ٱللَّٰتَ وَٱلْعُزَّىٰ ﴿١٩﴾

20 And another, the third, Manāt ?

وَمَنَوٰةَ ٱلثَّالِثَةَ ٱلْأُخْرَىٰٓ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Are the males for you and for Him the females ?[2382]

أَلَكُمُ ٱلذَّكَرُ وَلَهُ ٱلْأُنثَىٰ ﴿٢١﴾

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to indicate the Holy Prophet's twofold perfection, i.e., his nearness to the Divine Being and his humility in his relations with men. The commentators generally understand the phrase as only indicating *the distance of two bows.*

2379 The *mā* (*what*) in *mā auḥā* (i.e., *what He revealed*) is according to all commentators for the purpose of *tafkhīm,* i.e., to indicate that a mighty revelation was given to him.

2380 That is, what he saw was a certain truth and not an imaginary picture.

2381 The *sidrah,* or the lote-tree, is, in Arabia, the tree in the shade of which people alight and rest (LL), or in the shade of which people gather together (Bd). The word occurs elsewhere in the Qur'ān as indicating a tree in paradise (56: 28), and R thus explains the word: "And the shade of it is sought, and thus it is made to serve as a parable for the shade of paradise and its blessings in the words *fī sidr-in makhḍūd-in* on account of the ampleness of its shadow". As for its meaning in this verse, the same authority takes it either as meaning a place in which the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of Allāh be upon him!) was chosen for Divine favours and great blessings, or as signifying the tree under which the companions of the Holy Prophet took the pledge at Ḥudaibiyah to defend him with their lives, the mention in the latter case being prophetical. The qualification of *sidrah* by the word *al-muntahā* shows that it is a place beyond which human knowledge does not go, one of the explanations given by Kf being, "the knowledge of angels and others ends there, and no one knows what is beyond it". Hence the significance conveyed by the words is that the Prophet's knowledge of things Divine was the utmost which could be vouchsafed to man. According to some it conveys the same significance as *'illiyyūn* in 83: 18 (LL), for which see 2695.

2382 Verses 19-21 are made the basis of the false story of what is called the "Lapse of Muhammad" or "Compromise with idolatry" by Christian writers.

22 This indeed is an unjust division !

تِلْكَ إِذًا قِسْمَةٌ ضِيزَىٰ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 They are naught but names which you have named, you and your fathers.— Allāh has sent no authority for them. They follow but conjecture and what (their) souls desire. And certainly the guidance has come to them from their Lord.

إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا أَسْمَاءٌ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنْتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ ۚ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَمَا تَهْوَى الْأَنْفُسُ ۖ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِنْ رَبِّهِمُ الْهُدَىٰ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Or shall man have what he wishes ?

أَمْ لِلْإِنْسَانِ مَا تَمَنَّىٰ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 But for Allāh is the Hereafter and the former (life).

فَلِلَّهِ الْآخِرَةُ وَالْأُولَىٰ ﴿٢٥﴾

SECTION 2 : **Nothing avails against Truth**

26 And how many angels are in the heavens, whose intercession avails naught except after Allāh gives permission to whom He pleases and chooses.

وَكَمْ مِنْ مَلَكٍ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ لَا تُغْنِي شَفَاعَتُهُمْ شَيْئًا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ أَنْ يَأْذَنَ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَرْضَىٰ ﴿٢٦﴾

Certain reports narrated by Wāqidī and Ṭabrī are the sole authority for this charge against that incessant preacher against idolatry, every incident of whose life condemns it as a bare falsehood. Muir asserts that "Pious Muhammadans of after-days, scandalized at the lapse of their Prophet into so flagrant a concession, would reject the whole story," as if the earlier Muslims were not as pious as the latter. The fact is that the story was quite unknown to the earlier Muslims. There is not a single trustworthy ḥadīth that lends support to this story. Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq, who died as early as 151 A.H., does not mention the incident, while Muir's earliest authority, Wāqidī, was born more than forty years later. It is stated in the *Baḥrain* that when questioned about it, Ibn Isḥāq called it a fabrication of the *zindeeqs*. And the famous Bukhārī, the most trustworthy authority on the sayings of the Holy Prophet, was Wāqidī's contemporary, and his collection of sayings contains no mention of the story. As regards Wāqidī, all competent authorities entertain a very low opinion of his trustworthiness. The *Mīzān al-I'tidāl*, a critical work on the lives and characters of the reporters of Ḥadīth, speaks of Wāqidī as unreliable and even as a fabricator of reports. As regards Ṭabrī, Muir himself represents him as guilty of "indiscriminate reception". As against these two unreliable authorities, "those who reject this story are highly learned men" (Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī). The six collections of reports known as the *Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah* (or the *Six Reliable Works*) do not mention it at all, and contain instead a report which essentially contradicts the story of the so-called *compromise*. Internal evidence, too, is wholly against the story. We are told that instead of v. 21 the Prophet read the words: *Tilk al-gharānīq al-'ulā wa inna shafā'ata-hunna la-turtajā,* i.e., "These are exalted females whose intercession is to be sought". But the insertion of these few words in a chapter which is wholly directed against idolatry is quite out of place: v. 23 condemns idols ; v. 26 denies their intercession ; v. 28 condemns the giving of names of female deities to angels, and so on. It is further asserted that 22:52 was revealed in connection with this

27 Surely those who believe not in the Hereafter name the angels with female names.[2383]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ لَيُسَمُّونَ الْمَلَائِكَةَ تَسْمِيَةَ الْأُنْثَىٰ ٢٧

28 And they have no knowledge of it. They follow but conjecture, and surely conjecture avails naught against Truth.

وَمَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ ۖ إِنْ يَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ ۖ وَإِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا ٢٨

29 So shun him who turns his back upon Our Reminder, and desires nothing but this world's life.

فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْ مَنْ تَوَلَّىٰ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا وَلَمْ يُرِدْ إِلَّا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ٢٩

30 That is their goal of knowledge. Surely thy Lord knows best him who strays from His path and He knows best him who goes aright.

ذَٰلِكَ مَبْلَغُهُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اهْتَدَىٰ ٣٠

31 And Allāh's is whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, that He may reward those who do evil for that which they do, and reward those who do good with goodness.

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسَاءُوا بِمَا عَمِلُوا وَيَجْزِيَ الَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا بِالْحُسْنَى ٣١

32 Those who avoid the great sins and the indecencies, but the passing idea —[2384] surely thy Lord is Liberal in Forgiving. He knows best when He brings you forth from the earth and when you are embryos in the wombs of your mothers ; so ascribe not purity to yourselves. He knows him best who guards against evil.

الَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَائِرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ إِلَّا اللَّمَمَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ وَاسِعُ الْمَغْفِرَةِ ۚ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِكُمْ إِذْ أَنْشَأَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ وَإِذْ أَنْتُمْ أَجِنَّةٌ فِي بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ ۖ فَلَا تُزَكُّوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ ۖ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ ٣٢

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change, but it should be noted that a period of at least eight years must have elapsed between the revelation of this verse and that of 22:52. Moreover, if the Prophet had made any such compromise, it could not have been a sudden event, and traces of it would have been met with in other chapters revealed about the same time. But a perusal of these shows clearly that the Qur'ān's condemnation of idolatry was never marked by the slightest change. See further 2387.

2383 The Arabs called the angels daughters of Allāh.

2384 *Lamam* is from *almamtu bi-kadhā,* meaning *I alighted at it and approached it without falling into it* (R). Hence I render the word as *a passing idea* which leaves no impression on the mind. Such an idea is forgiven, for a mortal cannot be proof against it. But this by no means amounts to an intention or an attempt to commit a sin.

SECTION 3 : **Allāh's Power manifested in destruction of Falsehood**

33 Seest thou him who turns back,

أَفَرَءَيْتَ الَّذِي تَوَلَّىٰ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 And gives a little, then withholds ?

وَأَعْطَىٰ قَلِيلًا وَأَكْدَىٰ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 Has he the knowledge of the unseen so that he can see ?

أَعِندَهُ عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ فَهُوَ يَرَىٰ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 Or has he not been informed of what is in the scriptures of Moses,

أَمْ لَمْ يُنَبَّأْ بِمَا فِي صُحُفِ مُوسَىٰ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 And (of) Abraham who fulfilled (commandments) ?

وَإِبْرٰهِيمَ الَّذِي وَفَّىٰ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 That no bearer of a burden bears another's burden :

أَلَّا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 And that man can have nothing but what he strives for :

وَأَن لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 And that his striving will soon be seen.

وَأَنَّ سَعْيَهُ سَوْفَ يُرَىٰ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 Then he will be rewarded for it with the fullest reward :

ثُمَّ يُجْزَاهُ الْجَزَاءَ الْأَوْفَىٰ ﴿٤١﴾

42 And that to thy Lord is the goal:

وَأَنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الْمُنتَهَىٰ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 And that He it is Who makes (men) laugh and makes (them) weep :

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ أَضْحَكَ وَأَبْكَىٰ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 And that He it is Who causes death and gives life :

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ أَمَاتَ وَأَحْيَا ﴿٤٤﴾

45 And that He creates pairs, the male and the female :

وَأَنَّهُ خَلَقَ الزَّوْجَيْنِ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَىٰ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 From the small life-germ when it is adapted :[2385]

مِن نُّطْفَةٍ إِذَا تُمْنَىٰ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And that He has ordained the second bringing forth :

وَأَنَّ عَلَيْهِ النَّشْأَةَ الْأُخْرَىٰ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And that He it is Who gives wealth and contentment :

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ أَغْنَىٰ وَأَقْنَىٰ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 And that He is the Lord of Sirius :

وَأَنَّهُ هُوَ رَبُّ الشِّعْرَىٰ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 And that He destroyed the first 'Ād :[2385a]

وَأَنَّهُ أَهْلَكَ عَادًا الْأُولَىٰ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 And Thamūd, so He spared not :

وَثَمُودَا فَمَا أَبْقَىٰ ﴿٥١﴾

2385 *Tumnā* means, according to R, *tuqaddaru*, i.e., *adapted to circumstances*. And according to LL, *manā* is also synonymous with *qadr*.

2385a The tribe of 'Ād is sometimes referred to as the *first 'Ād*, in contrast with *Thamūd*, who are called the second 'Ād.

52 And the people of Noah before. Surely they were most iniquitous and inordinate.

وَقَوْمَ نُوحٍ مِّنْ قَبْلُ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا هُمْ أَظْلَمَ وَأَطْغَىٰ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 And the overthrown cities, He hurled down:

وَالْمُؤْتَفِكَةَ أَهْوَىٰ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 So there covered them that which covered.

فَغَشّٰهَا مَا غَشّٰى ﴿٥٤﴾

55 Which, then, of thy Lord's benefits wilt thou dispute?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَآءِ رَبِّكَ تَتَمَارٰى ﴿٥٥﴾

56 This is a warner of the warners of old.

هٰذَا نَذِيْرٌ مِّنَ النُّذُرِ الْأُوْلٰى ﴿٥٦﴾

57 The near Event draws nigh.[2386]

أَزِفَتِ الْآزِفَةُ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 There is none besides Allāh to remove it.

لَيْسَ لَهَا مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ كَاشِفَةٌ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 Wonder you then at this announcement?

أَفَمِنْ هٰذَا الْحَدِيْثِ تَعْجَبُوْنَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 And do you laugh and not weep,

وَتَضْحَكُوْنَ وَلَا تَبْكُوْنَ ﴿٦٠﴾

61 While you sport?

وَأَنْتُمْ سٰمِدُوْنَ ﴿٦١﴾

62 So bow down in prostration before Allāh and serve (Him).[2387]

Prostration

فَاسْجُدُوْا لِلّٰهِ وَاعْبُدُوْا ۩ ﴿٦٢﴾

2386 The near Event is the doom of the Quraish, the overthrow of their power, which was now being utilized against Islām.

2387 Here is a command to prostrate oneself, which is literally obeyed by all Muslims when reciting the Qur'ān or hearing it recited; see 978. This chapter, when first revealed, was read in a large assembly, containing Muslims as well as disbelievers. When the Holy Prophet prostrated himself in obedience to the command, not only did the Muslims prostrate themselves, but even the idolaters were so overawed that they also prostrated themselves, with the exception only of Umayyah ibn Khalf, who raised some gravel to his forehead. This man was afterwards killed, dying a disbeliever, says the report, evidently implying that all the others were gradually converted to Islām (B. 17:1). It should be further borne in mind that the idolaters did not deny the existence of God the Supreme, Whom they believed to be above their idols, who were recognized only as minor deities, and therefore there is nothing strange in their joining the Muslims in their prostration.

It is this simple incident which is connected with the story of the so-called "lapse" and is adduced as proof of its truth. But it will be seen that the prostration was made in obedience to the direct Divine command of prostration and had nothing to do with the worship of idols. The incidents narrated before it, relating to the grandeur and majesty of Allāh and to the destruction of the wicked, are so impressive that the idolaters could not resist prostrating themselves. It is possible that the story of the prostration reached the Abyssinian exiles, some of whom might have returned under the impression that the disbelievers no longer opposed the movement.

سُورَةُ الْقَمَرِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٥٤) آيَاتُهَا ٥٥ رُكُوعَاتُهَا ٣

CHAPTER 54

Al-Qamar: THE MOON

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 3 *sections;* 55 *verses*)

The Moon — the word occurring in the first verse and giving its title to this chapter — was a symbol of the power of the Arabs. As the chapter deals with the destruction of the opponents of Truth, its title is appropriately taken from the miracle of the rending asunder of the moon, which indicated the overthrow of the power of the Quraish; see 2388. The first section, after warning the opponents of the Holy Prophet, contains mention of Noah and 'Ād, the second of Thamūd and Lot's people. The third, after a brief reference to Pharaoh and his hosts, contains a prophetical reference to the battle of Badr, which was to humble the power of the Quraish. It is undoubtedly an early Makkan revelation.

SECTION 1 **Judgment to overtake opponents**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

1 The hour drew nigh and the moon was rent asunder.[2388]

اِقْتَرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ وَانْشَقَّ الْقَمَرُ ①

2 And if they see a sign, they turn away and say: Strong enchantment![2389]

وَإِنْ يَرَوْا آيَةً يُعْرِضُوا وَيَقُولُوا سِحْرٌ مُسْتَمِرٌّ ②

2388 The "rending asunder of the moon" in the time of the Holy Prophet is an incident related by a number of his companions; and the reports of this incident are classed as mashhūr (well-known) (Rz), and are accepted as correct by Bukhārī and Muslim. Ibn Athīr says: "The incident is narrated in *mutawātir* (successively repeated) ḥadīth with *ṣaḥīḥ isnād* (sound transmission)". While the main fact is thus undisputed, there are some differences as to details. IMsd says that he saw the peak of Mount Ḥirā' interposing between the two parts. I'Ab says that one of the two parts remained, while the other disappeared (Kf). Answering the objection to the possibility of such an unusual incident, Rz concludes from the different versions of the report that it was a kind of lunar eclipse, and the appearance of something in the form of half the moon in the firmament. The best authorities, however, agree that there is no reason to doubt the trustworthiness of the report, and that the same incident is referred to here. In the whole history of miracles, this is the only miracle of which a contemporaneous record exists. It thus stands unique even among the miracles of the Holy Prophet.

Some commentators are, however, of opinion that the verse under discussion refers to the rending asunder of the moon at the approach of the day of Judgment.

2389, see next page.

3 And they deny and follow their low desires; and every affair is settled.[2390]

وَكَذَّبُوا وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَكُلُّ أَمْرٍ مُسْتَقِرٌّ ﴿٣﴾

4 And certainly narratives have come to them, which should deter—[2391]

وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مِنَ الْأَنْبَاءِ مَا فِيهِ مُزْدَجَرٌ ﴿٤﴾

5 Consummate wisdom — but warnings avail not;

حِكْمَةٌ بَالِغَةٌ فَمَا تُغْنِ النُّذُرُ ﴿٥﴾

6 So turn away from them. On the day when the Inviter invites them to a hard task —

فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ يَوْمَ يَدْعُ الدَّاعِ إِلَىٰ شَيْءٍ نُكُرٍ ﴿٦﴾

7 Their eyes cast down, they will go forth from their graves as if they were scattered locusts,

خُشَّعًا أَبْصَارُهُمْ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ كَأَنَّهُمْ جَرَادٌ مُنْتَشِرٌ ﴿٧﴾

8 Hastening to the Inviter. The disbelievers will say: This is a hard day ![2392]

مُهْطِعِينَ إِلَى الدَّاعِ يَقُولُ الْكَافِرُونَ هَٰذَا يَوْمٌ عَسِرٌ ﴿٨﴾

There is also a suggestion that *inshaqqa-l-qamaru* means *the matter has become manifest,* the reason given being that the Arabs used to set forth the example of the moon for an affair becoming manifest, as the morning is spoken of as *falaq,* literally a *split, fissure,* or *cleft* (AH). R explains the phrase under the root *shaqq* as bearing any of the following three significances: "One explanation of the phrase is that the moon was rent asunder in the Holy Prophet's time; another, that the rending would be brought about at the approach of the Judgment day; and a third, that the meaning is that the affair became manifest".

It may, thus, have been a particular kind of lunar eclipse, the moon appearing as if it were cloven into two, a part remaining bright and the other part darkening, this being the meaning of one part disappearing and the other remaining, or some great commotion might have taken place in the moon or some other unusual phenomenon may have occurred, which might have been made apparent to the naked eye through the strong visionary power of the Prophet.

2389 By calling it strong *enchantment,* they meant to indicate that it was a strong magical illusion, not an actual occurrence. But the word *mustamirr,* which is here translated as *strong,* may also mean *transient,* i.e., a thing which has occurred and passed away, or *continuous* in the sense that such things have been taking place of old.

2390 According to Qatādah the meaning is *those who deserve good will meet with good, and those who deserve evil will meet with evil;* or the meaning is that *the truth will be established,* and *become manifest,* and *falsehood will pass away* (AH). Or, the words mean that *every affair must draw to an end,* the reference being to the opposition which was being offered to the Prophet.

2391 The fate of the ancients, of whom narratives are recited, should have prevented the opponents of Truth from following in their footsteps.

2392 The commentators make all verses of this description apply to the life after death, but comparison with the fate of other people, whose stories are narrated by way of illustration, shows clearly that the punishment of this life is also meant. The *hard day* of trouble overtakes the opponents of Truth in this life as well, and the Hereafter only brings it in a more palpable, and therefore more terrible, form. The Inviter is the Prophet, who invites them to truth, and the graves as applying to this life may signify their homes because they were spiritually dead.

9 Before them the people of Noah rejected — they rejected Our servant and called (him) mad, and he was driven away.

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ فَكَذَّبُوا عَبْدَنَا وَقَالُوا مَجْنُونٌ وَّازْدُجِرَ ﴿٩﴾

10 So he called upon his Lord: I am overcome, so do Thou help.

فَدَعَا رَبَّهُ أَنِّي مَغْلُوبٌ فَانْتَصِرْ ﴿١٠﴾

11 Then We opened the gates of heaven with water pouring down,

فَفَتَحْنَا أَبْوَابَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَاءٍ مُّنْهَمِرٍ ﴿١١﴾

12 And made water to flow forth in the land in springs, so the water gathered together according to a measure already ordained.

وَّفَجَّرْنَا الْأَرْضَ عُيُونًا فَالْتَقَى الْمَاءُ عَلَىٰ أَمْرٍ قَدْ قُدِرَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 And We bore him on that which was made of planks and nails,

وَحَمَلْنَاهُ عَلَىٰ ذَاتِ أَلْوَاحٍ وَّدُسُرٍ ﴿١٣﴾

14 Floating on, before Our eyes — a reward for him who was denied.[2392a]

تَجْرِي بِأَعْيُنِنَا جَزَاءً لِّمَنْ كَانَ كُفِرَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 And certainly We left it as a sign, but is there any that will mind ?[2393]

وَلَقَدْ تَّرَكْنَاهَا آيَةً فَهَلْ مِنْ مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿١٥﴾

16 How terrible was then My chastisement and My warning !

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ ﴿١٦﴾

17 And certainly We have made the Qur'ān easy to remember, but is there any one who will mind ?

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿١٧﴾

18 'Ād denied, so how terrible was My chastisement and My warning !

كَذَّبَتْ عَادٌ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ ﴿١٨﴾

19 Surely We sent on them a furious wind in a day of bitter ill-luck,

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا صَرْصَرًا فِي يَوْمِ نَحْسٍ مُّسْتَمِرٍّ ﴿١٩﴾

20 Tearing men away as if they were the trunks of palm-trees torn up.

تَنْزِعُ النَّاسَ كَأَنَّهُمْ أَعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ مُّنْقَعِرٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 How terrible was then My chastisement and My warning !

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ ﴿٢١﴾

22 And certainly We have made the Qur'ān easy to remember, but is there any one who will mind ?

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

2392a The boat in which Noah and his companions were saved — spoken of in the previous verse as a thing made of ordinary planks and nails — is here described as floating on *before Our eyes*, meaning that it was the mercy of God that saved the boat.

2393 The fate of Noah's people is a sign to the deniers of the Holy Prophet. Compare 51 : 37-46, where a sign is said to be left in the people of Noah, in Moses' enemies, in 'Ād and in Thamūd. Of late, reports have been published in certain newspapers that parts of Noah's ark have been discovered in the snowy regions of a certain mountain, but it is difficult to say what truth there is in these reports.

SECTION 2: **Thamūd and Lot's People**

23 Thamūd rejected the warning.

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِالنُّذُرِ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 So they said: What! A single mortal from among us! Shall we follow him? We shall then be in sure error and distress.

فَقَالُوٓا أَبَشَرًا مِّنَّا وَاحِدًا نَّتَّبِعُهٗٓ إِنَّآ إِذًا لَّفِيْ ضَلٰلٍ وَّسُعُرٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 Has the reminder been sent to him from among us? Nay, he is an insolent liar!

ءَاُلْقِيَ الذِّكْرُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْۢ بَيْنِنَا بَلْ هُوَ كَذَّابٌ أَشِرٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 To-morrow they will know who is the liar, the insolent one.

سَيَعْلَمُوْنَ غَدًا مَّنِ الْكَذَّابُ الْاَشِرُ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 Surely We are going to send the she-camel as a trial for them; so watch them and have patience.

إِنَّا مُرْسِلُوا النَّاقَةِ فِتْنَةً لَّهُمْ فَارْتَقِبْهُمْ وَاصْطَبِرْ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 And inform them that the water is shared between them; every share of the water shall be attended.[2394]

وَنَبِّئْهُمْ أَنَّ الْمَآءَ قِسْمَةٌۢ بَيْنَهُمْ كُلُّ شِرْبٍ مُّحْتَضَرٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 But they called their companion, so he took (a sword) and hamstrung (her).

فَنَادَوْا صَاحِبَهُمْ فَتَعَاطٰى فَعَقَرَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 How (terrible) was then My chastisement and My warning!

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِيْ وَنُذُرِ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 Surely We sent upon them a single cry, so they were like the dry fragments of trees, which the maker of an enclosure collects.[2395]

إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ صَيْحَةً وَّاحِدَةً فَكَانُوْا كَهَشِيْمِ الْمُحْتَظِرِ ﴿٣١﴾

32 And certainly We have made the Qur'ān easy to remember, but is there any one who will mind?

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْاٰنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 The people of Lot treated the warning as a lie.

كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ لُوْطٍۢ بِالنُّذُرِ ﴿٣٣﴾

2394 Water is here said to be shared between them, i.e., *between the people themselvs*, as the word *baina-hum* shows, and not between the people and the she-camel. The concluding statement signifies that "every share of the water shall be attended" by the she-camel, i.e., the water shall not be withheld from her on account of its division. These words, therefore, do not show that the she-camel had a whole day to herself, during which the people could not have a drink.

2395 The punishment which overtook Thamūd is called sometimes *rajfah*, i.e., *the earthquake* (7 : 78), sometimes *ṣā'iqah*, i.e., *the destructive punishment* (41 : 13 ; 51 : 44), sometimes *ṣaiḥah* as here, i.e., *the cry*, or *the rumbling before an earthquake*, and sometimes *ṭāghiyah* (69 : 5), which is synonymous with *ṣā'iqah*; but its description here, as also in 27 : 52, shows that it was a severe earthquake, which destroyed the men and their houses. *Muḥtaẓir* is the maker of a *ḥaẓīrah*,

34 Surely We sent upon them a stone-storm,[2396] except Lot's followers; We saved them a little before day-break —

إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ حَاصِبًا إِلَّآ ءَالَ لُوطٍ ۖ نَّجَّيْنَٰهُم بِسَحَرٍ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 A favour from Us. Thus do We reward him who gives thanks.

نِّعْمَةً مِّنْ عِندِنَا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِى مَن شَكَرَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 And certainly he warned them of Our violent seizure, but they disputed the warning.

وَلَقَدْ أَنذَرَهُم بَطْشَتَنَا فَتَمَارَوْا بِٱلنُّذُرِ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 And certainly they endeavoured to turn him from his guests, but We blinded their eyes; so taste My chastisement and My warning.[2397]

وَلَقَدْ رَٰوَدُوهُ عَن ضَيْفِهِۦ فَطَمَسْنَآ أَعْيُنَهُمْ فَذُوقُوا عَذَابِى وَنُذُرِ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 And certainly a lasting chastisement overtook them in the morning.

وَلَقَدْ صَبَّحَهُم بُكْرَةً عَذَابٌ مُّسْتَقِرٌّ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 So taste My chastisement and My warning.

فَذُوقُوا عَذَابِى وَنُذُرِ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 And certainly We have made the Qur'ān easy to remember, but is there any one who will mind?

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا ٱلْقُرْءَانَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

SECTION 3: **Pharaoh and the Prophet's Opponents**

41 And certainly the warning came to Pharaoh's people.

وَلَقَدْ جَآءَ ءَالَ فِرْعَوْنَ ٱلنُّذُرُ ﴿٤١﴾

42 They rejected all Our signs, so We overtook them with the seizing of the Mighty, the Powerful.

كَذَّبُوا بِـَٔايَٰتِنَا كُلِّهَا فَأَخَذْنَٰهُمْ أَخْذَ عَزِيزٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 Are your disbelievers better than these, or have you an immunity in the scriptures?

أَكُفَّارُكُمْ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكُمْ أَمْ لَكُم بَرَآءَةٌ فِى ٱلزُّبُرِ ﴿٤٣﴾

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which signifies *an enclosure made of dry canes, etc., to confine and protect sheep or camels, etc.* (LL). *Hashīm* signifies *the dry fragments of wood.*

2396 *Ḥāṣib* signifies *a thrower* or *a pelter of stones* (T, LL), that being its primary significance; hence it also comes to signify *a storm raining pebbles.* As other occasions on which details of the punishment are given show that it was a volcanic eruption, I render the word as meaning *stone-storm,* because stones mixed with ashes were rained upon them.

2397 They endeavoured to prevent him taking his guests into his house, but were unable to see their way to it.

44 Or say they: We are a host allied together to help each other?

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ نَحْنُ جَمِيعٌ مُّنتَصِرٌ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 Soon shall the hosts be routed, and they will show (their) backs.[2399]

سَيُهْزَمُ الْجَمْعُ وَيُوَلُّونَ الدُّبُرَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 Nay, the Hour is their promised time, and the Hour is most grievous and bitter.[2400]

بَلِ السَّاعَةُ مَوْعِدُهُمْ وَالسَّاعَةُ أَدْهَىٰ وَأَمَرُّ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 Surely the guilty are in error and distress.

إِنَّ الْمُجْرِمِينَ فِي ضَلَالٍ وَسُعُرٍ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 On the day when they are dragged into the Fire upon their faces: Taste the touch of hell.[2401]

يَوْمَ يُسْحَبُونَ فِي النَّارِ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ ذُوقُوا مَسَّ سَقَرَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 Surely We have created everything according to a measure.[2402]

إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 And Our command is but once, as the twinkling of an eye.

وَمَا أَمْرُنَا إِلَّا وَاحِدَةٌ كَلَمْحٍ بِالْبَصَرِ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 And certainly We destroyed your fellows, but is there any one who will mind?

وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا أَشْيَاعَكُمْ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ ﴿٥١﴾

52 And everything they do is in the writings.

وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ فَعَلُوهُ فِي الزُّبُرِ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 And everything small and great is written down.

وَكُلُّ صَغِيرٍ وَكَبِيرٍ مُّسْتَطَرٌ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 Surely the dutiful will be among Gardens and rivers,

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَنَهَرٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 In the seat of truth, with a most Powerful King.

فِي مَقْعَدِ صِدْقٍ عِندَ مَلِيكٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ ﴿٥٥﴾

2399 It is related by Ibn 'Abbās that the Holy Prophet prayed within his tent on the day of Badr, saying: "O Lord, I beseech Thee according to Thy covenant and Thy promise; O Lord, if such is Thy will, Thou mayest not be served after this day". Abū Bakr took his hand and said: "Allāh is sufficient for thee, O Messenger of Allāh". So he went out and he recited: "Soon shall the hosts be routed, and they shall turn their backs; but the Hour is their promised time, and the Hour shall be most grievous and bitter" (B. 56:89). This shows how the Prophet and his companions read prophecies of the vanquishment of the opponents in words relating apparently to the Hereafter.

2400 See the last note, which shows that the Holy Prophet understood *the Hour* to mean the *hour* or *time of the discomfiture of the Quraish*, and looked upon the battle of Badr as fulfilling this prophecy.

2401 The Quraish who were slain at Badr were removed to a pit for burial, and the Prophet is reported as having addressed them thus: "Surely we have found true what our Lord promised us; have you too found true what your Lord promised you?" (Ibn Hishām). The punishment of this life is called here *a touch of hell.*

2402 So that even nations and people cannot go beyond a certain limit.



CHAPTER 55

Al-Raḥmān : THE BENEFICENT

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 3 *sections ;* 78 *verses*)

This chapter takes its title from the name of the Divine Being, *The Beneficent,* with which it begins, and the entire chapter speaks of the beneficence of Allāh, both in the material and spiritual realms, repeating the words *which then of the bounties of your Lord will you reject ?*

It opens with the statement that the revelation of the Qur'ān to the Holy Prophet is an act of Divine beneficence, and then proceeds to speak of the means which Allāh has created for the physical sustenance of man, showing that He Who made such elaborate arrangements for the material welfare of man could not have neglected his spiritual care. The second speaks of the judgment which must overtake the guilty because they persist in rejecting the spiritual benefits which a Beneficent God has provided for them. The third deals with the reward that will accrue to the faithful who avail themselves of those spiritual benefits.

The chapter belongs to the early Makkan period.

SECTION 1 **Divine Beneficence**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful. — بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 The Beneficent — اَلرَّحْمٰنُ ①

2 Taught the Qur'ān.[2404] — عَلَّمَ الْقُرْاٰنَ ②

3 He created man,[2405] — خَلَقَ الْاِنْسَانَ ③

4 Taught him expression. — عَلَّمَهُ الْبَيَانَ ④

2404 *Al-Raḥmān* is the Beneficent God who brought things into existence for the sustenance of man before his creation. Man has not earned them. The same Beneficent God, we are here told, has taught the Qur'ān, which is a necessity for the spiritual life of man. It is a Divine gift for the spiritual sustenance of man, like so many gifts for his physical sustenance.

2405 I translate *al-insān* as meaning *man* in a general sense, and accordingly translate *al-bayān* as meaning *expression,* because it is in the faculty of speech that lies man's superiority above other animals. But many commentators interpret *al-insān* as meaning *the perfect man,* i.e., *the Prophet,* because *al-bayān,* or *that in which everything is made manifest* (LL), is an appellation applied to the Holy Qur'ān in 3 : 137.

5 The sun and the moon follow a reckoning,

اَلشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ بِحُسْبَانٍ ۝٥

6 And the herbs and the trees adore (Him).[2406]

وَّالنَّجْمُ وَالشَّجَرُ يَسْجُدٰنِ ۝٦

7 And the heaven, He raised it high, and He set up the measure,[2407]

وَالسَّمَآءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيْزَانَ ۝٧

8 That you may not exceed the measure,

اَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيْزَانِ ۝٨

9 And keep up the balance with equity, nor fall short in the measure.

وَاَقِيْمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيْزَانَ ۝٩

10 And the earth, He has set it for (His) creatures;

وَالْاَرْضَ وَضَعَهَا لِلْاَنَامِ ۝١٠

11 Therein is fruit and palms having sheathed clusters,

فِيْهَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَّالنَّخْلُ ذَاتُ الْاَكْمَامِ ۝١١

12 And the grain with (its) husk and fragrance.[2407a]

وَالْحَبُّ ذُو الْعَصْفِ وَالرَّيْحَانُ ۝١٢

13 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?[2408]

فَبِاَيِّ اٰلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبٰنِ ۝١٣

2406 This verse and the one preceding it show how everything created, from those large orbs in the heavens to the smallest herbs that grow on land, follows a law. Is not, then, a law needed for the spiritual perfection of man? *Najm* means *star* as well as *herb* (R).

2407 *Mīzān* in the Holy Qur'ān does not signify a pair of scales for weighing things, but *a measure,* as signifying *any standard of comparison, estimation,* or *judgment,* and the term is here, as elsewhere, used in this broad sense. This is made plain in 57:25: "Certainly We sent Our messengers with clear arguments, and sent with them the book and the measure (Ar., *mīzān*), that men may conduct themselves with equity", where the *mīzān* is that *which enables men to be just in their actions.* It is in this sense that most of the commentators understand this word. Thus, according to Mjd, Ṭabrī, and most commentators, *mīzān* signifies *'adl,* i.e., *justice* (AH), which is explained by Rz as meaning *the giving of their due to those who deserve it.*

2407a The *husk* or the outer covering is generally considered to be a worthless thing. In speaking of it as one of the bounties of God it is hinted that even the husk can be turned into a useful and valuable thing. In contrast with the husk is mentioned the fragrance, which resembles the spirit in the body. Neither should the outer form of the Divine law be considered to be a thing of no use, nor should the spirit of the law be neglected.

2408 This verse is repeated several times in this chapter. In the original the dual form is used instead of the plural, and thus we have instead of *your Lord, rabbi-kumā,* i.e., *the Lord of you two.* The commentators generally take the dual form literally, and suppose that the two kinds of rational beings, i.e., the *jinn* and the *men,* are meant. But see 2342 on the meaning of the dual form, where it is shown that the form is sometimes used by the Arabs to give force to the meaning. That here the dual is used for this purpose is shown by the fact that the blessings mentioned are those which serve as means of sustenance for mankind, such as palms and grain, which are not needed for ethereal beings, as the jinn are considered to be. Hence it is mankind only that is addressed. Even if the dual is taken literally, the two classes addressed are the believers and the disbelievers or the strong and the weak, divisions which are of frequent occurrence in the Holy Qur'ān. The former of these is specially referred to in the concluding words of the last chapter, and hence the personal pronoun *kumā* may refer to

14 He created man from dry clay like earthen vessels,

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ كَالْفَخَّارِ ﴿١٤﴾

15 And He created the jinn of a flame of fire.[2409]

وَخَلَقَ الْجَانَّ مِنْ مَارِجٍ مِنْ نَارٍ ﴿١٥﴾

16 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny ?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿١٦﴾

17 Lord of the two Easts, and Lord of the two Wests.[2410]

رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ وَرَبُّ الْمَغْرِبَيْنِ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny ?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿١٨﴾

19 He has made the two seas to flow freely — they meet :

مَرَجَ الْبَحْرَيْنِ يَلْتَقِيَانِ ﴿١٩﴾

20 Between them is a barrier which they cannot pass.[2411]

بَيْنَهُمَا بَرْزَخٌ لَا يَبْغِيَانِ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny ?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٢١﴾

22 There come forth from them both, pearls large and small.

يَخْرُجُ مِنْهُمَا اللُّؤْلُؤُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny ?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 And His are the ships reared aloft in the sea like mountains.

وَلَهُ الْجَوَارِ الْمُنْشَآتُ فِي الْبَحْرِ كَالْأَعْلَامِ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny ?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٢٥﴾

SECTION 2 : **Judgment of the Guilty**

26 Every one on it passes away—

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ﴿٢٦﴾

---

them ; the jinn not being mentioned in any previous verse, the personal pronoun cannot be taken as referring to them.

2409 For the creation of jinn from fire see 7:12 and 15:27, where it is contrasted with the creation of men from earth. The meaning is explained in 862 and 1336.

2410 The two Easts and the two Wests signify the different points of the horizon at which the sun rises and sets at the summer and winter solstice. In modern terminology, the two Easts are the Near or the Middle East and the Far East ; the two Wests are Europe and America.

2411 The two seas are mentioned in 25:53 and 35:12 as the sweet-water sea and the salt-water sea. A note on the first of these shows what the two seas represent. As in v. 22 here, it is stated in 35:12 also that from both seas fresh flesh and ornaments are obtained ; the significance being that useful men would continue to arise from among both believers and non-believers. Some understand that the Red and the Mediterranean Seas are meant. These seas were separated formerly, but are now united by the Suez Canal, and the verse is considered to contain a prophetical mention of this union.

27 And there endures for ever the person of thy Lord, the Lord of glory and honour.

وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny ?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 All those in the heavens and the earth ask of Him. Every moment He is in a state (of glory).[2414]

يَسْأَلُهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny ?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 Soon shall We apply Ourselves to you, O you two armies.[2415]

سَنَفْرُغُ لَكُمْ أَيُّهَ الثَّقَلَانِ ﴿٣١﴾

32 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny ?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 O assembly of jinn and men, if you are able to pass through the regions of the heavens and the earth, then pass through. You cannot pass through but with authority.[2416]

يَا مَعْشَرَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ إِنِ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ تَنْفُذُوا مِنْ أَقْطَارِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ فَانْفُذُوا ۚ لَا تَنْفُذُونَ إِلَّا بِسُلْطَانٍ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny ?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 The flames of fire and sparks of brass will be sent upon you, then you will not be able to defend yourselves.[2417]

يُرْسَلُ عَلَيْكُمَا شُوَاظٌ مِنْ نَارٍ وَنُحَاسٌ فَلَا تَنْتَصِرَانِ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny ?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 So when the heaven is rent asunder, so it becomes red like red hide.

فَإِذَا انْشَقَّتِ السَّمَاءُ فَكَانَتْ وَرْدَةً كَالدِّهَانِ ﴿٣٧﴾

2414 LA thus sums up the comments on this verse: "It is His attribute to raise up a mighty one from the lowly and to bring down one who is mighty, and to enrich one who is poor and to impoverish one who is rich".

2415 *Thaqalān*, dual of *thaql*, signifies, literally, *things that a man has with him of such things as burden him*, and then *the household and kindred and party* or *domestics* or *servants* (LL). And Ham explains the word *thaqalain*, occurring in pre-Islamic poetry, as meaning *two armies* (LL). The two armies here are the believers and the disbelievers, and Allāh's applying himself to them signifies the judging of their cases so that each should have its reward or punishment. Ham understood the *Arabs* and the *foreigners* (LL), and thus the allusion may be to the conquest of Arabia and the foreign countries. This explanation lends support to what is stated in 2580, that the word *jinn* in the Holy Qur'ān sometimes stands for *foreigners*, and sometimes for the generations to come.

2416 The jinn and the men of this verse are the great and the small opponents of the Holy Prophet or the foreigners and the Arabs as shown in the previous footnote. See also 2593. All these opponents are told that they cannot escape the punishment.

2417 *Nuḥās* means *copper* or *brass* or *the sparks that fall from brass when it is beaten* (LL). This is also the significance accepted by Bukhārī (B. 65 : 55) and

38 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 So on that day neither man nor jinni will be asked about his sin.

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا يُسْأَلُ عَن ذَنبِهِ إِنسٌ وَلَا جَانٌّ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 The guilty will be known by their marks, so they shall be seized by the forelocks and the feet.

يُعْرَفُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ بِسِيمَاهُمْ فَيُؤْخَذُ بِالنَّوَاصِي وَالْأَقْدَامِ ﴿٤١﴾

42 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 This is the hell which the guilty deny.

هَٰذِهِ جَهَنَّمُ الَّتِي يُكَذِّبُ بِهَا الْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 Round about shall they go between it and hot, boiling water.

يَطُوفُونَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ حَمِيمٍ آنٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٤٥﴾

SECTION 3 : **Reward of the Righteous**

46 And for him who fears to stand before his Lord are two Gardens.[2419]

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّتَانِ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 Full of varieties.

ذَوَاتَا أَفْنَانٍ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٤٩﴾

Râghib. Others interpret the word as *smoke*. According to Ḍaḥāk, their punishment in this world is spoken of here, the statement made here amounting to this that their condition would be like one on whom fire and sparks of brass are sent (R). It is a fact that on most occasions where the punishment of the opponents of Truth is spoken of, it is their punishment here, as well as in the Hereafter. In the use of the word *nuḥās*, which means *sparks of beaten brass*, there seems to be a reference to atomic warfare.

2419 The reward of the righteous is plainly spoken of here as two Gardens, i.e., a Garden in this life and a Garden in the Hereafter. The Garden of this life is the spiritual bliss which the righteous find here in the doing of good, whereof gardens and rivers and fruits are symbols. But in these words there may also be a deeper reference here to the worldly conquests which the Muslims were promised, and support to this is lent by the words of a ḥadīth which speaks of Saiḥān and Jaiḥān (the two rivers of Persia) and Furāt (the Euphrates, which with the Tigris waters Mesopotamia) and Nīl (the Nile, which waters Egypt) as being the rivers of paradise (Ms., vol. 2, p. 351), the countries which form the valley of these four rivers being among the earliest conquests of Islām, and remaining to this day Muslim lands under Muslim rule. Note further that it is always *two gardens* that are spoken of in the Holy Qur'ān as outward symbols of prosperity and a happy life, as the two gardens of prosperous Saba' (34:15), or the two gardens of the Christian nations (18:32).

50 Therein are two fountains flowing.

فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ تَجْرِيَانِ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٥١﴾

52 Therein are pairs of every fruit.

فِيهِمَا مِن كُلِّ فَاكِهَةٍ زَوْجَانِ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 Reclining on beds, whose inner coverings are of silk brocade. And the fruits of the two Gardens are within reach.

مُتَّكِئِينَ عَلَىٰ فُرُشٍ بَطَائِنُهَا مِنْ إِسْتَبْرَقٍ ۚ وَجَنَى الْجَنَّتَيْنِ دَانٍ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٥٥﴾

56 Therein are those restraining their glances, whom no man nor jinni has touched before them.

فِيهِنَّ قَاصِرَاتُ الطَّرْفِ لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 As though they were rubies and pearls.[2420]

كَأَنَّهُنَّ الْيَاقُوتُ وَالْمَرْجَانُ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 Is the reward of goodness aught but goodness?

هَلْ جَزَاءُ الْإِحْسَانِ إِلَّا الْإِحْسَانُ ﴿٦٠﴾

61 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٦١﴾

62 And besides those are two (other) Gardens.[2421]

وَمِن دُونِهِمَا جَنَّتَانِ ﴿٦٢﴾

63 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 Inclining to blackness.

مُدْهَامَّتَانِ ﴿٦٤﴾

65 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 Therein are two springs gushing forth.

فِيهِمَا عَيْنَانِ نَضَّاخَتَانِ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 Therein are fruits and palms and pomegranates.

فِيهِمَا فَاكِهَةٌ وَنَخْلٌ وَرُمَّانٌ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٦٩﴾

2420 So far as there is a description of the spiritual blessings of the Hereafter in these words, see 2356. So far as it relates to this life, the chaste and modest wives of the faithful are meant. According to a ḥadīth narrated by Umm Salamah, the Prophet's wife, the women of this world are greater in excellence than the *ḥūr 'īn* — "*nisā' al-dunyā afḍalu min al-ḥūr al-'īn*" (R).

2421 The faithful are spoken of in the very next chapter as belonging to

70 Therein are goodly beautiful ones.[2423]

71 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

72 Pure ones confined to pavilions.

73 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

74 Before them man has not touched them, nor jinni.

75 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

76 Reclining on green cushions and beautiful carpets.

77 Which then of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?

78 Blessed be the name of thy Lord, the Lord of Glory and Honour!

فِيهِنَّ خَيْرَٰتٌ حِسَانٌ ﴿٧٠﴾

فَبِأَيِّ آلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٧١﴾

حُورٌ مَّقْصُورَٰتٌ فِي الْخِيَامِ ﴿٧٢﴾

فَبِأَيِّ آلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٧٣﴾

لَمْ يَطْمِثْهُنَّ إِنسٌ قَبْلَهُمْ وَلَا جَانٌّ ﴿٧٤﴾

فَبِأَيِّ آلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٧٥﴾

مُتَّكِـِٔينَ عَلَىٰ رَفْرَفٍ خُضْرٍ وَعَبْقَرِيٍّ حِسَانٍ ﴿٧٦﴾

فَبِأَيِّ آلَآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ ﴿٧٧﴾

تَبَٰرَكَ اسْمُ رَبِّكَ ذِي الْجَلَٰلِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ﴿٧٨﴾

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two classes, the ordinary believers — those on the right hand or *aṣḥāb al-yamīn*, and the foremost or the *muqarrabūn* (56:8, 10); hence the two Gardens of this verse as compared with the two Gardens of v. 46; or, by the two Gardens of v. 46, are meant the Gardens of the Hereafter and by the two Gardens of this verse are meant the Gardens of this world.

2423 *Khairāt* is plural of *khairah*, feminine of *khair*. *Khairah* means *a good thing of any kind, a good quality, an excellency* (LL). The other word, *ḥisān*, is plural of *ḥasanā'*, which applied to a woman, signifies *comely, beautiful*, or *pleasing* (LL). The significance as regards blessings of a life after death is the same as explained in 2356. Or, the words contain a description of the faithful women.



CHAPTER 56

Al-Wāqi'ah : THE EVENT

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 3 *sections;* 96 *verses*)

The Event referred to, from which the title of this chapter is taken, is the time of the meting out of reward and punishment to the faithful and the opponents respectively. This chapter speaks of three classes of men, the foremost among the faithful being indicated as a separate class, while the other two are the believers and their opponents. The first section, after stating that men will be divided into three classes, speaks of the two classes of the faithful; the second refers to the guilty opponents, while the third states that judgment is inevitable and the three classes will receive what they deserve.

It is an early Makkan revelation.

SECTION 1 **Three Classes of Men**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 When the Event comes to pass—[2425]

إِذَا وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ ۝١

2 There is no belying its coming to pass—

لَيْسَ لِوَقْعَتِهَا كَاذِبَةٌ ۝٢

3 Abasing (some), exalting (others)—

خَافِضَةٌ رَّافِعَةٌ ۝٣

4 When the earth is shaken with a (severe) shaking,

إِذَا رُجَّتِ الْأَرْضُ رَجًّا ۝٤

5 And the mountains are crumbled to pieces,[2427]

وَّبُسَّتِ الْجِبَالُ بَسًّا ۝٥

6 So they are as scattered dust,

فَكَانَتْ هَبَآءً مُّنْۢبَثًّا ۝٦

7 And you are three sorts.

وَّكُنْتُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ثَلٰثَةً ۝٧

2425 Note that the Holy Qur'ān speaks of the *Hour* or the *Event* not only as signifying the Resurrection, but also very frequently as signifying the doom of its opponents. That doom was, in fact, a foretaste of what they would suffer in the life after death; this is made clear in v. 3.

2427 The crumbling of the mountains signifies the fall of great opponents; see 1604.

8 So those on the right-hand ; how (happy) are those on the right-hand !

9 And those on the left ; how (wretched) are those on the left !

10 And the foremost are the foremost—[2428]

11 These are drawn nigh (to Allāh).

12 In Gardens of bliss

13 A multitude from among the first,

14 And a few from among those of later times,[2429]

15 On thrones inwrought,

16 Reclining on them, facing each other.

17 Round about them will go youths never altering in age,[2430]

18 With goblets and ewers, and a cup of pure drink —

19 They are not affected with headache thereby, nor are they intoxicated,

20 And fruits that they choose,

21 And flesh of fowl that they desire,

22 And pure, beautiful ones,

23 Like to hidden pearls.

24 A reward for what they did.

25 They hear therein no vain or sinful talk—

26 But only the saying, Peace ! Peace ![2430a]

فَاَصْحٰبُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ ۙ مَآ اَصْحٰبُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ ؕ ⑧

وَ اَصْحٰبُ الْمَشْـَٔمَةِ ۙ مَآ اَصْحٰبُ الْمَشْـَٔمَةِ ؕ ⑨

وَ السّٰبِقُوْنَ السّٰبِقُوْنَ ۚ ⑩

اُولٰٓئِكَ الْمُقَرَّبُوْنَ ۚ ⑪

فِيْ جَنّٰتِ النَّعِيْمِ ⑫

ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْاَوَّلِيْنَ ۙ ⑬

وَ قَلِيْلٌ مِّنَ الْاٰخِرِيْنَ ؕ ⑭

عَلٰى سُرُرٍ مَّوْضُوْنَةٍ ۙ ⑮

مُّتَّكِـِٕيْنَ عَلَيْهَا مُتَقٰبِلِيْنَ ⑯

يَطُوْفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُّخَلَّدُوْنَ ۙ ⑰

بِاَكْوَابٍ وَّ اَبَارِيْقَ ۙ وَ كَاْسٍ مِّنْ مَّعِيْنٍ ۙ ⑱

لَّا يُصَدَّعُوْنَ عَنْهَا وَ لَا يُنْزِفُوْنَ ۙ ⑲

وَ فَاكِهَةٍ مِّمَّا يَتَخَيَّرُوْنَ ۙ ⑳

وَ لَحْمِ طَيْرٍ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُوْنَ ؕ ㉑

وَ حُوْرٌ عِيْنٌ ۙ ㉒

كَاَمْثَالِ اللُّؤْلُؤِ الْمَكْنُوْنِ ۚ ㉓

جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ㉔

لَا يَسْمَعُوْنَ فِيْهَا لَغْوًا وَّ لَا تَاْثِيْمًا ۙ ㉕

اِلَّا قِيْلًا سَلٰمًا سَلٰمًا ㉖

2428 Those foremost in doing good are foremost in reaping their reward.

2429 Those who accepted the Holy Prophet in the earlier stages of his mission, and had to make greater sacrifices, had a greater reward ; but there were others who waited until Islām was established in the land and made no sacrifices. Compare 57 : 10 ; 2446.

2430 *Khallada* means *he remained* or *continued for ever*, and *mukhalladūn* signifies *that never become decrepit*, or *never altering in age*, because there is no decay in the life after death.

2430a This description of the paradise in early revelation does not differ from that of later revelation. After various blessings are enumerated, their true nature is depicted in one word, Peace. Peace in this world, and Peace in the Hereafter, such is the message of Islām.

27 And those on the right hand; how (happy) are those on the right hand!

وَأَصْحٰبُ الْيَمِينِ ۙ مَآ أَصْحٰبُ الْيَمِينِ ٢٧

28 Amid thornless lote-trees,

فِي سِدْرٍ مَّخْضُودٍ ٢٨

29 And clustered banana-trees,

وَّطَلْحٍ مَّنْضُودٍ ٢٩

30 And extensive shade,

وَّظِلٍّ مَّمْدُودٍ ٣٠

31 And water gushing,

وَّمَآءٍ مَّسْكُوبٍ ٣١

32 And abundant fruit,

وَّفَاكِهَةٍ كَثِيرَةٍ ٣٢

33 Neither intercepted, nor forbidden,

لَّا مَقْطُوعَةٍ وَّلَا مَمْنُوعَةٍ ٣٣

34 And exalted couches.

وَّفُرُشٍ مَّرْفُوعَةٍ ٣٤

35 Surely We have created them a (new) creation,

إِنَّآ أَنْشَأْنٰهُنَّ إِنْشَآءً ٣٥

36 So We have made them virgins,

فَجَعَلْنٰهُنَّ أَبْكَارًا ٣٦

37 Loving, equals in age,

عُرُبًا أَتْرَابًا ٣٧

38 For those on the right hand.[2432]

لِّأَصْحٰبِ الْيَمِينِ ٣٨

39 A multitude from among the first,

ثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ٣٩

40 And a multitude from among those of later times.[2433]

وَثُلَّةٌ مِّنَ الْآخِرِينَ ٤٠

SECTION 2: **The Guilty**

41 And those on the left hand; how (wretched) are those on the left hand!

وَأَصْحٰبُ الشِّمَالِ ۙ مَآ أَصْحٰبُ الشِّمَالِ ٤١

42 In hot wind and boiling water,

فِي سَمُومٍ وَّحَمِيمٍ ٤٢

43 And shadow of black smoke,

وَّظِلٍّ مِّنْ يَّحْمُومٍ ٤٣

2432 It is noteworthy that the blessings granted to the righteous are first spoken of as shades, water, fruits and resting-places; and then, as it were to dispel all doubts as to what these blessings of the next life are, it is said in v. 35, *We have created them a new creation.* These words settle conclusively that, whatever these blessings are, whether shades or trees or water or fruits, they are all the fruits of deeds, which have been made *to grow into a new growth.* The words that follow this statement are no doubt primarily applicable to women, but, as shown in 2356, it is only because womanhood stands as a symbol of purity and beauty. Thus *abkār,* plural of *bikr,* means a *virgin,* and also *an action that has not been preceded by its like* (LL). Similarly, *atrāb,* or *equals in age,* as already shown in 2148a, signifies that the growth of those blessings begins with the growth of spiritual life in man. *'Urub* is plural of both *'urūb* and *'arīb,* the former signifying *a woman that manifests love to her husband.*

2433 Note that these verses do not contradict vv. 13 and 14, as imagined by some Christian critics, for the latter speak only of those who were foremost in accepting the Holy Prophet.

44 Neither cool nor refreshing.[2434]

لَّا بَارِدٍ وَّلَا كَرِيْمٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 Surely they lived before that in ease.

اِنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا قَبْلَ ذٰلِكَ مُتْرَفِيْنَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 And they persisted in the great violation.[2435]

وَكَانُوْا يُصِرُّوْنَ عَلَى الْحِنْثِ الْعَظِيْمِ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And they used to say: When we die and become dust and bones, shall we then indeed be raised?

وَكَانُوْا يَقُوْلُوْنَ اَئِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَّعِظَامًا ءَاِنَّا لَمَبْعُوْثُوْنَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 Or our fathers of yore?

اَوَ اٰبَآؤُنَا الْاَوَّلُوْنَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 Say: The ancients and those of later times

قُلْ اِنَّ الْاَوَّلِيْنَ وَالْاٰخِرِيْنَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 Will surely be gathered together for the appointed hour of a known day.

لَمَجْمُوْعُوْنَ اِلٰى مِيْقَاتِ يَوْمٍ مَّعْلُوْمٍ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 Then shall you, O you who err and deny,

ثُمَّ اِنَّكُمْ اَيُّهَا الضَّآلُّوْنَ الْمُكَذِّبُوْنَ ﴿٥١﴾

52 Eat of the tree of Zaqqūm,

لَاٰكِلُوْنَ مِنْ شَجَرٍ مِّنْ زَقُّوْمٍ ﴿٥٢﴾

53 And fill (your) bellies with it;

فَمَالِـُٔوْنَ مِنْهَا الْبُطُوْنَ ﴿٥٣﴾

54 Then drink after it of boiling water;

فَشٰرِبُوْنَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْحَمِيْمِ ﴿٥٤﴾

55 And drink as drinks the thirsty camel.

فَشٰرِبُوْنَ شُرْبَ الْهِيْمِ ﴿٥٥﴾

56 This is their entertainment on the day of Requital.

هٰذَا نُزُلُهُمْ يَوْمَ الدِّيْنِ ﴿٥٦﴾

57 We have created you, why do you not then accept?

نَحْنُ خَلَقْنٰكُمْ فَلَوْلَا تُصَدِّقُوْنَ ﴿٥٧﴾

58 See you that which you emit?

اَفَرَءَيْتُمْ مَّا تُمْنُوْنَ ﴿٥٨﴾

59 Is it you that create it or are We the Creators?

ءَاَنْتُمْ تَخْلُقُوْنَهٗٓ اَمْ نَحْنُ الْخٰلِقُوْنَ ﴿٥٩﴾

60 We have ordained death among you and We are not to be overcome,

نَحْنُ قَدَّرْنَا بَيْنَكُمُ الْمَوْتَ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَسْبُوْقِيْنَ ﴿٦٠﴾

61 That We may change your state and make you grow into what you know not.[2436]

عَلٰٓى اَنْ نُّبَدِّلَ اَمْثَالَكُمْ وَنُنْشِئَكُمْ فِيْ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٦١﴾

62 And certainly you know the first growth, why do you not then mind?

وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ النَّشْاَةَ الْاُوْلٰى فَلَوْلَا تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٦٢﴾

2434 These verses draw a picture of the distress and abasement which were in store for the opponents of truth in this life as well as in the Hereafter.

2435 That is, the violation of Divine commandments.

2436 It is the Resurrection that is spoken of here. The present state will be changed, we are told, and men will be made to grow into a new creation, which

63 See you what you sow?

أَفَرَءَيْتُم مَّا تَحْرُثُونَ ﴿٦٣﴾

64 Is it you that cause it to grow, or are We the Causer of growth?

ءَأَنتُمْ تَزْرَعُونَهُۥٓ أَمْ نَحْنُ ٱلزَّٰرِعُونَ ﴿٦٤﴾

65 If We pleased, We would make it chaff, then would you lament:

لَوْ نَشَآءُ لَجَعَلْنَٰهُ حُطَٰمًا فَظَلْتُمْ تَفَكَّهُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

66 Surely we are burdened with debt:

إِنَّا لَمُغْرَمُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

67 Nay, we are deprived.

بَلْ نَحْنُ مَحْرُومُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

68 See you the water which you drink?

أَفَرَءَيْتُمُ ٱلْمَآءَ ٱلَّذِى تَشْرَبُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

69 Do you bring it down from the clouds, or are We the Bringer?

ءَأَنتُمْ أَنزَلْتُمُوهُ مِنَ ٱلْمُزْنِ أَمْ نَحْنُ ٱلْمُنزِلُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

70 If We pleased, We could make it saltish; why give you not thanks?

لَوْ نَشَآءُ جَعَلْنَٰهُ أُجَاجًا فَلَوْلَا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

71 See you the fire which you kindle?

أَفَرَءَيْتُمُ ٱلنَّارَ ٱلَّتِى تُورُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

72 Is it you that produce the trees for it, or are We the Producer?

ءَأَنتُمْ أَنشَأْتُمْ شَجَرَتَهَآ أَمْ نَحْنُ ٱلْمُنشِـُٔونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

73 We have made it a reminder and an advantage for the wayfarers of the desert.[2437]

نَحْنُ جَعَلْنَٰهَا تَذْكِرَةً وَمَتَٰعًا لِّلْمُقْوِينَ ﴿٧٣﴾

74 So glorify the name of thy Lord, the Incomparably Great.

فَسَبِّحْ بِٱسْمِ رَبِّكَ ٱلْعَظِيمِ ﴿٧٤﴾

SECTION 3: **Judgment is Inevitable**

75 But nay, I swear by revelation of portions (of the Qur'ān)! —[2438]

فَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِمَوَٰقِعِ ٱلنُّجُومِ ﴿٧٥﴾

76 And it is a great oath indeed, if you knew —

وَإِنَّهُۥ لَقَسَمٌ لَّوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٧٦﴾

77 Surely it is a bounteous Qur'ān,

إِنَّهُۥ لَقُرْءَانٌ كَرِيمٌ ﴿٧٧﴾

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they do not know. Clearly it is not the material body of this life, but a new body which grows out of the deeds of men.

2437 The fire burned at night points out to the desert wayfarer a habitation of men, where he will be welcome. It is called "a reminder" because it represents the reward of evil deeds in another life.

2438 The meaning adopted is in consonance with the context. As to *nujūm*, meaning *portions of the Qur'ān, see* 2371, where this verse also is explained. *Mawāqi'* is the plural of *mauqa'*, i.e., *the time or place of the coming down of a thing*, which is the revelation of the Qur'ān in this case. V. 77 makes it clear that it is the revelation of the Qur'ān, for it is to this that the personal pronoun *it* occurring there refers.

78 In a book that is protected,

فِيْ كِتٰبٍ مَّكْنُوْنٍ ۙ

79 Which none touches save the purified ones.[2439]

لَّا يَمَسُّهٗۤ اِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُوْنَ ؕ

80 A revelation from the Lord of the worlds.

تَنْزِيْلٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

81 Is it this announcement that you disdain ?

اَفَبِهٰذَا الْحَدِيْثِ اَنْتُمْ مُّدْهِنُوْنَ ۙ

82 And make your denial your means of subsistence.[2441]

وَ تَجْعَلُوْنَ رِزْقَكُمْ اَنَّكُمْ تُكَذِّبُوْنَ

83 Why is it not then that when it comes up to the throat,

فَلَوْلَاۤ اِذَا بَلَغَتِ الْحُلْقُوْمَ ۙ

84 And you at that time look on —

وَ اَنْتُمْ حِيْنَئِذٍ تَنْظُرُوْنَ ۙ

85 And We are nearer to it than you, but you see not —

وَ نَحْنُ اَقْرَبُ اِلَيْهِ مِنْكُمْ وَ لٰكِنْ لَّا تُبْصِرُوْنَ

86 Why then, if you are not held under authority,

فَلَوْلَاۤ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ غَيْرَ مَدِيْنِيْنَ ۙ

87 Do you not send it back, if you are truthful ?[2442]

تَرْجِعُوْنَهَاۤ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰدِقِيْنَ

88 Then if he is one of those drawn nigh (to Allāh),

فَاَمَّاۤ اِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِيْنَ ۙ

89 Then happiness and bounty and a Garden of bliss.

فَرَوْحٌ وَّ رَيْحَانٌ ۙ وَّ جَنَّتُ نَعِيْمٍ

90 And if he is one of those on the right hand,

وَ اَمَّاۤ اِنْ كَانَ مِنْ اَصْحٰبِ الْيَمِيْنِ ۙ

91 Then peace to thee from those on the right hand.

فَسَلٰمٌ لَّكَ مِنْ اَصْحٰبِ الْيَمِيْنِ ؕ

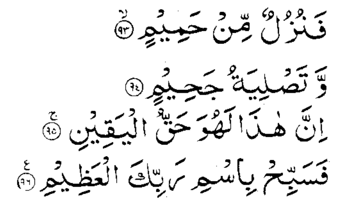
92 And if he is one of the rejectors, the erring ones,

وَ اَمَّاۤ اِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُكَذِّبِيْنَ الضَّآلِّيْنَ ۙ

As already stated in 2099, the object of an oath in such cases is to draw attention to certain facts. The use of *lā* in such cases is explained in 2606. The significance is that every portion of the Qur'ān bears evidence to its own truth.

2439 Vv. 77, 78 and 79 contain three statements regarding the Qur'ān. According to v. 77, it is bounteous. The word *karīm* used here about the Qur'ān means *generous, liberal, noble* or *honoured* (LL); and you say of land as *karumat,* meaning *it yielded increase of its seed-produce* (LL). And *karam* (the root-word, inf.) means, when used about the Divine Being (and the same is true of His Word and His Prophet), *iḥsān* and *in'ām,* i.e., *doing of good* or *conferring of benefit* (R). The Qur'ān is called *karīm* on account of the benefit which it brought to humanity, and hence I render it as meaning *bounteous* or *bountiful.* V. 78 speaks of it as being protected, by which is meant not only that it will be protected against all attempts to destroy it, but also that it will be protected in all its purity in writing. V. 79 states that it can be touched only by those purified by God. This shows that an understanding of the Qur'ān is granted only to those who are pure in heart. It also shows that the Qur'ān should not be touched by one who is impure. Hence the companions were forbidden to carry the Qur'ān to an enemy's country (B. 56:129). Both the verses and this report further show that the Qur'ān existed in a written form from the first, otherwise such injunctions

2441, 2442, see next page.



93 He has an entertainment of boiling water,

94 And burning in hell.

95 Surely this is a certain truth.

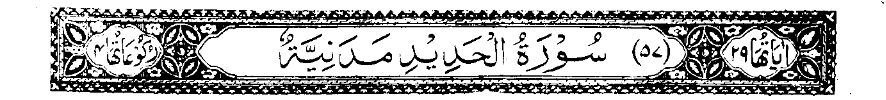
96 So glorify the name of thy Lord, the Incomparably Great.

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as not to touch or travel with it to the enemy's country would have been meaningless.

2441 The meaning is that you are bent upon giving the lie to the Qur'ān to such an extent as if to give it the lie were your means of subsistence, without which you could not live.

2442 Sale and others translate *gh̲aira madīnīna* as meaning *not to be rewarded* or *not to be judged,* and call the passage obscure. But *madīnīn* means *mamlūkīn,* i.e., *held under authority* (LL). The meaning is that, if you are your own masters and not subject to the authority of a Higher Power, why can you not resist death when it comes to you?



CHAPTER 57

Al-Ḥadīd : **IRON**

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 4 *sections*; 29 *verses*)

This chapter is entitled *Iron* — this word occurs in v. 25 — in reference to the punishment of the opponents, who were bent upon extirpating Islām with the sword. It opens with a description of the greatness of the power and knowledge of Allāh, containing a prophecy of the future conquests of Islām. But the Muslims are told that they will have to make sacrifices and exert themselves to their utmost. The second section after speaking of the hypocrites prophesies that after the lapse of a long time, which will harden the hearts of the believers, the dead earth will be again brought to life. The third section refers to the temporary nature of all those worldly enjoyments which keep a man away from the Truth, and it closes with a reference to the punishment of those who take up the sword to annihilate Islām. The last section speaks of two kinds of Divine grace which were in store for the believers.

From this, the 57th chapter, to the 66th, there is again a group of Madīnan chapters, which all seem to have been revealed from about the 4th to the 7th year of the Hijrah with the exception of ch. 63, which seems to have been revealed in the 2nd year of the Hijrah, and ch. 62 and ch. 64, which in all probability were revealed in the first. This is the last group of Madīnan revelations and it complements the subject-matter of the Madīnan group of chapters with which the Holy Qur'ān opens. It may be noted that five out of the ten chapters of this group commence with the hymn of the glorification of the Divine Being, which shows that this period was marked by the onward march of Islām.

SECTION 1 Establishment of the Kingdom of God

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Whatever is in the heavens and the earth declares the glory of Allāh, and He is the Mighty, the Wise.

سَبَّحَ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضِ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ①

2 His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He gives life and causes death; and He is Possessor of power over all things.

لَهٗ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضِ ۚ يُحْيٖ وَ يُمِيْتُ ۚ وَ هُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ②

3 He is the First and the Last and the Manifest and the Hidden,[2444] and He is Knower of all things.

هُوَ الْاَوَّلُ وَ الْاٰخِرُ وَ الظَّاهِرُ وَ الْبَاطِنُ ۚ وَ هُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ③

4 He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods, and He is established on the Throne of Power. He knows that which goes down into the earth and that which comes forth out of it, and that which comes down from heaven and that which goes up to it. And He is with you wherever you are. And Allāh is Seer of what you do.

هُوَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضَ فِيْ سِتَّةِ اَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوٰى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ ؕ يَعْلَمُ مَا يَلِجُ فِي الْاَرْضِ وَ مَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا وَ مَا يَنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ وَ مَا يَعْرُجُ فِيْهَا ؕ وَ هُوَ مَعَكُمْ اَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ④

5 His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth; and to Allāh are (all) affairs returned.

لَهٗ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضِ ؕ وَ اِلَى اللّٰهِ تُرْجَعُ الْاُمُوْرُ ⑤

6 He causes the night to pass into the day, and causes the day to pass into the night. And He is Knower of what is in the hearts.

يُوْلِجُ الَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَ يُوْلِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي الَّيْلِ ؕ وَ هُوَ عَلِيْمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ ⑥

7 Believe in Allāh and His Messenger, and spend of that whereof He has made you heirs. So those of you who believe and spend — for them is a great reward.

اٰمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَ رَسُوْلِهٖ وَ اَنْفِقُوْا مِمَّا جَعَلَكُمْ مُّسْتَخْلَفِيْنَ فِيْهِ ؕ فَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مِنْكُمْ وَ اَنْفَقُوْا لَهُمْ اَجْرٌ كَبِيْرٌ ⑦

2444 The Holy Prophet has thus explained the four attributes of the Divine Being mentioned here: "Thou art *the First,* so that there was nothing before Thee, and Thou art *the Last,* so that there is nothing after Thee, and Thou art *the Manifest,* or *the Ascendant* over all, so that there is nothing above Thee, and

8 And what reason have you that you believe not in Allāh? And the Messenger invites you to believe in your Lord, and He has indeed accepted your covenant, if you are believers.[2445]

وَ مَا لَكُمْ لَا تُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ ۚ وَ الرَّسُوْلُ يَدْعُوْكُمْ لِتُؤْمِنُوْا بِرَبِّكُمْ وَ قَدْ اَخَذَ مِيْثَاقَكُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿۸﴾

9 He it is Who sends down clear messages to His servant, that he may bring you forth from darkness into light. And surely Allāh is Kind, Merciful to you.

هُوَ الَّذِيْ يُنَزِّلُ عَلٰى عَبْدِهٖۤ اٰيٰتٍۭ بَيِّنٰتٍ لِّيُخْرِجَكُمْ مِّنَ الظُّلُمٰتِ اِلَى النُّوْرِ ؕ وَ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِكُمْ لَرَءُوْفٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۹﴾

10 And what reason have you that you spend not in Allāh's way? And Allāh's is the inheritance of the heavens and the earth. Those of you who spent before the Victory[2446] and fought are not on a level (with others). They are greater in rank than those who spent and fought afterwards. And Allāh has promised good to all. And Allāh is Aware of what you do.

وَ مَا لَكُمْ اَلَّا تُنْفِقُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَ لِلّٰهِ مِيْرَاثُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضِ ؕ لَا يَسْتَوِيْ مِنْكُمْ مَّنْ اَنْفَقَ مِنْ قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ وَ قٰتَلَ ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ اَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِّنَ الَّذِيْنَ اَنْفَقُوْا مِنْۢ بَعْدُ وَ قٰتَلُوْا ؕ وَ كُلًّا وَّعَدَ اللّٰهُ الْحُسْنٰى ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرٌ ﴿۱۰﴾

SECTION 2 : **Light and Life given by the Prophet**

11 Who is he that will offer to Allāh a good gift, so He will double it for him, and he will have a generous reward.

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِيْ يُقْرِضُ اللّٰهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضٰعِفَهٗ لَهٗ وَ لَهٗۤ اَجْرٌ كَرِيْمٌ ﴿۱۱﴾

12 On that day thou wilt see the faithful men and the faithful women, their light gleaming before them and on their right hand.[2447] Good news for you this day! — Gardens wherein rivers flow, to abide therein! That is the grand achievement.

يَوْمَ تَرَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَ الْمُؤْمِنٰتِ يَسْعٰى نُوْرُهُمْ بَيْنَ اَيْدِيْهِمْ وَ بِاَيْمَانِهِمْ بُشْرٰىكُمُ الْيَوْمَ جَنّٰتٌ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ؕ ذٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيْمُ ﴿۱۲﴾

Thou art *the Hidden, the Knower* of the hidden things, so that there is nothing hidden from Thee" (Ms. 48 : 13).

2445 The believers, who are addressed, are exhorted to be true to their belief. Belief is thus not mere confession of the Truth but the upholding of it under trials.

2446 By Victory here is meant the moral victory gained by the Ḥudaibiyah truce, or the conquest of Makkah, which made the Muslims virtually the masters of the whole of Arabia. The sacrifices made earlier had therefore a greater value on account of the trials which the Muslims had then to face.

2447 The first part of this section speaks of the light — the light of faith —

13 On the day when the hypocrites, men and women, will say to those who believe: Wait for us, that we may borrow from your light. It will be said: Turn back and seek a light. Then a wall, with a door in it, will be raised between them. Within it shall be mercy, and outside of it chastisement.[2448]

يَوْمَ يَقُوْلُ الْمُنٰفِقُوْنَ وَ الْمُنٰفِقٰتُ
لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا انْظُرُوْنَا نَقْتَبِسْ مِنْ
نُّوْرِكُمْ ۚ قِيْلَ ارْجِعُوْا وَرَآءَكُمْ
فَالْتَمِسُوْا نُوْرًا ؕ فَضُرِبَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِسُوْرٍ
لَّهٗ بَابٌ ؕ بَاطِنُهٗ فِيْهِ الرَّحْمَةُ وَظَاهِرُهٗ
مِنْ قِبَلِهِ الْعَذَابُ ؕ ﴿۱۳﴾

14 They will cry out to them: Were we not with you? They will say: Yea, but you caused yourselves to fall into temptation, and you waited[2449] and doubted, and vain desires deceived you, till the threatened punishment[2450] of Allāh came, and the arch-deceiver deceived you about Allāh.

يُنَادُوْنَهُمْ اَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَّعَكُمْ ؕ قَالُوْا بَلٰى
وَلٰكِنَّكُمْ فَتَنْتُمْ اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتَرَبَّصْتُمْ
وَارْتَبْتُمْ وَغَرَّتْكُمُ الْاَمَانِيُّ حَتّٰى جَآءَ
اَمْرُ اللّٰهِ وَغَرَّكُمْ بِاللّٰهِ الْغَرُوْرُ ﴿۱۴﴾

15 So this day no ransom will be accepted from you, nor from those who disbelieved. Your abode is the Fire; it is your patron[2451] and evil is the resort.

فَالْيَوْمَ لَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْكُمْ فِدْيَةٌ وَّلَا
مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا ؕ مَاْوٰىكُمُ النَّارُ ؕ
هِيَ مَوْلٰىكُمْ ؕ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿۱۵﴾

16 Has not the time yet come for the believers that their hearts should be humble for the remembrance of Allāh and the Truth that is revealed, and (that) they should not be like

اَلَمْ يَاْنِ لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْۤا اَنْ تَخْشَعَ
قُلُوْبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ
الْحَقِّ ۙ وَلَا يَكُوْنُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا

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which was given through the Prophet. This light will become manifest on the day of Resurrection.

2448 Although the hypocrites remained mixed with the believers for a time, yet separation was brought about even in this life towards the close of the Prophet's life. As the Resurrection will bring hidden things to light, the hypocrites will find themselves devoid of light, because they did not possess the light of faith in this life.

2449 The hypocrites hoped that the Muslims would be annihilated by their powerful opponents.

2450 *Amr Allāh* here signifies *the threatened punishment of Allāh* (LL).

2451 The Fire is here called a *maulā*, or a *friend* or *patron*, of the disbelievers, thus showing that it is for their good that they will have to undergo the suffering of fire. In fact, hell is elsewhere also represented to be a place or a state which will ultimately lead to the purification of man, as fire purifies gold of dross. Those who do not prepare themselves in this life for a life after death,

those who were given the Book before, but time was prolonged for them,[2451a] so their hearts hardened. And most of them are transgressors.

الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْاَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوْبُهُمْ ۭ وَكَثِيْرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 Know that Allāh gives life to the earth after its death.[2451b] Indeed, We have made the signs clear for you that you may understand.

اِعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحْيِ الْاَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۭ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْاٰيٰتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُوْنَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 The men who give in charity and the women who give in charity and set apart for Allāh a goodly portion, it will be doubled for them, and their's is a generous reward.

اِنَّ الْمُصَّدِّقِيْنَ وَالْمُصَّدِّقٰتِ وَاَقْرَضُوا اللّٰهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يُّضٰعَفُ لَهُمْ وَلَهُمْ اَجْرٌ كَرِيْمٌ ﴿١٨﴾

19 And those who believe in Allāh and His messengers, they are the truthful and the faithful ones with their Lord. They have their reward and their light. And those who disbelieve and reject Our messages, they are the inmates of hell.

وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَرُسُلِهٖٓ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ هُمُ الصِّدِّيْقُوْنَ ڰ وَالشُّهَدَاۗءُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۭ لَهُمْ اَجْرُهُمْ وَنُوْرُهُمْ ۭ وَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَكَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَآ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ اَصْحٰبُ الْجَحِيْمِ ﴿١٩﴾

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will have to be purified in the next life, so that they may be fit to make the spiritual progress necessary for a heavenly life. The process of purification, which is in other words *hell,* is thus a necessary stage in the spiritual perfection of those who do not avail themselves of the opportunity granted to them in this life. The keenness of the torments of that other life is due to the keener perception of the soul, which is the necessary result of its separation from the earthly vessel. Bliss and torment therefore grow equally keener in that life.

2451a Commenting on this verse, IJ quotes an earlier authority to the effect that the first thing that will be taken away from the people is *khushū'* or *humbleness* of heart. It is clear that this verse speaks of the Muslims of a later age, for it compares their case to those who were given the scriptures before them and then *a long time having passed over them,* their hearts hardened. It is therefore the later generations of the Muslims that are addressed in these words. They are reminded that after the passing of a long time, they will fall off from the high standard of the earlier generations, and their hearts will be hardened like the hearts of the earlier people.

2451b Having spoken of the falling off of the Muslims of a later age, the good news is here announced that, after that, the dead earth will be generated with a new life, the life spiritual. The next verse then goes on to add that it will be through the sacrifices of a part of them that the Muslim nation will again be raised to eminence. These verses are a clear prophetic description of the present condition of Islām. A generous reward is promised to those who make these sacrifices, in the concluding words of v. 18.

SECTION 3: **Truth shall be Established**

20 Know that this world's life is only sport and play and gaiety and boasting among yourselves and a vying in the multiplication of wealth and children.[2452] It is as rain, whose causing the vegetation to grow pleases the husbandmen, then it withers away so that thou seest it turning yellow, then it becomes chaff.[2453] And in the Hereafter is a severe chastisement, and (also) forgiveness from Allāh and (His) pleasure.[2454] And this world's life is naught but a source of vanity.

اِعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّمَا الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَّ
لَهْوٌ وَّ زِيْنَةٌ وَّ تَفَاخُرٌۢ بَيْنَكُمْ وَ
تَكَاثُرٌ فِي الْاَمْوَالِ وَ الْاَوْلَادِ ؕ كَمَثَلِ
غَيْثٍ اَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهٗ ثُمَّ يَهِيْجُ
فَتَرٰىهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَكُوْنُ حُطَامًا ؕ
وَ فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيْدٌ ۙ وَّ مَغْفِرَةٌ
مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَ رِضْوَانٌ ؕ وَ مَا الْحَيٰوةُ
الدُّنْيَآ اِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُوْرِ ۝

21 Vie one with another for forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden the extensiveness of which is as the extensiveness of the heaven and the earth—[2454a] it is prepared for those

سَابِقُوْٓا اِلٰى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ وَ جَنَّةٍ
عَرْضُهَا كَعَرْضِ السَّمَآءِ وَ الْاَرْضِ ۙ

2452 *This world's life* here stands for the material side of life. It is entirely a pursuit of unreality. Individuals as well as nations are, as it were, racing for the transitory goods of this life, for means of adorning the outside, for riches and gaiety, to the utter neglect of the higher values of life which are pointed out in the next verse.

2453 The word *kuffār*, which by the consensus of the opinion of all interpreters signifies here *husbandmen*, is the plural of *kāfir*, which has been used throughout the Holy Qur'ān to signify a disbeliever. But the context here does not allow us to adopt that significance. *Kafara* literally means *he covered, concealed* or *hid* a thing (LL). The disbeliever is called a *kāfir* because *he covers* or *conceals* the *benefit* or *favour* conferred on him by God, the favour relating to the higher or moral side of life (LL). The husbandman is called a *kāfir* because *he conceals the seed under earth* (LL). The material side of life is here likened to the growth of vegetation which flourishes for a time and then decays. Even thus we see individuals and nations rising to prosperity and then falling back on evil days.

2454 Note how Divine forgiveness is constantly mentioned when punishment is spoken of, to show that the attribute of mercy is the predominant attribute of the Divine nature.

2454a The Garden or the Paradise is here said to be as extensive as the heavens and the earth, and a similar statement occurs in 3:132. These statements afford us the key to a right conception of Paradise. The following incident is related under 3:132: "A messenger of Heraclius asked the Holy Prophet: 'If paradise were as extensive as the heavens and the earth, where would be hell?' The Prophet replied 'Glory be to Allāh! Where is the night when the day comes?'" (Rz). It shows clearly that heaven and hell are not the names of two places, but are really two conditions, because if paradise were the name of a particular place, hell could not exist, as paradise would according to these verses extend over the whole of space.

who believe in Allāh and His messengers. That is the grace of Allāh; He gives it to whom He pleases. And Allāh is the Lord of mighty grace.

أُعِدَّتْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٢١﴾

22 No disaster befalls in the earth, or in yourselves,[2454b] but it is in a book before We bring it into existence— surely that is easy to Allāh —

مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ نَبْرَأَهَا ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 So that you grieve not for what has escaped you, nor exult in that which He has given you. And Allāh loves not any arrogant boaster :

لِكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Such as are niggardly and enjoin niggardliness on men. And whoever turns back, then surely Allāh is the Self-Sufficient, the Praised.

الَّذِينَ يَبْخَلُونَ وَيَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ ۗ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 Certainly We sent Our messengers with clear arguments, and sent down with them the Book and the measure,[2455] that men may conduct themselves with equity. And We sent down iron,[2456] wherein is great violence and advantages to men, and that Allāh may know who helps Him and His messengers, unseen. Surely Allāh is Strong, Mighty.

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ ۖ وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

2454b The book here means Divine knowledge. Disaster is here spoken of as befalling in the earth or in yourselves, i.e., it either affects the people of the world generally or the Muslims in particular. Dailamī records a report from the Prophet: "A door of disasters will be opened for my community, *ummah*, in the latter days, which you will be unable to close, unless you meet the situation with this verse". And then the Prophet recited this verse. In view of what has already been stated in verse 16, relating to the lapse of a long time and the hardening of the hearts of the Muslims, it is easy to see that the disasters which are predicted as befalling the Muslims in the latter days are due to their own falling off from the high standard of life which they were required to follow, and hence the remedy suggested is again the making of sacrifices as pointed out in **v. 18.** The great World-wars, which have brought the heaviest disasters on humanity in general, and the disasters of the Muslims in particular, are all spoken of in the Ḥadīth, which it is difficult to quote in a footnote.

2455 As to what is meant by *mīzān*, or *the measure*, see 2407. Here the *measure* is spoken of as being sent down with messengers of God along with the Book. Now the Book contains the Divine commandments or the moral code of life, and the measure is therefore clearly the example of the Prophet, who by carrying out the Divine commandments shows how the directions contained in the Book are to be followed.

2456 Of all the metals, none has proved of greater utility than iron, and

SECTION 4: **Double Reward for Believers**

26 And certainly We sent Noah and Abraham, and We gave prophethood and the Book to their offspring; so among them is he who goes aright, but most of them are transgressors.

وَ لَقَدْ اَرْسَلْنَا نُوْحًا وَّ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ وَ
جَعَلْنَا فِيْ ذُرِّيَّتِهِمَا النُّبُوَّةَ وَ الْكِتٰبَ
فَمِنْهُمْ مُّهْتَدٍ ۚ وَ كَثِيْرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿۲۶﴾

27 Then We made Our messengers to follow in their footsteps, and We made Jesus son of Mary to follow, and We gave him the Gospel. And We put compassion and mercy in the hearts of those who followed him. And (as for) monkery, they innovated it—We did not prescribe it to them—only to seek Allāh's pleasure, but they did not observe it with its due observance.[2457] So We gave those of them who believed their reward, but most of them are transgressors.

ثُمَّ قَفَّيْنَا عَلٰۤى اٰثَارِهِمْ بِرُسُلِنَا
وَ قَفَّيْنَا بِعِيْسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ وَ اٰتَيْنٰهُ
الْاِنْجِيْلَ ۙ وَ جَعَلْنَا فِيْ قُلُوْبِ
الَّذِيْنَ اتَّبَعُوْهُ رَاْفَةً وَّ رَحْمَةً ؕ
وَ رَهْبَانِيَّةَ ۣ ابْتَدَعُوْهَا مَا كَتَبْنٰهَا
عَلَيْهِمْ اِلَّا ابْتِغَآءَ رِضْوَانِ اللّٰهِ فَمَا
رَعَوْهَا حَقَّ رِعَايَتِهَا ۚ فَاٰتَيْنَا الَّذِيْنَ
اٰمَنُوْا مِنْهُمْ اَجْرَهُمْ ۚ وَ كَثِيْرٌ
مِّنْهُمْ فٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿۲۷﴾

28 O you who believe, keep your duty to Allāh and believe in His Messenger — He will give you two portions of His mercy,[2458] and give you a light in which you shall walk, and forgive you. And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful —

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَ اٰمِنُوْا
بِرَسُوْلِهٖ يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِنْ رَّحْمَتِهٖ
وَ يَجْعَلْ لَّكُمْ نُوْرًا تَمْشُوْنَ بِهٖ وَ يَغْفِرْ
لَكُمْ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۲۸﴾

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this metal has played an all-important part in civilization. It should be noted that *inzāl* (inf. of *anzala*) not only signifies the *sending down* of a thing from above, but also means causing *a thing to grow*, or *bringing the means of it into existence* (Rz). Hence it is that in the Holy Qur'ān we find the word used with reference to the clothes that a man wears (7:26), and to cattle (39:6), etc.

The mention of *iron* undoubtedly refers to the resistance against the enemy, which as a last resource had to be effected with the sword. This is made clear by the addition of the words — *that Allāh may know who helps Him and His messengers, unseen.* This help was rendered by the faithful by taking up the sword in defence of the faith.

2457 *There is no monkery in Islām*, is a well-known saying of the Holy Prophet, quite in accordance with this verse, which states that even among the Christians monkery is an institution which was introduced by themselves, not being a Divine ordinance. It is added, however, that their object in adopting this innovation was to seek Divine pleasure. The Muslims were now becoming a great nation, and as they were brought up in the utmost simplicity, and were also enjoined to disdain the gaiety of this life, they are told that their greatness as a nation depended upon the development of all their faculties, so that they, while retaining their simplicity of life, should not stoop to practices like that of monkery.

2458, see next page.

29 That the People of the Book may know that they control naught of the grace of Allāh, and that grace is in Allāh's hand. He gives it to whom He pleases. And Allāh is the Lord of mighty grace.[2459]

لِّئَلَّا يَعْلَمَ اَهْلُ الْكِتٰبِ اَلَّا يَقْدِرُوْنَ عَلٰى شَيْءٍ مِّنْ فَضْلِ اللّٰهِ وَ اَنَّ الْفَضْلَ بِيَدِ اللّٰهِ يُؤْتِيْهِ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۭ وَ اللّٰهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيْمِ ﴿۲۹﴾

They are thus first told that they should not run after the gaieties of the world and make the amassing of wealth the pursuit of their life (v. 20), and now they are reminded that they should neither go to the other extreme and give up worldly pursuits, and adopt such practices as monkery. They are thus required to keep the balance between the material and moral sides of life.

2458 By the *two portions of mercy* are meant their portion *in this world* and their portion *in the Hereafter.* A Muslim is thus required to enjoy the worldly benefits but not to the neglect of his moral responsibilities, to take advantage of the material benefits without retarding his spiritual advancement. Islām offers a contrast with Christian civilization, which started with monkery and has ended in engrossment in the world to the utter neglect of the spiritual side. The history of Islām on the other hand shows temporal and spiritual advancement going hand in hand from the days of the Prophet. And it is to this contrast that attention is called in these verses. In fact it is thus pointed out that the only lasting civilization is the civilization of Islām, which offers a middle course, and chalks out a way, by walking in which man can attain material along with spiritual advancement. Hence the next verse speaks clearly of the People of the Book.

2459 The People of the Book or the Christians are here told that they do not control Allāh's grace. They wanted first to control Allāh's spiritual grace by their monkery, but failed. Later, they have tried to control the material grace or the temporal bounties of God by their entire engrossment in worldly pursuits, but even their material advancement is leading to their ruin, because it is not being balanced by spiritual progress.



PART XXVIII

CHAPTER 58

Al-Mujādilah : THE PLEADING WOMAN

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 3 *sections; 22 verses*)

The title of this chapter is taken from the circumstances narrated in the first section. There was an old Arab custom of putting away the wife by calling her "mother", but she was not thus divorced, nor did she continue to hold the status of a wife. A Muslim did the same. The wife complained to the Holy Prophet, and it is by reason of her complaint that she is called *Al-Mujādilah* or *The Pleading Woman*. Islām took up the cause of woman in the greatest earnestness, as, in her person, half the human race was rotting under severe oppression, and Islām came to deal a death-blow to all kinds of oppression under which any class of society laboured. The whole of the first section is devoted to this matter. The second section condemns secret counsels against the Holy Prophet, which, owing to Islām having gained power, had become very frequent at Madīnah — the hypocrites, and the Jews especially, taking part in these conspiracies. The third section speaks more plainly of the hypocrites and the Jews, and enjoins the Muslims to be wary of them, and, as they were hidden enemies of Islām, not to befriend them.

The last chapter having referred to the future conquests of the Muslims, this warns them of the secret plans of the enemies of Islām. Though this chapter deals with the conspiracies of the Jews and the hypocrites, it also deals with the rights of women, both of these being also the subjects dealt with in the 4th chapter, to which therefore it forms, as it were, a complement.

As regards the date of revelation, the chapter may be placed a little before the 33rd chapter, for the custom known as *ẓihār* is fully dealt with here, while only a reference to it is contained in the 33rd chapter. And as the case of *Khaulah* shows (see 2460) that the Prophet waited for the Divine revelation before giving a decision, it is evident that the reference to *ẓihār* contained in 33:4 was a later revelation.

SECTION 1 Safeguarding Women's Rights

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Allāh indeed has heard[2460] the plea of her who pleads with thee about her husband and complains to Allāh ; and Allāh hears the contentions of both of you. Surely Allāh is Hearing, Seeing.

قَدْ سَمِعَ اللّٰهُ قَوْلَ الَّتِيْ تُجَادِلُكَ فِيْ زَوْجِهَا وَ تَشْتَكِيْٓ اِلَى اللّٰهِ ۖ وَاللّٰهُ يَسْمَعُ تَحَاوُرَكُمَا ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيْعٌۢ بَصِيْرٌ ①

2 Those of you who put away their wives by calling them their mothers[2461] — they are not their mothers. None are their mothers save those who gave them birth, and they utter indeed a hateful word and a lie. And surely Allāh is Pardoning, Forgiving.

اَلَّذِيْنَ يُظٰهِرُوْنَ مِنْكُمْ مِّنْ نِّسَآئِهِمْ مَّا هُنَّ اُمَّهٰتِهِمْ ؕ اِنْ اُمَّهٰتُهُمْ اِلَّا الّٰٓـِٔيْ وَلَدْنَهُمْ ؕ وَ اِنَّهُمْ لَيَقُوْلُوْنَ مُنْكَرًا مِّنَ الْقَوْلِ وَزُوْرًا ؕ وَ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَعَفُوٌّ غَفُوْرٌ ②

3 And those who put away their wives by calling them their mothers, then go back on that which they said, must free a captive before they touch one another. To this you are exhorted; and Allāh is Aware of what you do.

وَ الَّذِيْنَ يُظٰهِرُوْنَ مِنْ نِّسَآئِهِمْ ثُمَّ يَعُوْدُوْنَ لِمَا قَالُوْا فَتَحْرِيْرُ رَقَبَةٍ مِّنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّتَمَآسَّا ؕ ذٰلِكُمْ تُوْعَظُوْنَ بِهٖ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرٌ ③

4 But he who has not the means, should fast for two months successively before they touch one another, and he who is unable to do so should feed

فَمَنْ لَّمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ مِنْ قَبْلِ اَنْ يَّتَمَآسَّا ۚ فَمَنْ لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَاِطْعَامُ سِتِّيْنَ

2460 The woman referred to was Khaulah or Khuwailah, wife of Aus ibn Ṣāmit, who was separated by her husband in an old Arab form, the husband saying to the wife, *Thou art to me as the back of my mother*, the word *ẓihār* being derived from *ẓahr*, meaning *back*. The woman complained about it to the Prophet, who said that, as he had no revelation about it, he could not interfere. Then Aus wanted her to have conjugal relations with him, but she refused and came to the Prophet complaining of his bad temper. The Prophet wanted her to be more lenient but she was not willing. It was then that the Prophet received this revelation, according to which it was necessary that the husband should in such cases make an expiation before re-establishing conjugal rights (Ah, vol. VI, 410).

2461 For this form of putting away the wife see 1967, under 33:4, where the abolition of this practice is also referred to.

sixty needy ones. That is in order that you may have faith in Allāh and His Messenger. And these are Allāh's limits. And for the disbelievers is a painful chastisement.

مِسْكِينًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ لِتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ۚ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ ۗ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ④

5 Surely those who oppose Allāh and His Messenger will be humbled[2461a] as those before them were humbled; and indeed We have revealed clear messages. And for the disbelievers is an abasing chastisement.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُحَادُّونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ كُبِتُوا كَمَا كُبِتَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَقَدْ أَنزَلْنَا آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ ۚ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ⑤

6 On the day when Allāh will raise them all together, then inform them of what they did. Allāh records it, while they forget it. And Allāh is Witness over all things.

يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوا ۚ أَحْصَاهُ اللَّهُ وَنَسُوهُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ⑥

SECTION 2 : **Secret Counsels condemned**

7 Seest thou not that Allāh knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth? There is no secret counsel between three but He is the fourth of them, nor between five but He is the sixth of them, nor between less than that nor more but He is with them wheresoever they are; then He will inform them of what they did on the day of Resurrection. Surely Allāh is Knower of all things.[2462]

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۖ مَا يَكُونُ مِن نَّجْوَىٰ ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ وَلَا أَدْنَىٰ مِن ذَٰلِكَ وَلَا أَكْثَرَ إِلَّا هُوَ مَعَهُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كَانُوا ۖ ثُمَّ يُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ⑦

2461a Those who would not abide by the Divine commandments regarding the treatment of women are here told that this was not a light matter. They were in the ranks of those who opposed the Prophet. With these words the subject is changed to the conspiracies of the Jews and the hypocrites, who were now conspiring secretly against the Prophet.

2462 The hypocrites and the Jews conspired with the enemies of Islām to destroy the Muslim community of Madīnah. There is a brief reference to their plots in 4:114: "There is no good in most of their secret counsels". Such plots are mentioned in greater detail here, and they are told that these secret plots are known to Allāh, and they cannot succeed in bringing harm to Islām.

8 Seest thou not those who are forbidden secret counsels, then they return to that which they are forbidden, and hold secret counsels[2463] for sin and revolt and disobedience to the Messenger. And when they come to thee they greet thee with a greeting with which Allāh greets thee not,[2464] and say within themselves: Why does not Allāh punish us for what we say? Hell is enough for them; they will burn in it, and evil is the resort!

ألم تر إلى الذين نهوا عن النجوى
ثم يعودون لما نهوا عنه ويتناجون
بالإثم والعدوان ومعصيت الرسول
وإذا جاءوك حيوك بما لم يحيك
به الله ويقولون في أنفسهم لولا
يعذبنا الله بما نقول حسبهم جهنم
يصلونها فبئس المصير ٨

9 O you who believe, when you confer together in private, give not to each other counsel of sin and revolt and disobedience to the Messenger, but give to each other counsel of goodness and observance of duty. And keep your duty to Allāh, to Whom you will be gathered together.[2465]

يا أيها الذين آمنوا إذا تناجيتم فلا
تتناجوا بالإثم والعدوان ومعصيت
الرسول وتناجوا بالبر والتقوى
واتقوا الله الذي إليه تحشرون ٩

10 Secret counsels are only of the devil that he may cause to grieve those who believe, and he can hurt them naught except with Allāh's permission.[2466] And on Allāh let the believers rely.

إنما النجوى من الشيطان ليحزن الذين
آمنوا وليس بضارهم شيئا إلا بإذن
الله وعلى الله فليتوكل المؤمنون ١٠

11 O you who believe, when it is said to you, Make room in assemblies, make room. Allāh will give you ample. And when it is said, Rise up, rise up. Allāh will exalt those of you who

يا أيها الذين آمنوا إذا قيل لكم
تفسحوا في المجالس فافسحوا يفسح
الله لكم وإذا قيل انشزوا فانشزوا
يرفع الله الذين آمنوا منكم والذين

2463 The hypocrites seem to be referred to here. But even the Jews had entered into an agreement with the Prophet not to help the enemies of Islām.

2464 The meaning is that they invoke death and destruction for thee, while Allāh wishes that thou shouldst live and prosper. There is a report that the Jews used to say when they came to the Prophet: *al-sāmu 'alaika,* i.e., *death overtake thee!* instead of *al-salāmu 'alaika,* i.e., *peace be to thee!* the two phrases sounding nearly alike (B. 79:22).

2465 Secret counsels and secret societies are condemned, because these societies were formed with the object of undermining peace and helping the enemies of Islām. Private counsels to promote the cause of goodness and service of humanity are quite different from the subversive activities of secret societies.

2466 This verse makes it clear that the secret societies denounced in the above verses were formed to spread mischief and help the enemies of Islām, but they could not achieve their mischievous object.

believe, and those who are given knowledge, to high ranks. And Allāh is Aware of what you do.[2467]

أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١١﴾

12 O you who believe, when you consult the Messenger, offer something in charity before your consultation. That is better for you and purer. But if you have not (the means), then surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.[2468]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نَاجَيْتُمُ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَةً ۚ ذَٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ ۚ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَجِدُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

13 Do you fear that you will not (be able to) give in charity before your consultation? So when you do it not, and Allāh has turned to you (mercifully), keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and obey Allāh and His Messenger. And Allāh is Aware of what you do.

أَأَشْفَقْتُمْ أَنْ تُقَدِّمُوا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ نَجْوَاكُمْ صَدَقَاتٍ ۚ فَإِذْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَتَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

SECTION 3 : **Internal Enemy to be guarded against**

14 Hast thou not seen those who take for friends a people with whom Allāh is wroth? They are neither of you nor of them, and they swear falsely, while they know.[2469]

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا قَوْمًا غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا هُمْ مِنْكُمْ وَلَا مِنْهُمْ وَيَحْلِفُونَ عَلَى الْكَذِبِ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Allāh has prepared for them a severe chastisement. Evil indeed is that which they do!

أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا ۖ إِنَّهُمْ سَاءَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

2467 As I have already stated, the progress of Islām brought large numbers of people into its fold who stood in need of being taught manners as well as morals. In their assemblies they crowded and pressed upon each other in order to be able to sit nearest to the Prophet. The injunction to make room in assemblies means, either that room should be made for others, or that the people should not sit too close to each other.

2468 The verse that follows does not cancel the injunction of the previous verse; it rather shows that the injunction contained in v. 12 is not obligatory but optional — the legal alms called *zakāt* being the only obligatory alms, as is shown by the words *keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate*. It should also be noted that the Prophet and his family derived no benefit whatever from zakāt, for to them alms were totally prohibited.

2469 It is evident that the people with whom Allāh is wroth are the Jews, because it is of them that the Holy Qur'ān says again and again that they earned Allāh's wrath, and the people who took them for friends were the hypocrites.

16 They take shelter under their oaths, so they turn (men) from Allāh's way; for them is an abasing chastisement.

اتخذوا أيمانهم جنة فصدوا عن سبيل الله فلهم عذاب مهين ﴿١٦﴾

17 Of no avail against Allāh, will be to them their wealth or their children. They are the companions of the Fire; therein they will abide.[2470]

لن تغني عنهم أموالهم ولا أولادهم من الله شيئا أولئك أصحاب النار هم فيها خالدون ﴿١٧﴾

18 On the day when Allāh will raise them all up, they will swear to Him as they swear to you, and they think that they have some (excuse). Now surely they are the liars.

يوم يبعثهم الله جميعا فيحلفون له كما يحلفون لكم ويحسبون أنهم على شيء ألا إنهم هم الكاذبون ﴿١٨﴾

19 The devil has gained the mastery over them, so he has made them forget the remembrance of Allāh. They are the devil's party. Now surely the devil's party are the losers.

استحوذ عليهم الشيطان فأنساهم ذكر الله أولئك حزب الشيطان ألا إن حزب الشيطان هم الخاسرون ﴿١٩﴾

20 Those who oppose Allāh and His Messenger, they shall be among the most abased.

إن الذين يحادون الله ورسوله أولئك في الأذلين ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Allāh has written down: I shall certainly prevail, I and My messengers. Surely Allāh is Strong, Mighty.[2472]

كتب الله لأغلبن أنا ورسلي إن الله قوي عزيز ﴿٢١﴾

22 Thou wilt not find a people who believe in Allāh and the latter day[2473] loving those who oppose Allāh and His Messenger, even though they be their fathers, or their sons, or their brothers, or their kinsfolk.[2474] These are they into whose hearts He has impressed faith, and strengthened

لا تجد قوما يؤمنون بالله واليوم الآخر يوادون من حاد الله ورسوله ولو كانوا آباءهم أو أبناءهم أو إخوانهم أو عشيرتهم أولئك كتب في قلوبهم الإيمان وأيدهم

2470 The prophecy relating to the punishment of both the Jews and the hypocrites was fulfilled in the Prophet's lifetime.

2472 Note the certain conviction of the final triumph of Truth, which is expressed here. The next verse concludes with similar words: Surely it is *Allāh's party* who are the successful.

2473 The Muslims are thus the people who believe in Allāh and the latter day.

2474 In a state of war between the two parties, friendly relations with the hostile tribes were prohibited, as these would have resulted in great harm to the

them with a Spirit from Himself, and He will cause them to enter Gardens wherein flow rivers, abiding therein. Allāh is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Him. These are Allāh's party. Now surely it is Allāh's party who are the successful!

بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ ۖ وَيُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِي
مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ۚ
رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوْا عَنْهُ ۚ أُولٰٓئِكَ حِزْبُ
اللّٰهِ ۚ أَلَآ إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللّٰهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾

weaker community of the Muslims. As to those who were not actually engaged in hostilities against the Muslims, see the express directions contained in 60:8.

سُورَةُ الْحَشْرِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ (٥٩) آياتها ٢٤ ركوعاتها ٣

CHAPTER 59

Al-Hashr : THE BANISHMENT

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 3 *sections*; 24 *verses*)

This chapter is appropriately termed *The Banishment,* as it deals entirely with the banishment of the Jewish tribe called the *Banī Nadīr,* and matters arising out of it. The last chapter warned the Muslims of the secret plans of the Jews and the hypocrites, and this offers an example. The first section deals with the banishment itself and the property acquired thereby; the second shows how the hypocrites gave the Jews secret promises of help, but failed to fulfil them; and the third ends the chapter with an exhortation to the faithful and an exposition of some of the Divine attributes, indicating the greatness and purity of the Divine Being.

The date of revelation is the 4th year of the Hijrah, soon after the banishment of which it speaks.

SECTION 1 **The Exiled Jews**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allāh; and he is the Mighty, the Wise.

سَبَّحَ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ①

2 He it is Who caused those who disbelieved of the People of the Book to go forth from their homes at the first banishment.[2475] You deemed not that they would go forth, while they

هُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَخْرَجَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْ اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ لِاَوَّلِ الْحَشْرِ ؕ مَا ظَنَنْتُمْ اَنْ يَّخْرُجُوْا وَظَنُّوْٓا اَنَّهُمْ مَّانِعَتُهُمْ

2475 The banishment spoken of here took place six months after the battle of Uhud, when the Banī Nadīr, a Jewish tribe of Madīnah, who had at first

thought that their fortresses would defend them against Allāh. But Allāh came to them from a place they expected not and cast terror into their hearts — they demolished their houses with their own hands and the hands of the believers. So take a lesson, O you who have eyes ![2476]

حُصُونُهُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ فَأَتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يَحْتَسِبُوا ۖ وَقَذَفَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الرُّعْبَ ۚ يُخْرِبُونَ بُيُوتَهُم بِأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَيْدِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَاعْتَبِرُوا يَا أُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ ②

3 And had it not been that Allāh had decreed for them the exile, He would certainly have chastised them in this world ; and for them in the Hereafter is the chastisement of Fire.

وَلَوْلَا أَن كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْجَلَاءَ لَعَذَّبَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابُ النَّارِ ③

4 That is because they were opposed to Allāh and His Messenger, and whoever is opposed to Allāh, surely Allāh is Severe in retribution.

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَاقُّوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۖ وَمَن يُشَاقِّ اللَّهَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ④

5 Whatever palm-tree you cut down or leave it standing upon its

مَا قَطَعْتُم مِّن لِّينَةٍ أَوْ تَرَكْتُمُوهَا

---

entered into a covenant with the Holy Prophet, showed signs of treachery and were punished with banishment (B). This is called the first banishment, to distinguish it from the second, which took place in the time of 'Umar, when the Jews settled at Khaibar were banished to Syria, and which is prophetically referred to here. The following detailed account is given by Rz: The Banī Naḍīr made a treaty with the Holy Prophet to stand neutral between him and his enemies. When he was victorious at Badr, they said that he was the Prophet promised in the Torah, on account of the victory, but when the Muslims suffered a loss on the day of Uḥud, they (i.e., the Banī Naḍīr) repudiated their vow and broke the agreement. Ka'b, son of Ashraf, went to Makkah with forty horsemen and made an alliance with Abū Sufyān. As a consequence, Ka'b was murdered, and the Holy Prophet told the tribe to leave Madīnah. They wanted ten days for preparation, but 'Abd Allāh ibn Ubayy (the head of the hypocrites) advised them not to leave Madīnah but to fight against the Prophet, promising the help of his own men. He also assured them that, if they were compelled to go forth, he would go with them. So they fortified themselves within their strongholds. After having remained besieged for twenty-one days, and having despaired of help from the hypocrites, they surrendered. The Prophet raised the siege on condition that they should depart from Madīnah. With the exception of two families that chose to remain at Khaibar, they all went to Syria.

Dr. Prideaux says that the Prophet ordered a party of the Muslims to pursue the emigrants, and that thus they were all put to death. Sale has shown in his note on this verse that the incident from which Dr. Prideaux draws this strange conclusion relates really to the murder in cold blood of seventy Muslims, who, being invited to preach Islām, were treacherously put to death by an Arab tribe.

2476 The Banī Naḍīr, being granted ten days in which to collect and take with them such of their property as they desired, devoted the time at their disposal to the destruction of their houses, lest they should be a source of strength to the Muslims. What remained of them was demolished by the Muslims.

roots, it is by Allāh's permission, and that He may abase the transgressors.

قَآئِمَةً عَلٰٓى اُصُوْلِهَا فَبِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلِيُخْزِيَ الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ۝

6 And whatever Allāh restored to His Messenger from them, you did not press forward against it any horse or any riding-camel, but Allāh gives authority to His messengers against whom He pleases. And Allāh is Possessor of power over all things.

وَمَآ اَفَآءَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهٖ مِنْهُمْ فَمَآ اَوْجَفْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ خَيْلٍ وَّلَا رِكَابٍ وَّلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُسَلِّطُ رُسُلَهٗ عَلٰى مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ۝

7 Whatever Allāh restored to His Messenger from the people of the towns, it is for Allāh and for the Messenger, and for the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer, so that it be not taken by turns by the rich among you. And whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and whatever he forbids you, abstain (therefrom); and keep your duty to Allāh. Surely Allāh is Severe in retribution.[2477]

مَآ اَفَآءَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهٖ مِنْ اَهْلِ الْقُرٰى فَلِلّٰهِ وَلِلرَّسُوْلِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبٰى وَالْيَتٰمٰى وَالْمَسٰكِيْنِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيْلِ ۙ كَيْ لَا يَكُوْنَ دُوْلَةًۢ بَيْنَ الْاَغْنِيَآءِ مِنْكُمْ ۭ وَمَآ اٰتٰىكُمُ الرَّسُوْلُ فَخُذُوْهُ ۤ وَمَا نَهٰىكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوْا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ ۝

2477 This verse relates to property acquired in war, which is called *fai'*, being derived from *afā'a,* which occurs in this verse, another kind, called *ghanīmah,* being mentioned in 8:41, for which see 1007. The word *afā'a* means, *He restored to the Muslims,* or *gave to them as spoil, the property of the disbelievers* (LL). Hence *fai'* comes to mean *such of the possessions of the disbelievers as accrue to the Muslims without war,* or *such as are obtained from the believers in a plurality of gods after the laying down of arms* (LL).

The *fai'* is not distributed among the warriors for the reason that there has been no fighting. It is described here as being for Allāh and for the Messenger, the near of kin, the orphans, the needy and the wayfarer. From this it will be seen that the whole of it was to be distributed in exactly the same manner as the one-fifth of the *ghanīmah,* for which see 1007. A reference to that note will show that the Prophet's share was for the benefit of the Muslims. Bd states that there are three different opinions as to the Prophet's share after his death. According to one it should go to the *Imām* or the head; according to a second, it should be spent on the army and the fortification of the boundaries; and according to a third, it is for the benefit of the Muslims in general. The lives of the Holy Prophet and his earlier successors — a conqueror like 'Umar, before whom, wearing patched clothes, was brought all the hoarded wealth of Persia and Syria — are a sufficient testimony that the Prophet's share was always spent for the benefit of the Muslims. In fact, this share was considered as a part of the *Bait al-Māl,* the public treasury, for when, after the Holy Prophet's death, his daughter Fāṭimah claimed a share of *Fidk,* which was also a part of *fai',* Abū Bakr refused it on the ground that it was not the personal property of the Holy Prophet, and he decided in fact that a prophet does not leave any property to be inherited by his heirs. The feud which thus arose has rent the Muslim world into two great schools. The prohibition contained in the words *so that it be not taken by turns by the rich among you* is directed against the Prophet's share being inherited at all.

8 (It is) for the poor who fled, who were driven from their homes and their possessions, seeking grace of Allāh and (His) pleasure, and helping Allāh and His Messenger. These it is that are the truthful.[2478]

لِلْفُقَرَآءِ الْمُهٰجِرِيْنَ الَّذِيْنَ اُخْرِجُوْا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَ اَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُوْنَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَ رِضْوَانًا وَّ يَنْصُرُوْنَ اللّٰهَ وَ رَسُوْلَهٗ ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الصّٰدِقُوْنَ ۚ﴿۸﴾

9 And those who made their abode in the City and in faith before them love those who have fled to them, and find in their hearts no need of what they are given, and prefer (them) before themselves, though poverty may afflict them.[2479] And whoever is saved from the niggardliness of his soul, these it is that are the successful.

وَ الَّذِيْنَ تَبَوَّؤُ الدَّارَ وَ الْاِيْمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّوْنَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ اِلَيْهِمْ وَ لَا يَجِدُوْنَ فِيْ صُدُوْرِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّآ اُوْتُوْا وَ يُؤْثِرُوْنَ عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ وَ لَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ ؕ وَ مَنْ يُّوْقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهٖ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ ۚ﴿۹﴾

10 And those who come after them say: Our Lord, forgive us and our brethren who had precedence of us in faith, and leave no spite in our hearts

وَ الَّذِيْنَ جَآءُوْ مِنْۢ بَعْدِهِمْ يَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَ لِاِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِيْنَ سَبَقُوْنَا

It may be added that under modern conditions when the soldiers are paid by the State, all spoils of war may be treated as *fai'*.

2478 It should be noted that the refugees in general did not receive any share of this property: it was only to the poor among them that something was given for maintenance, the reason for which is clearly stated in the verse, viz., they had lost everything and had to leave their homes as well as their property. It is necessary to remember, moreover, that one of the important heads of expenditure in the *Bait al-Māl*, was the help of the poor and those who were unable to earn their own livelihood. It was under that head that the Refugees who had lost all their wealth and homes and were still so poor that they could not carry on any business of their own, were to receive anything from what the Banī Naḍīr left, all of which formed part of the public treasury.

2479 By *those who made their abode in the City and in faith* are meant *the Anṣār* or *the Helpers*, i.e., the Muslim residents of Madīnah. *Dār* means *a house* or *a mansion* as well as *a country*, or *a city* or *a town* or *village* (LL), and with the article *al*, *al-Dār* means *al-Madīnah* or *the City of the Prophet* (LL). The meaning is that they made an abode in the city of the Prophet and the faith; the faith being likened to a place of abode. *Before them* signifies *before their* (i.e., the Refugees') *coming to Madīnah*.

When the Muslims fled from Makkah, they found a refuge in Madīnah, where the Muslim inhabitants received them as if they were their brothers, lodging them in their own houses, and many of them were still living in the houses of their benefactors, when the banishment of the Banī Naḍīr took place. On this the Holy Prophet asked the Helpers to consent to one of two proposals, i.e., to have a share of what was acquired from the Banī Naḍīr and give part of their houses and wealth to the Refugees, or to let the (poor) Refugees alone have a share in that property, so that with it they might build their houses and make a start in some business or trade. *The Anṣār* replied that they were willing that the Refugees alone should have a share, and, notwithstanding that, they might continue to lodge in their houses (Rz).

towards those who believe. Our Lord, surely Thou art Kind, Merciful.[2480]

بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِّلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

SECTION 2: **The Hypocrites fail in their Promise to the Jews**

11 Hast thou not seen the hypocrites? They say to their brethren who disbelieve from among the People of the Book: If you are expelled, we certainly will go forth with you, and we will never obey any one concerning you; and if you are fought against, we will certainly help you. And Allāh bears witness that they surely are liars.[2481]

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا يَقُولُونَ لِإِخْوَانِهِمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَئِنْ أُخْرِجْتُمْ لَنَخْرُجَنَّ مَعَكُمْ وَلَا نُطِيعُ فِيكُمْ أَحَدًا أَبَدًا وَإِنْ قُوتِلْتُمْ لَنَنْصُرَنَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12 If they are expelled, they will not go forth with them, and if they are fought against, they will not help them; and even if they help them, they will certainly turn (their) backs; then they shall not be helped.

لَئِنْ أُخْرِجُوا لَا يَخْرُجُونَ مَعَهُمْ وَلَئِنْ قُوتِلُوا لَا يَنْصُرُونَهُمْ وَلَئِنْ نَصَرُوهُمْ لَيُوَلُّنَّ الْأَدْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا يُنْصَرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 Your fear in their hearts is indeed greater than Allāh's. That is because they are a people who understand not.

لَأَنْتُمْ أَشَدُّ رَهْبَةً فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿١٣﴾

14 They will not fight against you in a body save in fortified towns or from behind walls. Their fighting between them is severe. Thou wouldst think them united, but their hearts are divided. That is because they are a people who have no sense.

لَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ جَمِيعًا إِلَّا فِي قُرًى مُحَصَّنَةٍ أَوْ مِنْ وَرَاءِ جُدُرٍ بَأْسُهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ شَدِيدٌ تَحْسَبُهُمْ جَمِيعًا وَقُلُوبُهُمْ شَتَّىٰ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Like those before them shortly:[2482] they tasted the evil conse-

كَمَثَلِ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ قَرِيبًا

2480 This verse contains two directions for all future Muslim generations, viz., to pray for the forgiveness of earlier generations that have passed away before them and to pray for their hearts to be free from all spite towards their living Muslim brethren.

2481 The hypocrites deceived the Jews with false promises, and thus encouraged them to fight against the Prophet.

2482 According to some, this description applies to the Banī Qainuqā', and according to others, to the Quraish slain on the field of Badr.

quences of their conduct, and for them is a painful chastisement.

ذَاقُوا وَبَالَ أَمْرِهِمْ ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾

16 Like the devil when he says to man: Disbelieve. But when he disbelieves, he says: I am free of thee: surely I fear Allāh, the Lord of the worlds.

كَمَثَلِ الشَّيْطَٰنِ إِذْ قَالَ لِلْإِنسَٰنِ اكْفُرْ ۚ فَلَمَّا كَفَرَ قَالَ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّنكَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 So the end of both of them is that they are both in the Fire to abide therein. And that is the reward of the wrongdoers.

فَكَانَ عَٰقِبَتَهُمَا أَنَّهُمَا فِي النَّارِ خَٰلِدَيْنِ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ جَزَٰٓؤُا الظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿١٧﴾

SECTION 3: **An Exhortation**

18 O you who believe, keep your duty to Allāh, and let every soul consider that which it sends forth for the morrow, and keep your duty to Allāh. Surely Allāh is Aware of what you do.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

19 And be not like those who forget Allāh, so He makes them forget their own souls. These are the transgressors.

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنسَىٰهُمْ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۚ أُولَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْفَٰسِقُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 Not alike are the companions of the Fire and the owners of the Garden. The owners of the Garden are the achievers.

لَا يَسْتَوِيٓ أَصْحَٰبُ النَّارِ وَأَصْحَٰبُ الْجَنَّةِ ۚ أَصْحَٰبُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمُ الْفَآئِزُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Had We sent down this Qur'ān on a mountain, thou wouldst certainly have seen it falling down, splitting asunder because of the fear of Allāh. And We set forth these parables to men that they may reflect.

لَوْ أَنزَلْنَا هَٰذَا الْقُرْءَانَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْتَهُۥ خَٰشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَٰلُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 He is Allāh besides Whom there is no God: The Knower of the unseen and the seen; He is the Beneficent, the Merciful.[2483]

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ عَٰلِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَٰدَةِ ۖ هُوَ الرَّحْمَٰنُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٢٢﴾

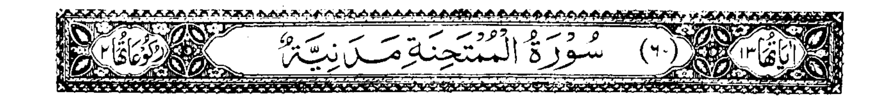
2483 From this verse to the end we have a most beautiful collection of the Divine names.

23 He is Allāh, besides Whom there is no God; the King, the Holy, the Author of Peace, the Granter of Security, Guardian over all, the Mighty, the Supreme, the Possessor of greatness. Glory be to Allāh from that which they set up (with Him)!

هُوَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِیْ لَاۤ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۚ اَلْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوْسُ السَّلٰمُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَیْمِنُ الْعَزِیْزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ ؕ سُبْحٰنَ اللّٰهِ عَمَّا یُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿۲۳﴾

24 He is Allāh; the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner: His are the most beautiful names. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth declares His glory; and He is the Mighty, the Wise.

هُوَ اللّٰهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْاَسْمَآءُ الْحُسْنٰی ؕ یُسَبِّحُ لَهٗ مَا فِی السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِیْزُ الْحَكِیْمُ ﴿۲۴﴾



CHAPTER 60

Al-Mumtaḥanah : THE WOMAN WHO IS EXAMINED

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 2 *sections* ; 13 *verses*)

The whole of this chapter deals with the relations between the Muslims and the non-Muslims, and in particular with the undesirability of relations with those enemies who were bent upon extirpating Islām, and who, not being satisfied with expelling the Muslims from their homes, now made war on them. It is in this connection that the Holy Prophet is enjoined to *examine the women* who came to him from among the idolaters for the purpose of embracing Islām, so that, if they were found to be inspired by sincere motives, they should be retained. It is this circumstance which gives its title to this chapter. It shows that, notwithstanding enmity, the Muslims were required to be fair in their dealings with the disbelievers. A clear statement was needed regarding the relations of the two communities on account of the hostilities which had sprung up between them. This gives us the clue to its connection with the last chapter.

The first section opens with an injunction against entering into friendly relations with the enemies of Islām, and the example of Abraham is quoted. The second section, however, adds that every non-Muslim is not to be regarded as an enemy. This direction, given as it was at a very late date, furnishes a basic principle in a discussion of the question of friendly relations. It is then stated that women who fled from Makkah to escape persecution, could be given shelter if they were found, on examination, to be sincere.

The date of revelation may be placed between the treaty of Ḥudaibiyah and the conquest of Makkah ; it was very likely the seventh year of the Hijrah.

SECTION 1 **Friendly Relations with Enemies**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 O you who believe, take not My enemy and your enemy for friends. Would you offer them love, while they deny the Truth that has come to you, driving out the Messenger and yourselves because you believe in Allāh, your Lord?[2484] If you have come forth to strive in My way and to seek My pleasure, would you love them in secret? And I know what you conceal and what you manifest. And whoever of you does this, he indeed strays from the straight path.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوْا عَدُوِّيْ
وَعَدُوَّكُمْ اَوْلِيَآءَ تُلْقُوْنَ اِلَيْهِمْ بِالْمَوَدَّةِ
وَقَدْ كَفَرُوْا بِمَا جَآءَكُمْ مِّنَ الْحَقِّ ۚ
يُخْرِجُوْنَ الرَّسُوْلَ وَاِيَّاكُمْ اَنْ تُؤْمِنُوْا
بِاللّٰهِ رَبِّكُمْ ؕ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ خَرَجْتُمْ
جِهَادًا فِيْ سَبِيْلِيْ وَابْتِغَآءَ مَرْضَاتِيْ ۖ
تُسِرُّوْنَ اِلَيْهِمْ بِالْمَوَدَّةِ ۖ وَاَنَا اَعْلَمُ
بِمَاۤ اَخْفَيْتُمْ وَمَاۤ اَعْلَنْتُمْ ؕ وَمَنْ يَّفْعَلْهُ
مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَآءَ السَّبِيْلِ ①

2 If they overcome you, they will be your enemies, and will stretch forth their hands and their tongues towards you with evil,[2485] and they desire that you may disbelieve.

اِنْ يَّثْقَفُوْكُمْ يَكُوْنُوْا لَكُمْ اَعْدَآءً
وَّيَبْسُطُوْۤا اِلَيْكُمْ اَيْدِيَهُمْ وَاَلْسِنَتَهُمْ
بِالسُّوْٓءِ وَوَدُّوْا لَوْ تَكْفُرُوْنَ ②

3 Your relationships and your children would not profit you, on the day of Resurrection — He will decide between you. And Allāh is Seer of what you do.

لَنْ تَنْفَعَكُمْ اَرْحَامُكُمْ وَلَاۤ اَوْلَادُكُمْ ۚ
يَوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۚ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَكُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ
بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ③

4 Indeed, there is for you a good example in Abraham and those with him, when they said to their people: We are clear of you and of that which you serve besides Allāh. We disbelieve

قَدْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ اُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ فِيْۤ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ
وَالَّذِيْنَ مَعَهٗ ۚ اِذْ قَالُوْا لِقَوْمِهِمْ
اِنَّا بُرَءٰٓؤُا مِنْكُمْ وَمِمَّا تَعْبُدُوْنَ مِنْ
دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ ؗ كَفَرْنَا بِكُمْ وَبَدَا بَيْنَنَا وَ
بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةُ وَالْبَغْضَآءُ اَبَدًا حَتّٰى

2484 It should be noted that the reason given for not taking the disbelievers as friends is that they are the enemies of Allāh and His Messenger, who drove out the Prophet and the Muslims from their homes. Vv. 8 and 9 afford a full explanation.

2485 That is, they would slay you with their hands and revile you with their tongues.

in you and there has arisen enmity and hatred between us and you forever until you believe in Allāh alone — except Abraham's saying to his sire : I would ask forgiveness for thee, and I control naught for thee from Allāh.[2486] Our Lord, on Thee do we rely, and to Thee do we turn, and to Thee is the eventual coming.

تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَحْدَهُ إِلَّا قَوْلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ لَأَسْتَغْفِرَنَّ لَكَ وَمَا أَمْلِكُ لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۖ رَبَّنَا عَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ أَنَبْنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٤﴾

5 Our Lord, make us not a trial for those who disbelieve, and forgive us, our Lord. Surely Thou art the Mighty, the Wise.

رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا رَبَّنَا ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٥﴾

6 Certainly there is for you in them a good example, for him who hopes for Allāh and the Last Day. And whoever turns away, surely Allāh is the Self-Sufficient, the Praised.

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيهِمْ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ ﴿٦﴾

SECTION 2 : **Friendly Relations with non-Muslims**

7 It may be that Allāh will bring about friendship between you and those of them whom you hold as enemies. And Allāh is Powerful ; and Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.[2487]

عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَجْعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ الَّذِينَ عَادَيْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ مَوَدَّةً ۚ وَاللَّهُ قَدِيرٌ ۚ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾

8 Allāh forbids you not respecting those who fight you not for religion, nor drive you forth from your homes,

لَا يَنْهَاكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ

2486 As shown in 790, it was not Abraham's father for whom he thus prayed, for ultimately this sire of Abraham proved to be a deadly enemy. Abraham's example is quoted to show how loving and tender he was towards his people, yet, when it became clear to him that they were bent upon uprooting the Truth, even Abraham could not maintain relations of friendship with them. The Holy Prophet and his companions were in like manner now obliged to renounce all relationships of friendship with a people who were not only the avowed enemies of the Muslims but also in a state of continual war with them. For Abraham's promise to ask forgiveness for his sire, see 19:47.

2487 This verse makes it clear that the prohibition against friendly relations with the disbelievers was only temporary, to be operative only so long as the war continued. The friendship prophetically referred to here was brought about after the conquest of Makkah.

that you show them kindness and deal with them justly. Surely Allāh loves the doers of justice.[2488]

أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوٓا إِلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ
اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٨﴾

9 Allāh forbids you only respecting those who fight you for religion, and drive you forth from your homes and help (others) in your expulsion, that you make friends of them ; and whoever makes friends of them, these are the wrongdoers.

إِنَّمَا يَنْهٰىكُمُ اللّٰهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قٰتَلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ
وَأَخْرَجُوكُمْ مِّنْ دِيٰرِكُمْ وَظٰهَرُوا عَلٰٓى
إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَنْ تَوَلَّوْهُمْ ۚ وَمَنْ يَّتَوَلَّهُمْ
فَأُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الظّٰلِمُونَ ﴿٩﴾

10 O you who believe, when believing women come to you fleeing, examine them. Allāh knows best their faith. Then if you know them to be believers send them not back to the disbelievers.[2489] Neither are these (women) lawful for them, nor are those (men) lawful for them. And give them what they have spent ; and there is no blame on you in marrying them, when you give them their dowries. And hold not to the ties of marriage of disbelieving women, and ask for what you have spent, and let them ask for what they have spent.

يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوٓا إِذَا جَآءَكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنٰتُ
مُهٰجِرٰتٍ فَامْتَحِنُوهُنَّ ۖ اَللّٰهُ أَعْلَمُ
بِإِيمٰنِهِنَّ ۚ فَإِنْ عَلِمْتُمُوهُنَّ مُؤْمِنٰتٍ
فَلَا تَرْجِعُوهُنَّ إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ ۖ لَا هُنَّ
حِلٌّ لَّهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحِلُّونَ لَهُنَّ ۖ وَ
اٰتُوهُمْ مَّآ أَنْفَقُوا ۚ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ
أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ إِذَآ اٰتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ
وَلَا تُمْسِكُوا بِعِصَمِ الْكَوَافِرِ وَسْئَلُوا مَآ

2488 This verse and the one that follows, revealed as they were at a time when the relations between the Muslims and the disbelievers were most strained on account of the existence of a continual state of war between the two parties, settle conclusively that friendly relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, as such, are not prohibited. It is in the light of these verses that all the verses forbidding friendly relations with the disbelievers should be read, because here the true principle is revealed in unmistakable language, allowing friendly relations with one class of disbelievers and prohibiting such relations with those of another class.

2489 People continued to embrace Islām at Makkah, although there was now no preacher of the faith there. This gradual conversion to Islām continued notwithstanding the bitter persecution of the new converts, which compelled them to flee from their homes. It is an unparalleled example of the deep impression which the Holy Prophet's truth had made upon the Makkans. The example cited here relates to believing women who fled to Madīnah under these circumstances. These women were not taken unconditionally ; it was necessary that they should be examined. In accordance with this injunction we find it related that the Holy Prophet obtained the assurance of such women under oath that they had not left their homes except on account of Islām, and that it was not the desertion of their husbands or the love of anyone that had prompted them to flee (JB, Kf).

That is Allāh's judgment; He judges between you. And Allāh is Knowing, Wise.[2491]

أَنفَقْتُمْ وَلْيَسْأَلُوا مَا أَنفَقُوا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ حُكْمُ اللَّهِ ۖ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾

11 And if any part (of the dowries) of your wives has passed away from you to the disbelievers, then your turn comes, give to those whose wives have gone away the like of what they have spent, and keep your duty to Allāh in Whom you believe.[2492]

وَإِن فَاتَكُمْ شَيْءٌ مِّنْ أَزْوَاجِكُمْ إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ فَعَاقَبْتُمْ فَآتُوا الَّذِينَ ذَهَبَتْ أَزْوَاجُهُم مِّثْلَ مَا أَنفَقُوا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي أَنتُم بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١١﴾

12 O Prophet, when believing women come to thee giving thee a pledge that they will not associate aught with Allāh, and will not steal, nor commit adultery; nor kill their children, nor bring a calumny which they have forged of themselves, nor disobey thee in what is good, accept their pledge, and ask forgiveness for them from Allāh. Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.[2493]

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا جَاءَكَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتُ يُبَايِعْنَكَ عَلَىٰ أَن لَّا يُشْرِكْنَ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَسْرِقْنَ وَلَا يَزْنِينَ وَلَا يَقْتُلْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ وَلَا يَأْتِينَ بِبُهْتَانٍ يَفْتَرِينَهُ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِنَّ وَأَرْجُلِهِنَّ وَلَا يَعْصِينَكَ فِي مَعْرُوفٍ فَبَايِعْهُنَّ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُنَّ اللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢﴾

13 O you who believe, take not for friends a people with whom Allāh is wroth — they indeed despair of the Hereafter, as the disbelievers despair of those in the graves.[2494]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَوَلَّوْا قَوْمًا غَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ قَدْ يَئِسُوا مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ كَمَا يَئِسَ الْكُفَّارُ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْقُبُورِ ﴿١٣﴾

2491 The state of permanent warfare maintained between the Muslims and the disbelievers did not allow of any social relationship to be established between the two parties. Hence marriage relationship, between Muslim men and disbelieving women, as well as those between Muslim women and the disbelieving men, could no longer be maintained; each party having returned the dowry, divorce automatically resulted.

2492 It is a case in which a Muslim husband is allowed to recoup the loss sustained of the dowry of a disbelieving wife who has deserted him, from the sum due for the payment of dowry for a Muslim woman who has fled from the disbelievers and joined the Muslims, or from acquisitions gained in war (Kf). This was necessary because the disbelievers refused to return the dowries of women who had gone over to them.

2493 Most of the commentators think that the pledge spoken of in this verse was only taken by the Holy Prophet after the conquest of Makkah, when large numbers of women as well as men embraced Islām.

2494 The reference is to the Jews. One sect of the Jews denied the Resurrection, to which reference is contained in the concluding words of the verse.

اٰيَاتُهَا ١٤ (٦١) سُوْرَةُ الصَّفِّ مَدَنِيَّةٌ رُكُوْعَاتُهَا ٢

CHAPTER 61

Al-Ṣaff : THE RANKS

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 2 *sections* ; 14 *verses*)

The title of this chapter is taken from the injunction to the Muslims to fight in defence of the faith in *Ranks*, for fighting was now essential for the preservation of the very life of the Muslim community. After giving that injunction, the first section speaks of Moses and Jesus and of the latter's prophecy with regard to the advent of the Holy Prophet, and this is followed by a prophecy of the triumph of Islām over all other religions. The second section exhorts the Muslims to exert themselves in the cause of truth, if they would see that prophecy fulfilled, citing the example of Jesus. The date of revelation is very probably the first or the second year of the Hijrah.

SECTION 1 **Triumph of Islām**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allāh; and He is the Mighty, the Wise.

سَبَّحَ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ①

2 O you who believe, why say you that which you do not?

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لِمَ تَقُوْلُوْنَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُوْنَ ②

3 It is most hateful in the sight of Allāh that you say that which you do not.[2495]

كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ اَنْ تَقُوْلُوْا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُوْنَ ③

4 Surely Allāh loves those who fight in His way in ranks, as if they were a solid wall.[2495a]

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الَّذِيْنَ يُقَاتِلُوْنَ فِيْ سَبِيْلِهٖ صَفًّا كَاَنَّهُمْ بُنْيَانٌ مَّرْصُوْصٌ ④

2495 It is an exhortation to those who professed belief in the Truth to make their actions correspond with their assertions. The triumph of Truth, which is so definitely foretold in this sūrah, could not be brought about by boastful talk but by great deeds of sacrifice, and hence this prelude. Mere words, if not carried into action, are hateful to God. It is deeds that open the way to success.

2495a They had to fight in self-defence; see 2:190; 238, etc.

5 And when Moses said to his people: O my people, why do you malign me, when you know that I am Allāh's messenger to you?[2495b] But when they deviated, Allāh made their hearts deviate. And Allāh guides not the transgressing people.

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ يَٰقَوْمِ لِمَ تُؤْذُونَنِي وَقَد تَّعْلَمُونَ أَنِّي رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا زَاغُوٓا۟ أَزَاغَ ٱللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي ٱلْقَوْمَ ٱلْفَٰسِقِينَ ⑤

6 And when Jesus, son of Mary, said: O Children of Israel, surely I am the messenger of Allāh to you, verifying that which is before me of the Torah and giving the good news of a Messenger who will come after me, his name being Aḥmad.[2496] But when he came to them with clear

وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ٱبْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَٰبَنِيٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ ٱللَّهِ إِلَيْكُم مُّصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ ٱلتَّوْرَىٰةِ وَمُبَشِّرًۢا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنۢ بَعْدِي ٱسْمُهُۥٓ أَحْمَدُ ۖ فَلَمَّا جَآءَهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ

2495b That Moses was falsely accused by his own followers is stated in 33:69; see 2015. Such false imputations by the Israelites against their own prophet are referred to here as an example of the Jewish deviation from truth. An example of Christian deviation is given in the next verse. No wonder that they were inimical to the Prophet, when they did not care even for Moses and Jesus.

2496 We are here told that Jesus had given the good news of the advent of a Prophet whose name was Aḥmad coming after him. That our Prophet was known by two names Muḥammad and Aḥmad is a well-known fact of history. The famous poet Ḥassān mentions the Prophet, in one of his verses, by the name Aḥmad: *Ṣall Al-lāhu wa man yaḥuffu bi-'arshi-hī wa-l-ṭayyibūna 'ala-mubāraki Aḥmad,* i.e., Allāh blesses the blessed Aḥmad and so do those who go round about His Throne of Majesty and all pure ones.

The next question is, Does Jesus really speak of the coming of Aḥmad? As regards his sayings, we have to depend on a Greek translation, in which we find the word *Paraclete,* which is translated in English as *Comforter.* We are well aware how translations are sometimes misleading, and therefore the use of the word *Paraclete* in the Greek version, or that of *Comforter* in the English version, does not show what the actual word in the language spoken by Jesus was. But all those qualifications which are given in John 14:16 and 16:7 are met with in the person of the Holy Prophet. He is stated to be one who shall abide for ever, and so is the Prophet's law; for after him comes no prophet to promulgate a new law. He is spoken of as teaching all things, and it was with a perfect law that the Holy Prophet came. And clearest of all are the words of John 16:12-14: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me". Now, this prophecy about the *Spirit of Truth,* which is the same as the *Comforter,* clearly stated in John 14:17, establishes the following points: (1) Jesus could not guide into all truth because his teaching was really directed only to the reform of the Israelites, and he denounced only their crying evils; but the teaching of the *Comforter* would be a perfect one, guiding men into all truth, and the Holy Qur'ān is the only book which claims to be a perfect law. (2) That the *Comforter* would not speak of himself, but that which he shall hear he shall speak; the words conveying exactly the same idea as those of Deut. 18:18: "And I will put My words in his mouth", a qualification which is met with only in the person of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad. (3) That he will glorify Jesus, and the Holy Prophet did glorify Jesus by denouncing as utterly false all those calumnies which were heaped

arguments, they said: This is clear enchantment.[2497]

قَالُوْا هٰذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ۝٦

7 And who is more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allāh and he is invited to Islām. And Allāh guides not the unjust people.[2498]

وَمَنْ اَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرٰى عَلَى اللّٰهِ الْكَذِبَ وَهُوَ يُدْعٰٓى اِلَى الْاِسْلَامِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِى الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ۝٧

8 They desire to put out the light of Allāh with their mouths, but Allāh will perfect His light, though the disbelievers may be averse.

يُرِيْدُوْنَ لِيُطْفِـُٔوْا نُوْرَ اللّٰهِ بِاَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَاللّٰهُ مُتِمُّ نُوْرِهٖ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكٰفِرُوْنَ ۝٨

9 He it is Who sent His Messenger with the guidance and the true religion, that He may make it overcome the religions, all of them, though the polytheists may be averse.[2499]

هُوَ الَّذِىْٓ اَرْسَلَ رَسُوْلَهٗ بِالْهُدٰى وَدِيْنِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهٗ عَلَى الدِّيْنِ كُلِّهٖ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُوْنَ ۝٩

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upon Jesus and his mother.

It is argued, however, that the *Comforter* is here called the *Spirit of Truth*, and hence the words cannot be applicable to a man. But it is equally difficult to see why Jesus should call him *another Comforter;* evidently he was referring to a human being as he himself was. Moreover, we cannot imagine a spirit not speaking of himself but speaking only that which he shall hear, which a comparison with Deut. 18:18 clearly shows to be a prophet like Moses. And it should be noted that the Holy Prophet is frequently called *The Truth* in the Holy Qur'ān, as in 17:81.

Another point worth mentioning is that the different prophecies about the Holy Prophet really refer to the different phases of his life. The two aspects of the life of the Holy Prophet are *jalāl* and *jamāl*, i.e., *an aspect of glory* and *an aspect of beauty*, the first finding its manifestation in the name *Muḥammad* and the second in *Aḥmad*. Each of the two great prophets, Moses and Jesus, prophesied about the Holy Prophet in words expressing that aspect of his life which was in consonance with his own nature — glory finding greater expression in Moses, who was prophet, lawgiver and king at the same time, and beauty in Jesus, on account of the beauty of his moral teachings, while both these elements were combined in the person of the Holy Prophet.

2497 The Holy Prophet is referred to here, as the next verse clearly shows.

2498 By the words, "who forges a lie against Allāh and he is invited to Islām," are meant the rejectors who called the truth an enchantment, as stated at the end of the last verse, and as shown by the words that follow here: *And Allāh guides not the unjust people.* It was these people that were invited to Islām, while the Prophet was an inviter, as he is elsewhere called; see, for instance, 3:192; 20:108. Their polytheistic beliefs are repeatedly called a forgery in the Holy Qur'ān, as, for instance, in 6:138, and again in 6:139. Or, the Christians are meant who were invited to the Truth, but they forged a lie that Jesus was the son of God and that he took away their sins.

2499 Verses 8 and 9 contain two different prophecies. In the first of these we are told that all attempts to annihilate Islām will fail, and they did fail. In the second it is affirmed that Islām will be made the predominant religion, the truth of which was witnessed by Arabia in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. But both prophecies have a wider significance. Attempts are still being made to annihilate Islām, and the Divine promise is that all these attempts shall be brought to naught; while the predominance of Islām over all the religions of the world would in time be established, as clearly as it was in Arabia. The com-

SECTION 2 : **Establishment of Truth needed Sacrifices**

10 O you who believe, shall I lead you to a merchandise which will deliver you from a painful chastisement ?

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا هَلۡ اَدُلُّكُمۡ عَلٰى تِجَارَةٍ تُنۡجِيۡكُمۡ مِّنۡ عَذَابٍ اَلِيۡمٍ ﴿۱۰﴾

11 You should believe in Allāh and His Messenger, and strive hard in Allāh's way with your wealth and your lives. That is better for you, did you but know !

تُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوۡلِهٖ وَتُجَاهِدُوۡنَ فِىۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ بِاَمۡوَالِكُمۡ وَاَنۡفُسِكُمۡ ؕ ذٰلِكُمۡ خَيۡرٌ لَّكُمۡ اِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُوۡنَ ﴿۱۱﴾

12 He will forgive you your sins and cause you to enter Gardens wherein rivers flow, and goodly dwellings in Gardens of perpetuity — that is the mighty achievement —

يَغۡفِرۡ لَكُمۡ ذُنُوۡبَكُمۡ وَيُدۡخِلۡكُمۡ جَنّٰتٍ تَجۡرِىۡ مِنۡ تَحۡتِهَا الۡاَنۡهٰرُ وَمَسٰكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِىۡ جَنّٰتِ عَدۡنٍ ؕ ذٰلِكَ الۡفَوۡزُ الۡعَظِيۡمُ ﴿۱۲﴾

13 And yet another (blessing) that you love : help from Allāh and a victory near at hand ; and give good news to the believers.[2500]

وَاُخۡرٰى تُحِبُّوۡنَهَا ؕ نَصۡرٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَفَتۡحٌ قَرِيۡبٌ ؕ وَبَشِّرِ الۡمُؤۡمِنِيۡنَ ﴿۱۳﴾

14 O you who believe, be helpers (in the cause) of Allāh, as Jesus, son of Mary, said to the disciples : Who are my helpers in the cause of Allāh ? The disciples said : We are helpers (in the cause) of Allāh. So a party of the Children of Israel believed and another party disbelieved ; then We aided those who believed against their enemy, and they became predominant.[2501]

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا كُوۡنُوۡۤا اَنۡصَارَ اللّٰهِ كَمَا قَالَ عِيۡسَى ابۡنُ مَرۡيَمَ لِلۡحَوَارِيّٖنَ مَنۡ اَنۡصَارِىۡۤ اِلَى اللّٰهِ ؕ قَالَ الۡحَوَارِيُّوۡنَ نَحۡنُ اَنۡصَارُ اللّٰهِ فَاٰمَنَتۡ طَّآئِفَةٌ مِّنۡۢ بَنِىۡۤ اِسۡرَآءِيۡلَ وَكَفَرَتۡ طَّآئِفَةٌ ۚ فَاَيَّدۡنَا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا عَلٰى عَدُوِّهِمۡ فَاَصۡبَحُوۡا ظٰهِرِيۡنَ ﴿۱۴﴾

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mentators say that this predominance will be brought about through the Promised Messiah (Rz). Polytheists, it should be noted, include the Christians, for they adopted the polytheistic doctrine of Trinity.

2500 The prophecy in the previous verse relates to the Hereafter, while that in this verse relates to the victories of the Muslims over the disbelievers.

2501 The description applies to the triumph of the teachings of Christ over those who opposed the dissemination of his teachings, and speaks prophetically of the ultimate triumph of Islām over all other religions of the world.

CHAPTER 62

Al-Jumu'ah : THE CONGREGATION

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 2 *sections;* 11 *verses*)

This chapter receives its name from the exhortation to gather together on the day of *Congregation,* or *Friday.* The first section, after stating that the Prophet was a purifier of his immediate followers as well as of those who would come later on, warns the Muslims of the danger which brought about the downfall of the Jewish nation. They had with them the letter of the law, but were not true to its spirit. The reason for this was that they gave themselves up to worldly occupations and did not even observe their Sabbath, which was set apart for religious devotion. The second section enjoins the Muslims not to neglect their prayers in congregation, and the congregation of Friday is specially spoken of.

The date of the revelation of this chapter may be assigned to the first year of the Hijrah.

SECTION 1 **Muslims chosen for Divine Favours**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ ○

1 Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allāh, the King, the Holy, the Mighty, the Wise.

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ الْمَلِكِ الْقُدُّوسِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ ①

2 He it is Who raised among the illiterates[2502] a Messenger from among themselves, who recites to them His messages and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom — although they were before certainly in manifest error —

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ②

3 And others from among them who have not yet joined them. And He is the Mighty, the Wise.[2503]

وَآخَرِينَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ③

2502 For the word *Ummī,* see 117, 950.

2503 Abū Hurairah says: "We were sitting with the Holy Prophet when

4 That is Allāh's grace ; He grants it to whom He pleases. And Allāh is the Lord of mighty grace.

ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٤﴾

5 The likeness of those who were charged with the Torah, then they observed it not, is as the likeness of the ass carrying books. Evil is the likeness of the people who reject the messages of Allāh. And Allāh guides not the iniquitous people.

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِّلُوا التَّوْرَاةَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ الْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ أَسْفَارًا ۚ بِئْسَ مَثَلُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥﴾

6 Say : O you who are Jews, if you think that you are the favourites of Allāh to the exclusion of other people, then invoke death, if you are truthful.[2504]

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ هَادُوا إِن زَعَمْتُمْ أَنَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ لِلَّهِ مِن دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوُا الْمَوْتَ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٦﴾

7 But they will never invoke it because of what their hands have sent before. And Allāh is Knower of the wrongdoers.

وَلَا يَتَمَنَّوْنَهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٧﴾

8 Say : The death from which you flee, that will surely overtake you ; then you will be sent back to the Knower of the unseen and the seen, so He will inform you of that which you did.

قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُّونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلَاقِيكُمْ ۖ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾

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the chapter entitled *al-Jumu'ah* was revealed to him, and in it the words *others from among them who have not yet joined them*. I asked the Holy Prophet: 'Who are these?' He gave no reply until I questioned him thrice. Salmān, the Persian, was sitting among us, and the Holy Prophet placed his hand on Salmān, and said, 'Even if faith were near the Pleiades, a man from among these would surely find it'." (B. 65: lxii, 1). This report would show that the verse applies to a man of Persian descent. As other reports show that the Messiah would appear among the Muslims at a time when they would have the letter of the law with them but would not be true to its spirit, the reference in the report given here is particularly to the Messiah or to his time. The significance is that after a time, when the true spirit of Islām should have been lost, a man would be raised who, again receiving the light from the Holy Prophet, would spread the light of Islām in the world. But some commentators understand that non-Arabs, or all Muslims coming after the Prophet, are meant (Rz, JB). The Prophet would thus be the teacher forever, through his disciples, and no Israelite prophet would be sent as a teacher to the Muslim community.

2504 The prayer for death spoken of here is the same as that in 2:94, for which see 138.

SECTION 2 : **Friday Prayer**

9 O you who believe, when the call is sounded for prayer on Friday, hasten to the remembrance of Allāh and leave off traffic. That is better for you, if you know.[2505]

10 But when the prayer is ended, disperse abroad in the land and seek of Allāh's grace, and remember Allāh much, that you may be successful.

11 And when they see merchandise or sport, they break away to it, and leave thee standing.[2505a] Say : What is with Allāh is better than sport and merchandise. And Allāh is the Best of Providers.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡۤا اِذَا نُوۡدِىَ
لِلصَّلٰوةِ مِنۡ يَّوۡمِ الۡجُمُعَةِ فَاسۡعَوۡا
اِلٰى ذِكۡرِ اللّٰهِ وَذَرُوا الۡبَيۡعَ ؕ ذٰلِكُمۡ
خَيۡرٌ لَّكُمۡ اِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ تَعۡلَمُوۡنَ ﴿۹﴾
فَاِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلٰوةُ فَانۡتَشِرُوۡا
فِى الۡاَرۡضِ وَابۡتَغُوۡا مِنۡ فَضۡلِ اللّٰهِ
وَاذۡكُرُوا اللّٰهَ كَثِيۡرًا لَّعَلَّكُمۡ تُفۡلِحُوۡنَ ﴿۱۰﴾
وَاِذَا رَاَوۡا تِجَارَةً اَوۡ لَهۡوَا ۨانْفَضُّوۡۤا
اِلَيۡهَا وَتَرَكُوۡكَ قَآئِمًا ؕ قُلۡ مَا عِنۡدَ
اللّٰهِ خَيۡرٌ مِّنَ اللَّهۡوِ وَمِنَ التِّجَارَةِ ؕ
وَاللّٰهُ خَيۡرُ الرّٰزِقِيۡنَ ﴿۱۱﴾

2505 The word *Jumu'ah* is derived from *jama'a, he gathered,* and *yaum al-Jumu'ah* means the *day of Congregation.* The time of the Jumu'ah is just after noon, and the service, which consists only of two *rak'ats* instead of the four *rak'ats* of the early afternoon prayer, is preceded by a sermon. The words of this verse and those of the following show that ordinary business may be carried on by a Muslim on Friday before or after the *Jumu'ah* prayer. Hence, unlike the Jewish and the Christian Sabbaths, it is not necessarily a day of rest. But attendance at the Jumu'ah prayers is obligatory, and as soon as the call to prayer is sounded, every Muslim is bound to leave business of every kind and immediately hasten to the mosque. Every nation has a Sabbath, or a so-called day of Divine service set apart from the ordinary weekdays, but in practice, the whole day is never given to prayer. In fact, a Muslim, who is allowed to do his ordinary work on Friday, gives more time to his prayers than the majority of those who recognize a seventh day as their Sabbath. The idea underlying the Sabbath is, no doubt, a temporary cessation of the material and physical activities, to give place to spiritual exercise and to holding communion with the Divine Being. Islām, on the other hand, requires communion with the Divine Being to be observed throughout the entire week, five times daily. Thus it gives a real chance to its followers for the exercise and development of the spiritual faculties, which in others lie quite dormant. The Islamic division of prayers is much more suited to elevate a man spiritually, affording true spiritual food to the soul than is to be discovered in any other form of worship.

2505a Those spoken of here are apparently the hypocrites. The fact that the next chapter deals with the hypocrites corroborates this.

CHAPTER 63

Al-Munāfiqūn : **THE HYPOCRITES**

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 2 *sections*; 11 *verses*)

The entire chapter, as its name shows, deals with *the hypocrites* and condemns *hypocrisy*. The first section speaks of their false promises and their desire to see Islām abased and wiped out, while the second section concludes with an exhortation to the Muslims to be sincere and not to be led away by the love of wealth and children.

The date of revelation may be assigned to a time when the hypocrites became separated from the believers, which first took place in the battle of Uḥud, and therefore it was probably in the third year of the Hijrah that it was revealed.

SECTION 1 **The Hypocrites**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 When the hypocrites come to thee, they say: We bear witness that thou art indeed Allāh's Messenger. And Allāh knows thou art indeed His Messenger. And Allāh bears witness that the hypocrites are surely liars.

إِذَا جَآءَكَ الْمُنٰفِقُوْنَ قَالُوْا نَشْهَدُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ ۘ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ إِنَّكَ لَرَسُوْلُهٗ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ يَشْهَدُ إِنَّ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ لَكٰذِبُوْنَ ۝١

2 They take shelter under their oaths, thus turning (men) from Allāh's way. Surely evil is that which they do.

اِتَّخَذُوْٓا أَيْمَانَهُمْ جُنَّةً فَصَدُّوْا عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۗ إِنَّهُمْ سَآءَ مَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝٢

3 That is because they believed, then disbelieved; thus their hearts are sealed, so they understand not.[2506]

ذٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ اٰمَنُوْا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوْا فَطُبِعَ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُوْنَ ۝٣

2506 Note how the sealing of hearts is described here. It is man's own action which is the cause, while the sealing is but the necessary consequence.

4 And when thou seest them, their persons please thee; and if they speak, thou listenest to their speech. They are like pieces of wood, clad with garments. They think every cry to be against them. They are the enemy, so beware of them. May Allāh destroy them! How they are turned back![2507]

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَهُمْ تُعْجِبُكَ أَجْسَامُهُمْ ۖ وَإِن يَقُولُوا تَسْمَعْ لِقَوْلِهِمْ ۖ كَأَنَّهُمْ خُشُبٌ مُّسَنَّدَةٌ ۖ يَحْسَبُونَ كُلَّ صَيْحَةٍ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ هُمُ الْعَدُوُّ فَاحْذَرْهُمْ ۚ قَاتَلَهُمُ اللَّهُ ۖ أَنَّىٰ يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٤﴾

5 And when it is said to them: Come, the Messenger of Allāh will ask forgiveness for you, they turn away their heads and thou seest them hindering (others), and they are big with pride.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا يَسْتَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ لَوَّوْا رُءُوسَهُمْ وَرَأَيْتَهُمْ يَصُدُّونَ وَهُم مُّسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٥﴾

6 It is alike to them whether thou ask forgiveness for them or ask not forgiveness for them — Allāh will never forgive them. Surely Allāh guides not the transgressing people.

سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَسْتَغْفَرْتَ لَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ ۚ لَن يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٦﴾

7 They it is who say: Spend not on those who are with the Messenger of Allāh that they may disperse. And Allāh's are the treasures of the heavens and the earth, but the hypocrites understand not.

هُمُ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ لَا تُنفِقُوا عَلَىٰ مَنْ عِندَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ حَتَّىٰ يَنفَضُّوا ۗ وَلِلَّهِ خَزَائِنُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَٰكِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٧﴾

8 They say: If we return to Madīnah, the mightier will surely drive out the meaner therefrom. And might belongs to Allāh and His Messenger and the believers, but the hypocrites know not.[2508]

يَقُولُونَ لَئِن رَّجَعْنَا إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ لَيُخْرِجَنَّ الْأَعَزُّ مِنْهَا الْأَذَلَّ ۚ وَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَٰكِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨﴾

SECTION 2: **An Exhortation**

9 O you who believe, let not your wealth nor your children divert you from the remembrance of Allāh; and whoever does that, these are the losers.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿٩﴾

2507 By the *cry* is here meant the *hostile incursion* of the enemy *by which the tribes are surprised* (LL). Whenever there was an incursion of the enemy, the hypocrites showed cowardice and thought that the Muslims would be crushed by their adversaries.

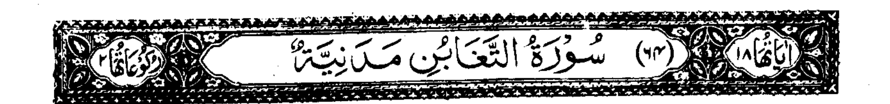
2508 So late as this revelation, the hypocrites considered themselves, in conjunction with their disbelieving friends, to be the stronger party and the Muslims

10 And spend out of that which We have given you before death comes to one of you, and he says: My Lord, why didst Thou not respite me to a near term, so that I should have given alms and been of the doers of good deeds?

11 But Allāh respites not a soul, when its term comes. And Allāh is Aware of what you do.

وَأَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنٰكُمْ مِّنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ
يَّأْتِيَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ فَيَقُوْلَ رَبِّ لَوْ
لَآ أَخَّرْتَنِيْٓ إِلٰٓى أَجَلٍ قَرِيْبٍ فَأَصَّدَّقَ
وَأَكُنْ مِّنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿١٠﴾
وَلَنْ يُّؤَخِّرَ اللّٰهُ نَفْسًا إِذَا جَآءَ أَجَلُهَا
وَاللّٰهُ خَبِيْرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿١١﴾

to be the weaker party, whom they could easily drive out of Madīnah. But they are told that they themselves will meet with disgrace. Ultimately their opposition came to naught; see 1090.



CHAPTER 64

Al-Taghābun : THE MANIFESTATION OF LOSSES

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH: 2 *sections*; 18 *verses*)

This chapter not only warns the disbelievers of the evil consequences of their deeds but also exhorts the believers to continue their march towards spiritual advancement, not permitting worldly attractions to interfere in the necessary attainment of perfection. The chapter is appropriately entitled *The Manifestation of Losses,* because, not only will disbelievers find their losses manifested on a certain day, but believers will also find such losses manifested, if they have been remiss in fulfilling their obligations.

The first section, after referring to Allāh as being the Creator of both believers and disbelievers, warns the disbelievers of the consequences of their evil deeds on the day of Resurrection. The second section exhorts the Muslims to be obedient to the Messenger, and not to be led into a wrong course by worldly allurements.

There is a difference of opinion as to whether this chapter is of Makkan or Madīnan origin; the majority incline to the latter opinion. Internal evidence shows it to be an early Madīnan revelation.

SECTION 1 **Disbelievers Warned**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allāh. His is the kingdom, and His the praise; and He is Possessor of power over all things.

يُسَبِّحُ لِلّٰهِ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ ۚ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ ۫ وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ۝١

2 He it is Who created you, but one of you is a disbeliever and one of you is a believer. And Allāh is Seer of what you do.

هُوَ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَكُمْ فَمِنْكُمْ كَافِرٌ وَّمِنْكُمْ مُّؤْمِنٌ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ بَصِيْرٌ ۝٢

3 He created the heavens and the earth with truth, and He shaped you, then made goodly your shapes; and to Him is the resort.

خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَصَوَّرَكُمْ فَاَحْسَنَ صُوَرَكُمْ ۚ وَاِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيْرُ ۝٣

4 He knows what is in the heavens and the earth, and He knows what you hide and what you manifest. And Allāh is Knower of what is in the hearts.

يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تُسِرُّوْنَ وَمَا تُعْلِنُوْنَ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ ۝٤

5 Has there not come to you the story of those who disbelieved before, then tasted the evil consequences of their conduct, and they had a painful chastisement?

اَلَمْ يَاْتِكُمْ نَبَؤُا الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ ۡ فَذَاقُوْا وَبَالَ اَمْرِهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ۝٥

6 That is because there came to them their messengers with clear arguments, but they said: Shall mortals guide us? So they disbelieved and turned away, and Allāh is above all need. And Allāh is Self-Sufficient, Praised.

ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهٗ كَانَتْ تَّاْتِيْهِمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ فَقَالُوْٓا اَبَشَرٌ يَّهْدُوْنَنَا ۡ فَكَفَرُوْا وَتَوَلَّوْا وَّاسْتَغْنَى اللّٰهُ ۭ وَاللّٰهُ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيْدٌ ۝٦

7 Those who disbelieve think that they will not be raised. Say: Aye, by my Lord! you will certainly be raised; then you will certainly be informed of what you did. And that is easy to Allāh.

زَعَمَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا اَنْ لَّنْ يُّبْعَثُوْا ۭ قُلْ بَلٰى وَرَبِّيْ لَتُبْعَثُنَّ ثُمَّ لَتُنَبَّؤُنَّ بِمَا عَمِلْتُمْ ۭ وَذٰلِكَ عَلَى اللّٰهِ يَسِيْرٌ ۝٧

8 So believe in Allāh and His Messenger and the Light which We

فَاٰمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ وَالنُّوْرِ الَّذِيْٓ

have revealed. And Allāh is Aware of what you do.

اَنْزَلْنَا ۗ وَاللّٰهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ خَبِيْرٌ ﴿۸﴾

9 The day when He will gather you for the day of Gathering, that is the day of the Manifestation of losses.[2509] And whoever believes in Allāh and does good, He will remove from him his evil and cause him to enter Gardens wherein rivers flow, to abide therein for ever. That is the great achievement.[2510]

يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُكُمْ لِيَوْمِ الْجَمْعِ ذٰلِكَ يَوْمُ التَّغَابُنِ ۗ وَمَنْ يُّؤْمِنْۢ بِاللّٰهِ وَيَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا يُّكَفِّرْ عَنْهُ سَيِّاٰتِهٖ وَيُدْخِلْهُ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَاۤ اَبَدًا ۗ ذٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيْمُ ﴿۹﴾

10 And those who disbelieve and reject Our messages, they are the companions of the Fire, abiding therein ; and evil is the resort.

وَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا وَكَذَّبُوْا بِاٰيٰتِنَاۤ اُولٰٓئِكَ اَصْحٰبُ النَّارِ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ۗ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿۱۰﴾

SECTION 2 : **An Exhortation**

11 No calamity befalls but by Allāh's permission. And whoever believes in Allāh, He guides his heart. And Allāh is Knower of all things.

مَاۤ اَصَابَ مِنْ مُّصِيْبَةٍ اِلَّا بِاِذْنِ اللّٰهِ ۗ وَمَنْ يُّؤْمِنْۢ بِاللّٰهِ يَهْدِ قَلْبَهٗ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۱۱﴾

12 And obey Allāh and obey the Messenger ; but if you turn away, the duty of Our Messenger is only to deliver (the message) clearly.

وَاَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَاَطِيْعُوا الرَّسُوْلَ ۚ فَاِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَاِنَّمَا عَلٰى رَسُوْلِنَا الْبَلٰغُ الْمُبِيْنُ ﴿۱۲﴾

13 Allāh, there is no God but He. And on Allāh let the believers rely.

اَللّٰهُ لَاۤ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ۚ وَعَلَى اللّٰهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿۱۳﴾

14 O you who believe, surely of your wives and your children there are

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْۤا اِنَّ مِنْ اَزْوَاجِكُمْ وَاَوْلَادِكُمْ عَدُوًّا لَّكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوْهُمْ ۚ

2509 *Taghābun* is derived from *ghabn*, which means *the causing of loss* to another. It may be either in property or in judgment, and *ghabintu kadhā* means *I neglected the thing*. *Yaum al-taghābun* is the day of Resurrection, *on account of the manifestation on that day of the ghabn or the loss* (R).

The day of Resurrection is called the day of *Taghābun* because the loss that a man suffers is generally hidden from his eyes in this life, and it will be manifest on the Judgment day.

2510 Note that he who acts righteously will have his evil removed, because a change comes over his life. There is no doubt that, when a complete transformation takes place in the life of a man, the consequences of the evil which he might have previously wrought are wiped out.

enemies to you,[2511] so beware of them. And if you pardon and forbear and forgive, surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

وَإِنْ تَعْفُوا وَتَصْفَحُوا وَتَغْفِرُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Your wealth and your children are only a trial, and Allāh — with Him is a great reward.

إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿١٥﴾

16 So keep your duty to Allāh as much as you can, and hear and obey and spend ; it is better for your souls. And whoever is saved from the greediness of his soul, these it is that are the successful.

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ وَاسْمَعُوا وَأَطِيعُوا وَأَنْفِقُوا خَيْرًا لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 If you set apart for Allāh a goodly portion, He will double it for you and forgive you. And Allāh is the Multiplier (of rewards), Forbearing,

إِنْ تُقْرِضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يُضَاعِفْهُ لَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ شَكُورٌ حَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾

18 The Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Mighty, the Wise.

عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿١٨﴾

2511 Because it is most often for the sake of one's wife and children that one acts wrongfully towards others. Thus, in some cases the wife or the children become an enemy to man. Note the use of the word *min,* which shows that it is only occasionally that a man is led to an evil course.

اٰيَاتُهَا ١٢ (٦٥) سُوْرَةُ الطَّلَاقِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ رُكُوْعَاتُهَا ٢

CHAPTER 65

Al-Ṭalāq : DIVORCE

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH : 2 *sections* ; 12 *verses*)

This chapter deals with certain rules regarding divorce in its first section, and is accordingly entitled *Divorce.* The second gives an unmistakable warning to the opponents and shows that the Prophet had brought to them light. The law of divorce had already been given to the Muslims in the second chapter, but its misuse called for additional directions ; see 2512.

The date of revelation may be assigned approximately to the sixth year of the Hijrah, when the incident referred to in the first verse is said to have taken place.

SECTION 1 **Supplementary Divorce Rules**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 O Prophet, when you divorce women, divorce them for their prescribed period,[2512] and calculate the period ; and keep your duty to Allāh, your Lord. Turn them not out of their houses — nor should they themselves

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ اِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَآءَ فَطَلِّقُوْهُنَّ لِعِدَّتِهِنَّ وَاَحْصُوا الْعِدَّةَ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ رَبَّكُمْ ۚ لَا تُخْرِجُوْهُنَّ مِنْۢ بُيُوْتِهِنَّ وَلَا يَخْرُجْنَ اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّاْتِيْنَ

2512 The prescribed time is ordinarily, according to 2 : 228, three courses. But in the case of women with child, and in certain other cases, the prescribed time is laid down in v. 4 of this chapter. It should be noted how every direction in connection with the subject of divorce is followed by the injunction, ***keep your duty to Allāh,*** throughout this chapter. The utmost carefulness must therefore be exercised in the matter of divorce. Divorce is allowed but the right must be used sparingly and under exceptional circumstances.

It is reported that the directions contained in this chapter were needed to correct a mistake made in connection with the law of divorce by Ibn 'Umar, who divorced his wife when she had her courses. He was told to take her back, as divorce was ineffective unless pronounced when the wife was free from the menses (B. 68 : 1).

go forth — unless they commit an open indecency. And these are the limits of Allāh. And whoever goes beyond the limits of Allāh, he indeed wrongs his own soul. Thou knowest not that Allāh may after that bring about an event.[2513]

بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُّبَيِّنَةٍ ۚ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ ۚ وَمَن يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ ۚ لَا تَدْرِي لَعَلَّ اللَّهَ يُحْدِثُ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ أَمْرًا ﴿١﴾

2 So when they have reached their prescribed time, retain them with kindness or dismiss them with kindness, and call to witness two just ones from among you, and give upright testimony for Allāh. With that is admonished he who believes in Allāh and the Latter Day. And whoever keeps his duty to Allāh, He ordains a way out for him,

فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ فَارِقُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَأَشْهِدُوا ذَوَيْ عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ وَأَقِيمُوا الشَّهَادَةَ لِلَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ يُوعَظُ بِهِ مَن كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّهُ مَخْرَجًا ﴿٢﴾

3 And gives him sustenance from whence he imagines not. And whoever trusts in Allāh, He is sufficient for him. Surely Allāh attains His purpose. Allāh indeed has appointed a measure for everything.

وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۚ وَمَن يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَالِغُ أَمْرِهِ ۚ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا ﴿٣﴾

4 And those of your women who despair of menstruation, if you have a doubt, their prescribed time is three months, and of those, too, who have not had their courses. And the pregnant women, their prescribed time is that they lay down their burden. And whoever keeps his duty to Allāh, He makes his affair easy for him.

وَاللَّائِي يَئِسْنَ مِنَ الْمَحِيضِ مِن نِّسَائِكُمْ إِنِ ارْتَبْتُمْ فَعِدَّتُهُنَّ ثَلَاثَةُ أَشْهُرٍ وَاللَّائِي لَمْ يَحِضْنَ ۚ وَأُولَاتُ الْأَحْمَالِ أَجَلُهُنَّ أَن يَضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ ۚ وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَل لَّهُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ يُسْرًا ﴿٤﴾

5 That is the command of Allāh, which He has revealed to you. And whoever keeps his duty to Allāh, He will remove from him his evils and give him a big reward.

ذَٰلِكَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ أَنزَلَهُ إِلَيْكُمْ ۚ وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يُكَفِّرْ عَنْهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِ وَيُعْظِمْ لَهُ أَجْرًا ﴿٥﴾

2513 The *amr* or *event* here means *reunion* (JB). We are here expressly told that a divorced woman is not to be turned out of the husband's house, because either party may regret the divorce and a reunion may be brought about.

6 Lodge them where you live according to your means, and injure them not to straiten them. And if they are pregnant, spend on them until they lay down their burden. Then if they suckle for you, give them their recompense, and enjoin one another to do good; and if you disagree, another will suckle for him.

أَسْكِنُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ سَكَنْتُمْ مِّنْ وُّجْدِكُمْ وَلَا تُضَآرُّوهُنَّ لِتُضَيِّقُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ ؕ وَإِنْ كُنَّ أُولَاتِ حَمْلٍ فَأَنْفِقُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ حَتّٰى يَضَعْنَ حَمْلَهُنَّ ۚ فَإِنْ أَرْضَعْنَ لَكُمْ فَاٰتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ ۚ وَأْتَمِرُوا بَيْنَكُمْ بِمَعْرُوفٍ ۚ وَإِنْ تَعَاسَرْتُمْ فَسَتُرْضِعُ لَهٗٓ أُخْرٰى ؕ ﴿٦﴾

7 Let him who has abundance spend out of his abundance, and whoever has his means of subsistence straitened to him, let him spend out of that which Allāh has given him. Allāh lays not on any soul a burden beyond that which He has given it. Allāh brings about ease after difficulty.[2514]

لِيُنْفِقْ ذُو سَعَةٍ مِّنْ سَعَتِهٖ ؕ وَمَنْ قُدِرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهٗ فَلْيُنْفِقْ مِمَّآ اٰتٰىهُ اللّٰهُ ؕ لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا مَآ اٰتٰىهَا ؕ سَيَجْعَلُ اللّٰهُ بَعْدَ عُسْرٍ يُّسْرًا ﴿٧﴾

SECTION 2 : **Makkah warned**

8 And how many a town which rebelled against the commandment of its Lord and His messengers, so We called it to severe account and We chastised it with a stern chastisement !

وَكَأَيِّنْ مِّنْ قَرْيَةٍ عَتَتْ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهَا وَرُسُلِهٖ فَحَاسَبْنٰهَا حِسَابًا شَدِيدًا ۙ وَّعَذَّبْنٰهَا عَذَابًا نُّكْرًا ﴿٨﴾

9 So it tasted the evil consequences of its conduct, and the end of its affair was perdition.

فَذَاقَتْ وَبَالَ أَمْرِهَا وَكَانَ عَاقِبَةُ أَمْرِهَا خُسْرًا ﴿٩﴾

10 Allāh has prepared for them severe chastisement, so keep your duty to Allāh, O men of understanding, who believe. Allāh has indeed sent down to you a Reminder —

أَعَدَّ اللّٰهُ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا ۙ فَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ يٰٓأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ۚۛ الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوا ۚۛ قَدْ أَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ إِلَيْكُمْ ذِكْرًا ۙ ﴿١٠﴾

2514 Women should be lodged where a man himself lives, so that, after divorce, the woman has the full status of a wife so long as the *'iddah* has not expired. If a man possesses abundant wealth, he must spend on his wife abundantly.

11 A Messenger who recites to you the clear messages of Allāh, so that he may bring forth those who believe and do good deeds from darkness into light. And whoever believes in Allāh and does good deeds, He will cause him to enter Gardens wherein rivers flow, to abide therein for ever. Allāh has indeed given him a goodly sustenance.

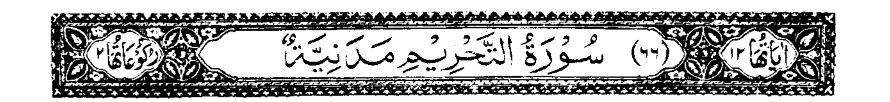
رَّسُوْلًا يَّتْلُوْا عَلَيْكُمْ اٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ مُبَيِّنٰتٍ
لِّيُخْرِجَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ
مِنَ الظُّلُمٰتِ اِلَى النُّوْرِ ؕ وَمَنْ يُّؤْمِنْۢ
بِاللّٰهِ وَيَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا يُّدْخِلْهُ جَنّٰتٍ
تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ
فِيْهَاۤ اَبَدًا ؕ قَدْ اَحْسَنَ اللّٰهُ لَهٗ رِزْقًا ﴿۱۱﴾

12 Allāh is He who created seven heavens, and of the earth the like thereof.[2516] The command descends among them, that you may know that Allāh is Possessor of power over all things, and that Allāh encompasses all things in (His) knowledge.

اَللّٰهُ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمٰوٰتٍ وَّمِنَ
الْاَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ ؕ يَتَنَزَّلُ الْاَمْرُ
بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوْۤا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
قَدِيْرٌ ۙ وَّاَنَّ اللّٰهَ قَدْ اَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ
شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا ﴿۱۲﴾

2516 The statement made here that there are "seven heavens and of the earth the like thereof" throws light upon what is meant by heavens where the number seven is mentioned. The seven heavens are elsewhere called the *seven ways* (23 : 17) and the seven earths may therefore be the seven major planets of the solar system, the earth itself being the eighth, their orbits being spoken of as the seven heavens or seven ways. It should, however, be borne in mind that the heavens are often referred to without a limitation of number, and include the whole of the starry creation. Another point worth noting is that the mention of seven heavens does not preclude the existence of more. For the application of the word *seven* and for further discussion, see 46.

The descending of the command among these is interpreted by Mjd as meaning the existence of life and death in them (Rz).



CHAPTER 66

Al-Taḥrīm : THE PROHIBITION

(REVEALED AT MADĪNAH : 2 *sections* ; 12 *verses*)

This chapter is called *The Prohibition*, the title being taken from the statement made in the first verse that the Prophet, as well as those who follow him, should not forbid themselves what Allāh has made lawful. The incident referred to is no other than the Prophet's temporary separation from his wives ; and the arrangement of chapters, the chapter on divorce being followed by a chapter on temporary separation, corroborates this conclusion.

The first section of this chapter speaks of the relations of the Holy Prophet with his wives, while the second speaks of the progress to be made by his faithful followers. The connection between these two sections may not be clear to a superficial reader. The word *zauj*, which means *a wife* or *a husband*, also signifies *an associate* or *a comrade* (LL), and the spiritual relation between the Prophet and a true follower of his is often metaphorically compared to the relation subsisting between husband and wife. It should also be noted that disbelievers and believers are in the concluding verses of the section compared to women, the wives of Noah and Lot on the one hand, and the wife of Pharaoh and Mary, the mother of Jesus, on the other.

The date of the revelation of this chapter may be placed about the year 7 A.H., which is the probable date of the separation.

SECTION 1 **Prophet's Domestic Relations**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ ○

1 O Prophet, why dost thou forbid (thyself) that which Allāh has made lawful for thee? Seekest thou to please thy wives? And Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.[2517]

یٰۤاَیُّہَا النَّبِیُّ لِمَ تُحَرِّمُ مَاۤ اَحَلَّ اللّٰہُ لَکَ ۚ تَبۡتَغِیۡ مَرۡضَاتَ اَزۡوَاجِکَ ؕ وَ اللّٰہُ غَفُوۡرٌ رَّحِیۡمٌ ①

2517 This verse is said to contain a reference to the Prophet's conjugal relations with Mary, the Coptic lady, which, it is alleged, being discovered by his wife Ḥafṣah, the Prophet swore not to have anything more to do with her. How far this story is worthy of credit may be gathered from the fact that Mary did enjoy the honour of standing in the same relation to the Prophet as his other wives, and that she gave birth to Ibrāhīm, a son of the Holy Prophet, who died in infancy. Why then should the Prophet's conjugal relations with her be regarded with a suspicious eye? Mary was not an Arab lady, and therefore socially her status may not have been the same as that of the other wives, but so far as her relation with the Holy Prophet was concerned, there was nothing in it of a clandestine nature, and as *a son's mother* (Ar. *umm walad*) she is ranked equally with the Holy Prophet's wives. It is a fact that the Prophet never kept a slave. The case of Ṣafiyyah illustrates this. She was a prisoner of war and might have been treated as a slave, but from the first she enjoyed the honour of being a wife, and no distinct or separate treatment was ever accorded to her. Nor does it appear that Mary was ever treated otherwise than as a *son's mother*. The story therefore that Ḥafṣah's discovery of the Prophet having conjugal relations with her upset the Prophet to such a degree that he swore not to have anything more to do with her is a pure invention, and the known facts not only nullify the calumny, but brand it as another of those fables invented by Christian writers who seek to vilify Islām.

Some commentator's version is that the Holy Prophet had gone in to Mary when he ought to have been in Ḥafṣah's house, but IJ holds that the reference may as well be to the Prophet's forbidding himself the company of his wives for a month, or to his having forbidden himself the use of honey in deference to the wishes of one of his wives; other commentators are also of the opinion that the reference may be to one of these latter incidents. One of the Christian critics calls the latter incident a "ludicrous story", while Noeldeke says that it was probably invented by 'Ā'ishah, the reason given being that she was chiefly concerned in this quarrel. Strange to say, the reason given is just the opposite of what is held by Noeldeke himself to be true. It was Ḥafṣah that was chiefly concerned in the quarrel, if the story credited by Sale, Muir, and others is to be taken as correct. Again, we do not see what blame rested on either Ḥafṣah or 'Ā'ishah, if that story is correct, whereas the incident of the honey casts the blame upon both of them. Why should 'Ā'ishah herself have invented a story which cast a blame (slight though it be) on her? According to the story of the Christian critics she was blameless. Not only had she no motive in inventing the story, but she should have been the first person to repudiate the incident of the honey, if it were false. In fact, it is a proof of the great trustworthiness of the reports relating to the Holy Prophet that 'Ā'ishah herself is found circulating a report which cast blame on her. It shows how scrupulous, how conscientious, and how true were the companions in reporting sayings and incidents relating to the life of the Holy Prophet. For the incident is thus narrated by 'Ā'ishah: "The Holy Prophet (peace and the blessings of Allāh be on him!) used to take honey at Zainab's house, and Ḥafṣah and I agreed to tell the Prophet that he smelled as if he had taken *Maghāfīr*", which being done, the Holy Prophet, accepting their word, solemnly promised that he would take honey no more.

The reference here, however, is to the well-known temporary separation, regarding which the Holy Prophet made a vow, and which is actually spoken of

2 Allāh indeed has sanctioned for you the expiation of your oaths; and Allāh is your Patron, and He is the Knowing, the Wise.[2518]

قَدْ فَرَضَ اللّٰهُ لَكُمْ تَحِلَّةَ اَيْمَانِكُمْ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ مَوْلٰىكُمْ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيْمُ الْحَكِيْمُ ۝

3 And when the Prophet confided an information to one of his wives — but when she informed (others) of it, and Allāh informed him of it, he made known part of it and passed over part. So when he told her of it, she said: Who informed thee of this? He said: The Knowing, the One Aware, informed me.[2519]

وَاِذْ اَسَرَّ النَّبِيُّ اِلٰى بَعْضِ اَزْوَاجِهٖ حَدِيْثًا ۚ فَلَمَّا نَبَّاَتْ بِهٖ وَاَظْهَرَهُ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ عَرَّفَ بَعْضَهٗ وَاَعْرَضَ عَنْۢ بَعْضٍ ۚ فَلَمَّا نَبَّاَهَا بِهٖ قَالَتْ مَنْ اَنْۢبَاَكَ هٰذَا ؕ قَالَ نَبَّاَنِيَ الْعَلِيْمُ الْخَبِيْرُ ۝

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as being referred to in these verses by no less an authority than 'Umar. Bukhārī relates the following report of I'Ab in his commentary on this chapter. I'Ab was long doubtful as to the two women spoken of in this chapter, and, finding himself alone with 'Umar on a certain day, questioned him about it. I'Ab tells us that before he had finished the question, 'Umar told him that these were 'Ā'ishah and Ḥafṣah, and then went on to tell him a long story. 'Umar told I'Ab that they did not customarily give women any status in the days of ignorance, until Allāh revealed concerning them what He revealed in the Holy Qur'ān. "One day," said 'Umar, "my wife said to me that I should take such and such a course in such and such an affair". "It is no concern of yours," was the curt reply. "Your daughter (Ḥafṣah) returns the Prophet answer for answer until he becomes displeased, and yet you do not like me to speak to you in an affair", was the rejoinder. 'Umar at once repaired to Ḥafṣah, and warned her against altercations with the Prophet. "'Ā'ishah should not mislead you in this matter," was the father's counsel to the daughter. Then he went to Umm Salamah, who was equally curt, and told 'Umar that he had no business to interfere in matters between the Holy Prophet and his wives. Soon afterwards the Prophet separated himself temporarily from all of his wives, swearing not to go to the house of any one of them for a month. News of this being brought to 'Umar, he immediately went to the Holy Prophet and related what had passed between Ḥafṣah and Umm Salamah and himself, at which the Holy Prophet smiled (B. 46:25).

This incident shows clearly that 'Umar understood this verse to refer to this temporary separation, and the incident being a very well-known one, of which the truth cannot be doubted, seems to be the real incident referred to in v. 1. A report in IJ further corroborates the view: 'Ā'ishah says that the Messenger of Allāh swore not to go to his wives, so he prohibited himself from having conjugal relations with them. So as regards the oath, he was commanded to expiate it, and as regards the prohibition, it was said to him, "O Prophet, why dost thou forbid thyself that which Allāh has made lawful for thee" (IJ). This report makes it clear that 'Ā'ishah also looked upon the opening words of v. 1 as referring to the Prophet's temporary separation from his wives. It should be further borne in mind that the word *taḥrīm* (inf. n. of *tuḥarrimu*, the word used here), which generally means *prohibiting a thing* or *making it unlawful*, is applied in particular to the prohibition of conjugal relations, as was done in *īlā'* (LA).

2518 The expiation of oaths is sanctioned in 5:89. It should be noted that *īlā'*, or *temporary separation*, is mentioned as an introduction to the subject of divorce in 2:226, but it is actually prohibited here. Thus I'Ab is reported to have said to a man who said that he had forsworn his wife: Thou liest, for Allāh says, Why dost thou forbid thyself that which Allāh has made lawful? (Nas. 27:16).

2519 There is no trustworthy report showing to what particular incident reference is here made. But as these verses speak of temporary separation which

4 If you both turn to Allāh, then indeed your hearts are inclined (to this) ; and if you back up one another against him, then surely Allāh is his Patron, and Gabriel and the righteous believers, and the angels after that are the aiders.

إِن تَتُوبَا إِلَى اللَّهِ فَقَدْ صَغَتْ قُلُوبُكُمَا ۖ وَإِن تَظَاهَرَا عَلَيْهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ مَوْلَاهُ وَجِبْرِيلُ وَصَالِحُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۖ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ ظَهِيرٌ ④

5 Maybe, his Lord, if he divorce you, will give him in your place wives better than you, submissive, faithful, obedient, penitent, adorers, fasters, widows, and virgins.[2520]

عَسَىٰ رَبُّهُ إِن طَلَّقَكُنَّ أَن يُبْدِلَهُ أَزْوَاجًا خَيْرًا مِّنكُنَّ مُسْلِمَاتٍ مُّؤْمِنَاتٍ قَانِتَاتٍ تَائِبَاتٍ عَابِدَاتٍ سَائِحَاتٍ ثَيِّبَاتٍ وَأَبْكَارًا ⑤

6 O you who believe, save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is men and stones ; over it are angels, stern and strong. They do not disobey Allāh in that which He commands them, but do as they are commanded.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ لَّا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ⑥

7 O you who disbelieve, make no excuses this day. You are rewarded only as you did.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا الْيَوْمَ ۖ إِنَّمَا تُجْزَوْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ⑦

SECTION 2 : **Progress of the Faithful**

8 O you who believe, turn to Allāh with sincere repentance. It may be your Lord will remove from you your evil and cause you to enter Gardens wherein flow rivers, on the day on which Allāh will not abase the Prophet and those who believe with him.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوحًا عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يُكَفِّرَ عَنكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيُدْخِلَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ يَوْمَ لَا يُخْزِي اللَّهُ النَّبِيَّ وَالَّذِينَ

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the Prophet resorted to on account of his wives demanding more of worldly comforts (33: 28), it is likely that this incident was also in connection with temporary separation. From what is related in connection with this incident, it appears that originally 'Ā'ishah and Ḥafṣah led this demand and later on the other wives joined. And when the Prophet on receiving Divine revelation gave an option to his wives either to remain in his house without more worldly comforts or to part company with him and have the desired comforts, he told 'Ā'ishah not to take a decision without consulting her parents (B. 46: 25). Maybe it was this matter which 'Ā'ishah disclosed to the others, and hence their united decision to remain in the Prophet's house with all the worldly privations.

2520 This shows that all those qualifications which are mentioned here were met with in the Prophet's wives. He had been given a choice to divorce any of

Their light will gleam before them and on their right hands — they will say: Our Lord, make perfect for us our light, and grant us protection; surely Thou art Possessor of power over all things.[2521]

9 O Prophet, strive against the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and remain firm against them, and their abode is hell; and evil is the resort.[2522]

10 Allāh sets forth an example for those who disbelieve — the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot. They were both under two of Our righteous servants, but they acted treacherously towards them, so they availed them naught against Allāh, and it was said: Enter the Fire with those who enter.[2523]

11 And Allāh sets forth an example for those who believe — the wife of Pharaoh, when she said: My Lord, build for me a house with Thee in the

آمَنُوا مَعَهُ ۚ نُورُهُمْ يَسْعَىٰ بَيْنَ
أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ
رَبَّنَا أَتْمِمْ لَنَا نُورَنَا وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ۖ
إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ⑧
يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَ
الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَمَأْوَاهُمْ
جَهَنَّمُ ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ ⑨
ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
امْرَأَتَ نُوحٍ وَامْرَأَتَ لُوطٍ ۖ كَانَتَا
تَحْتَ عَبْدَيْنِ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا صَالِحَيْنِ
فَخَانَتَاهُمَا فَلَمْ يُغْنِيَا عَنْهُمَا مِنَ اللَّهِ
شَيْئًا وَقِيلَ ادْخُلَا النَّارَ مَعَ الدَّاخِلِينَ ⑩
وَضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا امْرَأَتَ
فِرْعَوْنَ إِذْ قَالَتْ رَبِّ ابْنِ لِي عِنْدَكَ

his wives whom he did not desire but, when the wives decided not to leave him notwithstanding the extreme austerity of his home life, he did not divorce any of them; see 2002.

2521 Paradise is, therefore, not only a place to enjoy the blessings and reap the reward of one's previous good deeds, but it is also the starting-point of a never-ceasing spiritual advancement. The prayer for the perfection of the light is really an unceasing desire for perfection, showing that spiritual progress in that life will be endless. Every stage of excellence to which man will attain will seem to be imperfect when compared with the next stage of progress to which man will aspire. Thus the Holy Qur'ān teaches the principle that the development of man's faculties, as it takes place in this life, however unlimited, is not sealed by finality. The Hereafter is really the starting-point towards an immeasurably wider vista of the realms to be traversed, opening out after death, when the soul is liberated from the limitations of its casement of clay. Hence it is also that those who have wasted their opportunity in this life shall, under the inevitable law which makes every man taste of what he has done, be subjected to a course of treatment for the spiritual diseases which they have brought about with their own hands, and when the effect of the poison which vitiated their system has been nullified and they are fit to start on the onward journey to the great goal, they will no more be in hell.

2522 The verb translated *strive* is *jāhid*, from which is derived the word *jihād*, and the context shows that by *striving* is not meant the carrying on of a war, for war was never proclaimed against the hypocrites, who, in fact, were for all practical purposes treated as Muslims. Therefore, when the Prophet is commanded to carry on a *jihād* against the disbelievers and the *hypocrites*, it is clear that *jihād* is something else than mere fighting.

2523 This is an instance of the followers of prophets going against the principles of their teachers; therefore, those prophets will not be able to save them

Garden and deliver me from Pharaoh and his work, and deliver me from the iniquitous people.[2524]

12 And Mary, the daughter of Amran, who guarded her chastity, so We breathed into him Our inspiration, and she accepted the truth of the words of her Lord and His Books, and she was of the obedient ones.[2525]

بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَنَجِّنِي مِنْ فِرْعَوْنَ
وَعَمَلِهِ وَنَجِّنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ⑪
وَمَرْيَمَ ابْنَتَ عِمْرٰنَ الَّتِيْٓ اَحْصَنَتْ
فَرْجَهَا فَنَفَخْنَا فِيْهِ مِنْ رُّوْحِنَا
وَصَدَّقَتْ بِكَلِمٰتِ رَبِّهَا وَكُتُبِهٖ
وَكَانَتْ مِنَ الْقٰنِتِيْنَ ⑫

2524 This is an example of good men who are not yet made free from the bondage of sin, for which Pharaoh stands here as a typical example; but they ardently desire to be rid of sin, striving hard to free themselves from all trammels.

2525 The example of the righteous given in this parable illustrates how Divine inspiration is granted to the perfect ones. The words "We breathed into him of Our inspiration" are remarkable. Evidently the word ***him*** (Ar. *hi* in *fī hi*) cannot refer to Mary. The personal pronoun is taken by some commentators to refer to Jesus (Rz); and thus the meaning is that Mary gave birth to a son who received Divine inspiration. But the reference in the personal pronoun *him* might as well be to the believer for whom Mary is set as an example, and the object of the change might be to draw attention to the fact that it is really the granting of inspiration to the believer that is meant here and not the breathing of a soul.



PART XXIX

CHAPTER 67

Al-Mulk: THE KINGDOM

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 2 *sections;* 30 *verses*)

The title of this chapter is taken from the statement contained in the first verse, that *The Kingdom* is in the hands of Allāh, the evident conclusion of which is, that that kingdom which was known as *the Kingdom of God* in prophetical language was now about to be established on earth. Attention is then called to the perfect working of Divine laws in physical nature, and from this the inference is drawn that, as one law is working in the physical universe, so there is a law relating to good and evil working in the spiritual realm. The second section speaks of the doom that awaits the disbelievers because of their ungratefulness to the Divine Being.

From here to the end there are forty-eight chapters, and all these were revealed at Makkah, with the single exception of ch. 110, which belongs to the Madīnan period of revelation, though it too was revealed at Makkah when the Holy Prophet was there on his last pilgrimage. All of them, sometimes in plain and sometimes in metaphorical language, contain prophecies of the greatness to which Islām would rise and of the failure of opposition. But while they mostly belong to the earliest period of the Holy Prophet's revelation, the prophecies contained in them very often relate to the distant future of Islām, and are certainly not limited to the prevalence of Islām in Arabia or to the lifetime of the Prophet. While the distinct character of each chapter will be dealt with in the usual introductory note, these few words will suffice as to their general character and their relation towards each other.

SECTION 1 **The Kingdom of God**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسۡمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِيۡمِ ○

1 Blessed is He in Whose hand is the Kingdom, and He is Possessor of power over all things,[2526]

تَبٰرَكَ الَّذِيۡ بِيَدِهِ الۡمُلۡكُ ۡ وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيۡءٍ قَدِيۡرُ ۙ ①

2 Who created death and life that He might try you — which of you is best in deeds. And He is the Mighty, the Forgiving,[2527]

الَّذِيۡ خَلَقَ الۡمَوۡتَ وَالۡحَيٰوةَ لِيَبۡلُوَكُمۡ اَيُّكُمۡ اَحۡسَنُ عَمَلًا ؕ وَهُوَ الۡعَزِيۡزُ الۡغَفُوۡرُ ۙ ②

3 Who created the seven heavens alike.[2528] Thou seest no incongruity in the creation of the Beneficent. Then look again: Canst thou see any disorder ? [2529]

الَّذِيۡ خَلَقَ سَبۡعَ سَمٰوٰتٍ طِبَاقًا ؕ مَا تَرٰى فِيۡ خَلۡقِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ مِنۡ تَفٰوُتٍ ؕ فَارۡجِعِ الۡبَصَرَ ۙ هَلۡ تَرٰى مِنۡ فُطُوۡرٍ ③

2526 The short Makkan chapters, which are no doubt generally among the earliest revelations of the Holy Prophet, often speak most forcibly of the greatness and glory of Allāh. The statement here that *the Kingdom is in Allāh's hand* and that He has power over all things is like a prophetical statement as to the establishment of the kingdom of Islām, which was really the kingdom of God. This is made clear by what Jesus Christ said: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21:43).

2527 The law of life and death or growth and decay works throughout nature, but it has a special meaning in reference to man, because death does not end his life, but is really the starting-point for a new life of spiritual progress. Life to him below is, therefore, a trial, i.e., a means of bringing to light his hidden qualifications for the performance of good. But life and death have another and a deeper significance for man in the life and death of nations. Nations that work evil are swept away, and others are raised in their place that they may do good.

2528 You say, such a thing is *ṭabq* or *ṭibāq* of that, meaning that *this thing is the match of that* or *conforms* or *corresponds with that* or *is the like of that* (LL). This significance, moreover, suits the context, for the verse goes on to describe the uniformity prevailing in nature.

2529 Attention is here called to the regularity and uniformity of the laws working in nature. There is no incongruity, so that things belonging to the same class should be subject to different laws, nor is there a disorder (*fuṭūr*, which R translates as meaning *ikhtilāl*, i.e., *disorder* and *laxity*), so that a law should not work uniformly. The verse, while calling attention to the existence of a Supreme Being, as witnessed in the regularity and uniformity of the laws working in creation, draws special attention to spiritual laws, which also work uniformly, and thus evil and good must each bring its special reward.

4 Then turn the eye again and again — thy look will return to thee confused, while it is fatigued.

ثُمَّ ارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ كَرَّتَيْنِ يَنْقَلِبْ إِلَيْكَ الْبَصَرُ خَاسِئًا وَّهُوَ حَسِيْرٌ ﴿٤﴾

5 And certainly We have adorned this lower heaven with lamps and We make them means of conjectures for the devils,[2530] and We have prepared for them the chastisement of burning.

وَلَقَدْ زَيَّنَّا السَّمَآءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيْحَ وَجَعَلْنٰهَا رُجُوْمًا لِّلشَّيٰطِيْنِ وَاَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابَ السَّعِيْرِ ﴿٥﴾

6 And for those who disbelieve in their Lord is the chastisement of hell, and evil is the resort.

وَلِلَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا بِرَبِّهِمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيْرُ ﴿٦﴾

7 When they are cast therein, they will hear a loud moaning of it as it heaves,

اِذَآ اُلْقُوْا فِيْهَا سَمِعُوْا لَهَا شَهِيْقًا وَّهِيَ تَفُوْرُ ﴿٧﴾

8 Almost bursting for fury. Whenever a group is cast into it, its keepers ask them: Did not a warner come to you?

تَكَادُ تَمَيَّزُ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ ۖ كُلَّمَآ اُلْقِيَ فِيْهَا فَوْجٌ سَاَلَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَآ اَلَمْ يَاْتِكُمْ نَذِيْرٌ ﴿٨﴾

9 They say: Yea, indeed a warner came to us, but we denied and said: Allāh has revealed nothing; you are only in great error.

قَالُوْا بَلٰى قَدْ جَآءَنَا نَذِيْرٌ ۙ فَكَذَّبْنَا وَقُلْنَا مَا نَزَّلَ اللّٰهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۖ اِنْ اَنْتُمْ اِلَّا فِيْ ضَلٰلٍ كَبِيْرٍ ﴿٩﴾

10 And they say: Had we but listened or pondered, we should not have been among the inmates of the burning Fire.

وَقَالُوْا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ اَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِيْٓ اَصْحٰبِ السَّعِيْرِ ﴿١٠﴾

11 Thus they will confess their sins; so far (from good) are the inmates of the burning Fire.

فَاعْتَرَفُوْا بِذَنْۢبِهِمْ ۚ فَسُحْقًا لِّاَصْحٰبِ السَّعِيْرِ ﴿١١﴾

12 Those who fear their Lord in secret, for them is surely forgiveness and a great reward.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَيْبِ لَهُمْ مَّغْفِرَةٌ وَّاَجْرٌ كَبِيْرٌ ﴿١٢﴾

2530 The lamps with which the lower heaven is lighted, i.e., the stars, are made the means of conjectures regarding the future by the astrologers. *Rujūm* is the plural of *rajm*, and explaining it IA<u>th</u> says: "*Rajm* means *conjectures about what Allāh has not stated*" (N). And classing the *munajjim*, i.e., *the astrologer*, and the *kāhin*, i.e., *the diviner*, and the *sāḥir*, i.e., *the magician*, as one, he goes on to say: "Thus he (i.e., the Prophet, whose saying is explained) considered the astrologer, who learns about stars so that he may judge thereby, and attributes to them the effect of good and evil, to be a disbeliever" (N). Explaining these very words, Rāghib says: "And *rajm* is used metaphorically to signify *conjectures* and *surmises*" (R). LL also gives this significance of the verse on the authority of Bd and TA: "We have made them to be means of conjectures to the devils

13 And conceal your word or manifest it, truly He is Knower of that which is in the hearts.

وَأَسِرُّوا قَوْلَكُمْ أَوِ اجْهَرُوا بِهِ ۖ إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ ﴿١٣﴾

14 Does He not know Who created? And He is the Knower of subtilties, the Aware.

أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ ﴿١٤﴾

SECTION 2: **The Disbelievers' Doom**

15 He it is Who made the earth subservient to you, so go about in the spacious sides thereof, and eat of His sustenance. And to Him is the rising (after death).

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذَلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِنْ رِزْقِهِ ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ ﴿١٥﴾

16 Do you feel secure that He Who is in the heaven will not make the earth to swallow you up? Then lo! it will shake.[2531]

ءَأَمِنْتُمْ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ أَنْ يَخْسِفَ بِكُمُ الْأَرْضَ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَمُورُ ﴿١٦﴾

17 Or do you feel secure that He Who is in the Heaven will not send on you a violent wind?[2531a] Then shall you know how (truthful) was My warning!

أَمْ أَمِنْتُمْ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ أَنْ يُرْسِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَاصِبًا ۖ فَسَتَعْلَمُونَ كَيْفَ نَذِيرِ ﴿١٧﴾

18 And certainly those before them denied, then how (terrible) was My disapproval!

وَلَقَدْ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ ﴿١٨﴾

19 Do they not see the birds above them spreading and contracting (their wings)? Naught upholds them save the Beneficent. Surely He is Seer of all things.[2532]

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَى الطَّيْرِ فَوْقَهُمْ صَافَّاتٍ وَيَقْبِضْنَ ۚ مَا يُمْسِكُهُنَّ إِلَّا الرَّحْمَٰنُ ۚ إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ بَصِيرٌ ﴿١٩﴾

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of mankind, i.e., to the astrologers". Thus the astrologers, who deceived people by telling them many things which they posed as having learned from the stars, are referred to here.

2531 God is spoken of here as being in heaven; elsewhere He is spoken of as being in heaven and earth alike (43:84); and again He is spoken of as being "with you wherever you are" (57:4). The one thing certain is that God is not in one particular place to the exclusion of other places. Punishment sent by God is often spoken of as coming from heaven, and it is in reference to the punishment of the deniers of truth that He is spoken of here as being in heaven, or above all, so that none can avert the punishment sent by Him.

2531a The word *ḥāṣib* has already been explained in 1448. It is derived from *ḥaṣab* meaning *stones* or *pebbles that are thrown* and means a *violent wind that raises dust and pebbles* (LL). In the well-known *Battle of the Allies*, when an army of twenty thousand was besieging Madīnah and the Muslims were almost helpless against this mighty force, it was a violent wind which put all the hosts to flight; see 1972.

2532 *Yumsiku-hunna* may mean ***uphold them*** or *withhold them*. The withholding of the birds signifies the delay of the punishment, for the birds are spoken

20 Or who is it that will be a host for you to help you against the Beneficent? The disbelievers are in naught but delusion.

أَمَّنْ هَٰذَا الَّذِي هُوَ جُندٌ لَّكُمْ يَنصُرُكُم مِّن دُونِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ ۚ إِنِ الْكَافِرُونَ إِلَّا فِي غُرُورٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Or who is it that will give you sustenance, if He should withhold His sustenance? Nay, they persist in disdain and aversion.[2533]

أَمَّنْ هَٰذَا الَّذِي يَرْزُقُكُمْ إِنْ أَمْسَكَ رِزْقَهُ ۚ بَل لَّجُّوا فِي عُتُوٍّ وَنُفُورٍ ﴿٢١﴾

22 Is, then, he who goes prone upon his face better guided or he who walks upright on a straight path?[2534]

أَفَمَن يَمْشِي مُكِبًّا عَلَىٰ وَجْهِهِ أَهْدَىٰ أَمَّن يَمْشِي سَوِيًّا عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 Say: He it is Who brought you into being and made for you ears and eyes and hearts. Little thanks it is you give!

قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِي أَنشَأَكُمْ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ ۖ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Say: He it is Who multiplies you in the earth and to Him you will be gathered.

قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِي ذَرَأَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And they say: When will this threat be (executed), if you are truthful?

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هَٰذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 Say: The knowledge is with Allāh only, and I am only a plain warner.

قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْعِلْمُ عِندَ اللَّهِ وَإِنَّمَا أَنَا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 But when they see it nigh, the faces of those who disbelieve will be grieved, and it will be said: This is that which you used to call for.

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهُ زُلْفَةً سِيئَتْ وُجُوهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَقِيلَ هَٰذَا الَّذِي كُنتُم بِهِ تَدَّعُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 Say: Have you considered if Allāh should destroy me and those with me — rather He will have mercy on us — yet who will protect the disbelievers from a painful chastisement?[2535]

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَهْلَكَنِيَ اللَّهُ وَمَن مَّعِيَ أَوْ رَحِمَنَا فَمَن يُجِيرُ الْكَافِرِينَ مِنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿٢٨﴾

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of as following a victorious army; see 1387. The question in the next verse as to who will help them corroborates this significance.

2533 This is also a prophecy. Their sustenance was withheld in the great famine which prevailed at Makkah, prophecies regarding which are met with in the Holy Qur'ān in early as well as later revelation; see 2269.

2534 One going "prone upon his face" is one who stumbles and falls at every step. Such a one is he who is not guided by truth.

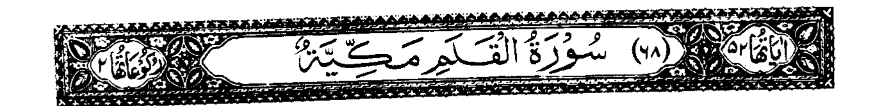
2535 The meaning is that the guilty will by all means be called to account and suffer the evil consequences of what they have done, whether the Prophet and his companions live or die, but the uncertainty as to the reward of the righteous is at once removed by the words *rather He will have mercy on us*. For *au*, meaning *rather*, see LL.

29 Say : He is the Beneficent — we believe in Him and on Him do we rely. So you will come to know who it is that is in clear error.

قُلْ هُوَ الرَّحْمٰنُ اٰمَنَّا بِهٖ وَعَلَيْهِ
تَوَكَّلْنَا ۚ فَسَتَعْلَمُوْنَ مَنْ هُوَ فِيْ
ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 Say : Have you considered if your water should subside, who is it then that will bring you flowing water ?

قُلْ اَرَءَيْتُمْ اِنْ اَصْبَحَ مَآؤُكُمْ غَوْرًا
فَمَنْ يَّاْتِيْكُمْ بِمَآءٍ مَّعِيْنٍ ﴿٣٠﴾ ع



CHAPTER 68

Al-Qalam : THE PEN

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 2 *sections ;* 52 *verses*)

When the Holy Prophet delivered his message, the disbelievers first called him a madman. The inkstand and the pen and all writings are called to bear witness to the fact that the utterances of the Prophet are not those of a madman ; hence this chapter is called *The Pen.* The first section closes with a parable clearly foretelling that all the struggles of the Makkans against the Holy Prophet will be a complete failure, and that they will in the end regret what they did. The second section lays stress on the knowledge of the future which was revealed through the Holy Qur'ān ; the example of Jonah is quoted to show how trials and sufferings sometimes make the issue doubtful, and the chapter concludes with the statement that the Holy Qur'ān will ultimately raise the whole of humanity to eminence. In this chapter, which is admittedly one of the earliest revelations, it should be noted that the message of the Holy Qur'ān is declared to be meant for all nations.

As regards the time of revelation, learned opinion is admittedly in favour of a very early date, so much so that it is generally considered to be the second chapter in order of revelation. But as the 74th chapter is shown by trustworthy reports to have been the second revelation, we can only place it after that chapter.

SECTION 1 **Not a Madman's Message**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 (By) the inkstand[2536] and the pen and that which they write!

نٓ وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُوْنَ ۝١

2 By the grace of thy Lord thou art not mad.[2537]

مَآ اَنْتَ بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ بِمَجْنُوْنٍ ۝٢

3 And surely thine is a reward never to be cut off.[2538]

وَاِنَّ لَكَ لَاَجْرًا غَيْرَ مَمْنُوْنٍ ۝٣

4 And surely thou hast sublime morals.[2539]

وَاِنَّكَ لَعَلٰى خُلُقٍ عَظِيْمٍ ۝٤

5 So thou wilt see, and they (too) will see,

فَسَتُبْصِرُ وَيُبْصِرُوْنَ ۝٥

2536 *Nūn* is not an abbreviation, but a word meaning *inkstand*. There is the authority of the earliest commentators that the letter *nūn* here stands for the word *nūn*, for both Ḥasan and Qatādah regard it as meaning *inkstand*, while I'Ab considers the meaning to be *fish*. The context, which mentions the pen and writing, clearly favours the former interpretation.

Rodwell's note here, that "the meaning of this and the similar symbols throughout the Qur'ān was unknown to the Muhammadans themselves even in the first century", shows a lamentable ignorance on the part of a translator of the Holy Qur'ān. The abbreviations in the beginning of chapters are in many cases explained by the companions of the Holy Prophet, Ibn 'Abbās being the chief authority. But here the Holy Qur'ān itself, in the very first abbreviation used in it, gives us a clue to the significance of the abbreviations used in it by giving an abbreviation *nūn*, which is also a significant word.

2537 The first allegation of the disbelieving Makkans against the Holy Prophet was that he was *majnūn*, i.e., *mad*, and this allegation is dealt with in this chapter. The first answer to it is contained in the first two verses. By mentioning the inkstand and the pen and that which they write, attention is really called to the fact that the Prophet's prophecies about his own future and the fate of the opponents, which were already put down in writing, would prove that the Prophet was not mad, for the ravings of a madman could not bear fruit. It should be noted that the Holy Qur'ān again and again challenges its opponents to write down their prophecies about the Holy Prophet, thus showing that its own were actually written down from the first; and thus this chapter, which is one of the earliest, conclusively establishes the truth that every revelation of the Holy Qur'ān was put down in writing as soon as it was communicated to the Prophet. For the assertion made here see v. 47, and 52:41: "Or have they the knowledge of the unseen so that they write it down?"

But the words have a wider significance, indicating that the Qur'ān will always continue to occupy a unique position among all the books which are ever written. This unique position consists in its completeness and exhaustive dealing with all the truths about religion, so that every religious truth is found within its covers; see 1785.

2538 The Prophet is further told that his exertions will be followed by a reward which will never be cut off, i.e., he will be successful in establishing a religion whose blessings will continue for ever, while a madman's actions cannot bear any fruit. Thus there is not only a clear prophecy here of the final triumph of the Prophet over his enemies, but there is also a prophecy that what is stated in the Qur'ān rests on such a firm foundation that it will never prove untrue.

2539 The Prophet's possession of the sublimest morals is a further proof that he cannot be a madman. In fact, he had already won from his contemporaries

6 Which of you is mad.

بِأَييِّكُمُ الْمَفْتُونُ ۝٦

7 Surely thy Lord knows best who is erring from His way, and He knows best those who go aright.

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَن سَبِيلِهِ ۖ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ۝٧

8 So obey not the rejectors.

فَلَا تُطِعِ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ ۝٨

9 They wish that thou shouldst be pliant, so they (too) would be pliant.[2540]

وَدُّوا لَوْ تُدْهِنُ فَيُدْهِنُونَ ۝٩

10 And obey not any mean swearer,[2541]

وَلَا تُطِعْ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَّهِينٍ ۝١٠

11 Defamer, going about with slander,

هَمَّازٍ مَّشَّاءٍ بِنَمِيمٍ ۝١١

12 Hinderer of good, outstepping the limits, sinful,

مَّنَّاعٍ لِّلْخَيْرِ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيمٍ ۝١٢

13 Ignoble, besides all that, notoriously mischievous —

عُتُلٍّ بَعْدَ ذَٰلِكَ زَنِيمٍ ۝١٣

14 Because he possesses wealth and sons.

أَن كَانَ ذَا مَالٍ وَبَنِينَ ۝١٤

15 When Our messages are recited to him, he says: Stories of those of yore!

إِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِ آيَاتُنَا قَالَ أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ ۝١٥

16 We shall brand him on the snout.[2542]

سَنَسِمُهُ عَلَى الْخُرْطُومِ ۝١٦

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the recognition of his sublime morality, inasmuch as he had won the title of *al-Amīn, the faithful one*. The Arabs, on account of their haughty spirit and tribal and family feuds, could not bow their heads to a man who was neither a king, nor the chief of a tribe, nor a great warrior, nor a famous poet. Nor could flattery have been their motive in according an unparalleled honour to a man who would not even mix with them, and led the life almost of a recluse. By calling him *al-Amīn*, the people expressed their high appreciation of his sublime morality, as if he were the one, and *only one*, as indicated by prefixing *al*, who could be trusted in all matters. His moral greatness was thus testified to by 'Ā'ishah, than whom none was more intimate with the Holy Prophet: *His morals are the Qur'ān*; meaning that all the pictures of sublime morality depicted by the Holy Qur'ān afford really a glimpse of the moral greatness of the Prophet.

2540 The first desire of the Quraish was no doubt, owing to their great respect for the Holy Prophet, that he should not condemn their evil deeds in strong language, and thus they too would not be severe in opposition to him.

2541 The description applies to all leaders of opposition to Truth. As against the sublime morals of the Inviter to Truth, vv. 10-13 describe the low state of morality of those who do not care for the moral values of life.

2542 *Branding on the snout* is equivalent to *bringing a man to disgrace which sticks to him* (R). Khurṭūm signifies really "*the proboscis of an elephant* (R), or *the nose of a beast of prey* (TA), or *a large* or *an elevated nose*" (LL), and the word is here applied to the nose of a man to indicate its ugliness (R). Some commentators apply this description to Walīd ibn Mughīrah in particular, and take the *branding on the snout* literally, a prophecy fulfilled in the battle of Badr, where Walīd received a wound on his nose, the mark of which remained till his death (Rz).

17 We shall try them as We tried the owners of the garden, when they swore to pluck its fruits in the morning,[2543]

18 And would not set aside a portion (for the poor).

19 But a visitation from thy Lord came on it, while they slept.

20 So it became as black, barren land —

21 Then they called out one to another in the morning,

22 Saying: Go early to your tilth, if you would pluck (the fruit).

23 So they went, while they said one to another in low tones:

24 No poor man shall enter it to-day to you —

25 And in the morning they went, having the power to prevent.

26 But when they saw it, they said: Surely we are in error;

27 Nay, we are made to suffer privation.

28 The best of them said: Said I not to you, Why do you not glorify (Allāh)?

29 They said: Glory be to our Lord! surely we were unjust.

30 Then some of them advanced against others, blaming each other.

31 Said they: O woe to us! Surely we were inordinate —

32 Maybe, our Lord will give us instead one better than it — surely to our Lord we make petition.[2544]

إِنَّا بَلَوْنٰهُمْ كَمَا بَلَوْنَآ أَصْحٰبَ الْجَنَّةِ ۚ إِذْ أَقْسَمُوْا لَيَصْرِمُنَّهَا مُصْبِحِيْنَ ﴿١٧﴾

وَلَا يَسْتَثْنُوْنَ ﴿١٨﴾

فَطَافَ عَلَيْهَا طَآئِفٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكَ وَهُمْ نَآئِمُوْنَ ﴿١٩﴾

فَأَصْبَحَتْ كَالصَّرِيْمِ ﴿٢٠﴾

فَتَنَادَوْا مُصْبِحِيْنَ ﴿٢١﴾

أَنِ اغْدُوْا عَلٰى حَرْثِكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صٰرِمِيْنَ ﴿٢٢﴾

فَانْطَلَقُوْا وَهُمْ يَتَخَافَتُوْنَ ﴿٢٣﴾

أَنْ لَّا يَدْخُلَنَّهَا الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّسْكِيْنٌ ﴿٢٤﴾

وَّغَدَوْا عَلٰى حَرْدٍ قٰدِرِيْنَ ﴿٢٥﴾

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهَا قَالُوْٓا إِنَّا لَضَآلُّوْنَ ﴿٢٦﴾

بَلْ نَحْنُ مَحْرُوْمُوْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾

قَالَ أَوْسَطُهُمْ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَّكُمْ لَوْلَا تُسَبِّحُوْنَ ﴿٢٨﴾

قَالُوْا سُبْحٰنَ رَبِّنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا ظٰلِمِيْنَ ﴿٢٩﴾

فَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ يَّتَلَاوَمُوْنَ ﴿٣٠﴾

قَالُوْا يٰوَيْلَنَآ إِنَّا كُنَّا طٰغِيْنَ ﴿٣١﴾

عَسٰى رَبُّنَآ أَنْ يُّبْدِلَنَا خَيْرًا مِّنْهَآ إِنَّآ إِلٰى رَبِّنَا رٰغِبُوْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾

2543 This is a parable which sets forth the ultimate fate of the opponents. Stated as it is in unmistakable terms, it is one of the earliest prophecies, when opposition to the Holy Prophet had not yet assumed the severity of the later days. It foretells not only the failure of opposition but shows also that the Prophet's heart was full of sympathy for the poor from the very first.

2544 It shows that while the Qur'ān threatened the opponents with punishment, it foretold at the same time that they would accept the Truth ultimately. This happened about twenty years afterwards. All their exertions came to naught

33 Such is the chastisement. And certainly the chastisement of the Hereafter is greater, did they but know![2545]

كَذٰلِكَ الْعَذَابُ ۖ وَلَعَذَابُ الْاٰخِرَةِ اَكْبَرُ ۘ لَوْ كَانُوْا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾

SECTION 2 : **A Reminder for the Nations**

34 Surely the dutiful have with their Lord Gardens of bliss.

اِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنّٰتِ النَّعِيْمِ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 Shall We then make those who submit as the guilty ?

اَفَنَجْعَلُ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ كَالْمُجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 What is the matter with you ? How do you judge ?

مَا لَكُمْ ۫ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُوْنَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 Or have you a book wherein you read

اَمْ لَكُمْ كِتٰبٌ فِيْهِ تَدْرُسُوْنَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 That you shall surely have therein what you choose ?

اِنَّ لَكُمْ فِيْهِ لَمَا تَخَيَّرُوْنَ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 Or have you covenants from Us on oath, extending to the day of Resurrection, that yours is surely what you judge ?

اَمْ لَكُمْ اَيْمَانٌ عَلَيْنَا بَالِغَةٌ اِلٰى يَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ ۙ اِنَّ لَكُمْ لَمَا تَحْكُمُوْنَ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 Ask them which of them will vouch for that.

سَلْهُمْ اَيُّهُمْ بِذٰلِكَ زَعِيْمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 Or have they associate-gods ? Then let them bring their associates, if they are truthful.

اَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَآءُ ۚ فَلْيَاْتُوْا بِشُرَكَآئِهِمْ اِنْ كَانُوْا صٰدِقِيْنَ ﴿٤١﴾

42 On the day when there is a severe affliction, and they are called upon to prostrate themselves, but they are not able —[2546]

يَوْمَ يُكْشَفُ عَنْ سَاقٍ وَّيُدْعَوْنَ اِلَى السُّجُوْدِ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيْعُوْنَ ﴿٤٢﴾

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and their power in the land was frustrated, but they then saw their error, came over to Islām, and were made the rulers of vast kingdoms. Thus their Lord gave them instead *one better,* because they made their petition to Him.

2545 The separate mention of the chastisement of the Hereafter is clear evidence that the punishment spoken of in the previous verses, which is referred to at the commencement of this verse in the words *such is the chastisement,* was a punishment which was to overtake them in this life, and thus to afford a proof of the truth of the chastisement of the Hereafter.

2546 The meaning of *kashf 'ani-l-sāq* has been explained in 1855. I may add here a few words from the commentaries. Bd says: *On the day when there is a severe affliction,* giving the alternative significance, *When the truth of the matter is laid bare.* Kf says: "*Kashf 'ani-l-sāq* is a proverb signifying the hardness of an affair and the severity of a calamity, and the origin of it is in the fright and the flight and the tucking up of their garments by women from their shanks in fleeing, and the disclosing of their anklets"; and then, quoting two pre-Islamic verses as his authority for the statement made, he adds: "The words here mean *the day when the affair becomes hard and formidable,* and there is *neither*

43 Their looks cast down, abasement will cover them. And they were indeed called upon to prostrate themselves, while yet they were safe.

خَاشِعَةً أَبْصَارُهُمْ تَرْهَقُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ وَقَدْ كَانُوا يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى السُّجُودِ وَهُمْ سَالِمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 So leave Me alone with him who rejects this announcement. We shall overtake them by degrees, from whence they know not.

فَذَرْنِي وَمَنْ يُكَذِّبُ بِهَٰذَا الْحَدِيثِ سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 And I bear with them, surely My plan is firm.[2547]

وَأُمْلِي لَهُمْ إِنَّ كَيْدِي مَتِينٌ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 Or dost thou ask from them a reward, so that they are burdened with debt ?

أَمْ تَسْأَلُهُمْ أَجْرًا فَهُمْ مِنْ مَغْرَمٍ مُثْقَلُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 Or is the unseen with them so that they write (it) down ?[2548]

أَمْ عِنْدَهُمُ الْغَيْبُ فَهُمْ يَكْتُبُونَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 So wait patiently for the judgment of thy Lord, and be not like the Companion of the fish, when he cried while he was in distress.[2549]

فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تَكُنْ كَصَاحِبِ الْحُوتِ إِذْ نَادَىٰ وَهُوَ مَكْظُومٌ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 Had not favour from his Lord reached him, he would certainly have been cast down on naked ground, while he was blamed.

لَوْلَا أَنْ تَدَارَكَهُ نِعْمَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ لَنُبِذَ بِالْعَرَاءِ وَهُوَ مَذْمُومٌ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 Then his Lord chose him, and He made him of the righteous.

فَاجْتَبَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَجَعَلَهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 And those who disbelieve would almost smite thee with their eyes when they hear the Reminder, and they say : Surely he is mad ![2550]

وَإِنْ يَكَادُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَيُزْلِقُونَكَ بِأَبْصَارِهِمْ لَمَّا سَمِعُوا الذِّكْرَ وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُ لَمَجْنُونٌ ﴿٥١﴾

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any laying bare nor a shank". Ibn Athīr in explaining similar words, occurring in a saying of the Holy Prophet, almost repeats the words of Kf. Rz holds the meaning of *al-sāq* to be *al-shiddat,* and quotes five verses in support of this.

Commentators also differ as to whether this severity will be brought about in this life or in the life after death, Abū Muslim holding the first opinion, which Rz admits.

2547 They are given respite, but their punishment is sure.

2548 Writing is always mentioned in connection with the knowledge of the unseen, because it is writing alone that makes the truth of a prophecy sure. Such verses are a clear proof that the Qur'ān itself, containing as it did numerous prophecies, was written from the first, otherwise a challenge to the opponents in these early revelations to write down the knowledge of the future which they had through their diviners would be meaningless.

2549 The Prophet Jonah is here called the Companion of the fish, because of the incident mentioned in 37 : 142.

2550 The chapter ends with exactly the same allegation on the part of the disbelievers as the one with which it opened. And the last verse, *and it is naught*

52 And it is naught but a Reminder for the nations.

وَمَا هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِّلْعٰلَمِيْنَ ۝٥٢

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but a Reminder for the nations, thus sums up the arguments advanced against that allegation. In fact, the arguments advanced in this chapter are equally true in all ages and for all nations. Note that even as early as the revelation of this chapter, the Prophet's message is declared to be meant for all nations.



CHAPTER 69

Al-Ḥāqqah : THE SURE TRUTH

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 2 *sections*; 52 *verses*)

This chapter is clearly later in revelation than its predecessor, because it deals with the later allegations of the disbelievers that the Prophet was a poet, or a diviner, and last of all that he was an impostor (vv. 41-44), the last chapter dealing with their first allegation that he was mad. *Al-Ḥāqqah* or *The Sure Truth* spoken of in the very first verse, which gives its name to this chapter, is *the hour of the triumph of Truth* and *the doom of the opponents.* The warning is followed by a reference to the fate of the earlier nations. The latter half of the first section states that *al-ḥāqqah* is the time of the reward of the faithful and of the punishment of the evildoers. The second section deals with the allegations of the opponents that the Prophet was a poet, or a diviner, or an impostor.

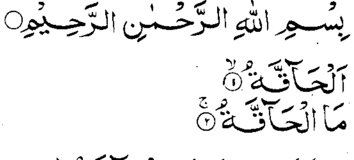
SECTION 1 **The Doom**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

1 The sure Truth!

2 What is the sure Truth?

3 And what would make thee realize what the sure Truth is?[2551]



2551 *Al-ḥāqqah* is derived from the root *ḥaqq*, meaning *truth*, and is interpreted in several ways, in all of which the sense of the root word is present. It is synonymous with *ḥaqīqat*, meaning *truth* or *reality* (T), or signifies *a severe calamity the happening of which is fixed or established* (LL). According to Az, *al-ḥāqqah* is *the hour in which the truth will be triumphant*, the reason given being that it is so called because it will overcome everyone who contends falsely in the matter of the religion of Allāh. The instances given about 'Ād and Thamūd, and Pharaoh, and the Sodomites, all show that this is the real significance. There is no doubt that a fuller manifestation of the Truth, and of the requital of those who reject it, will take place in the Hereafter, and thus it also means the Resurrection.

4 Thamūd and 'Ād called the calamity a lie.[2552]

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُوْدُ وَعَادٌۢ بِالْقَارِعَةِ ۝٤

5 Then as for Thamūd, they were destroyed by the severe punishment.[2553]

فَاَمَّا ثَمُوْدُ فَاُهْلِكُوْا بِالطَّاغِيَةِ ۝٥

6 And as for 'Ād, they were destroyed by a roaring, violent wind,

وَاَمَّا عَادٌ فَاُهْلِكُوْا بِرِيْحٍ صَرْصَرٍ عَاتِيَةٍ ۝٦

7 Which He made to prevail against them for seven nights and eight days continuously, so that thou mightest have seen the people therein prostrate as if they were trunks of hollow palm-trees.

سَخَّرَهَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَبْعَ لَيَالٍ وَّثَمٰنِيَةَ اَيَّامٍ حُسُوْمًا فَتَرَى الْقَوْمَ فِيْهَا صَرْعٰى كَاَنَّهُمْ اَعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ خَاوِيَةٍ ۝٧

8 So canst thou see a remnant of them ?

فَهَلْ تَرٰى لَهُمْ مِّنْۢ بَاقِيَةٍ ۝٨

9 And Pharaoh and those before him and the overthrown cities wrought evil.[2553a]

وَجَآءَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَنْ قَبْلَهٗ وَالْمُؤْتَفِكٰتُ بِالْخَاطِئَةِ ۝٩

10 And they disobeyed the messenger of their Lord, so He punished them with a vehement punishment.

فَعَصَوْا رَسُوْلَ رَبِّهِمْ فَاَخَذَهُمْ اَخْذَةً رَّابِيَةً ۝١٠

11 Surely We carried you in the ship,[2553b] when the water rose high,

اِنَّا لَمَّا طَغَا الْمَآءُ حَمَلْنٰكُمْ فِي الْجَارِيَةِ ۝١١

12 That We might make it a reminder for you, and that the retaining ear might retain it.

لِنَجْعَلَهَا لَكُمْ تَذْكِرَةً وَّتَعِيَهَآ اُذُنٌ وَّاعِيَةٌ ۝١٢

13 So when the trumpet is blown with a single blast,

فَاِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّوْرِ نَفْخَةٌ وَّاحِدَةٌ ۝١٣

14 And the earth and the mountains are borne away and crushed with one crash —

وَّحُمِلَتِ الْاَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ فَدُكَّتَا دَكَّةً وَّاحِدَةً ۝١٤

15 On that day will the Event come to pass,[2554]

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ وَّقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ ۝١٥

2552 *Al-qāri'ah* is derived from *qar'*, which signifies *the striking of one thing over another* (R) ; hence *al-qāri'ah* is *the striking calamity* or *calamity that strikes terror into the hearts of the people* (Rz), and here it signifies the calamity of which 'Ād and Thamūd were warned, but which they called a lie.

2553 See 915 which deals fully with the nature of the punishment by which Thamūd was destroyed. As shown there it was an earthquake. *Al-ṭāghiyah* is derived from the root *ṭaghā*, meaning *he exceeded the limit* (LL), and means *an excessively severe punishment.*

2553a The *overthrown cities* are the cities of Lot ; see 11 : 82 and 1196.

2553b The reference is to Noah.

2554 The consequences of this Event are described in 56 : 3 ; see 2425, where it is shown that the Event, *al-Wāqi'ah*, signifies the doom of the opponents in this

16 And the heaven will be cleft asunder ; so that day it will be frail,

وَانْشَقَّتِ السَّمَآءُ فَهِيَ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَّاهِيَةٌ ﴿١٦﴾

17 And the angels will be on its sides. And above them eight will bear that day thy Lord's Throne of Power.[2555]

وَّالْمَلَكُ عَلٰٓى اَرْجَآئِهَا ۗ وَيَحْمِلُ عَرْشَ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمٰنِيَةٌ ﴿١٧﴾

18 On that day you will be exposed to view — no secret of yours will remain hidden.[2556]

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُعْرَضُوْنَ لَا تَخْفٰى مِنْكُمْ خَافِيَةٌ ﴿١٨﴾

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life, with a full manifestation in the life after death. The passing away of the earth and the mountains and their being crushed, signifies the fall of the small and great men in connection with that doom.

2555 The bearing of the Throne of Power on that day by *eight* is a point attended with some difficulty. In the first place, *above them* means *above the angels* spoken of in the previous verse (Rz). From this we may conclude that the eight bearers of the Throne of Power either represent something above the angels, or particular angels above the ordinary angels. It is noteworthy that the word *thamāniyah,* or *eight,* is not followed by any word showing who or what these eight are. The commentators generally suppose them to be angels, but the more cautious among them refrain from even specifying the number. Some say the meaning may be eight thousand, others say eight ranks (Kf). Kf adds: "And maybe these eight are from among the spirit or some other creation". Now the one thing that should be borne in mind in interpreting such allegorical words is that the Divine Being Himself is *al-Qayyūm,* or the *Self-Subsisting by Whom all things subsist* (2:255). This being taken as the basis, it is clear that other things are not a support for the Divine Being, but all created things, whether angels or any beings above angels, subsist by God. Another consideration which helps us in understanding what is meant by these bearers is a saying of the Holy Prophet, reported by all commentators, that at present such bearers are four (Rz, Kf, Bd). Now there are four attributes of the Divine Being which are specially connected with the maintenance of the world. The opening chapter of the Holy Qur'ān is, as shown in the preliminary note to that chapter, the essence of the whole of the Qur'ān, and that chapter speaks of four attributes of the Divine Being in connection with the maintenance of *al-'ālamīn,* i.e., *the whole of the creation.* These attributes are mentioned in the names *Rabb, Raḥmān, Raḥīm,* and *Mālik,* and a reference to the notes on these four words in the opening chapter will show that these four attributes, *providence, beneficence, mercy* and *requital,* are really the chief attributes which bring the creation to perfection and from which all other attributes may be inferred. These four are thus the Personal attributes of the Divine Being which precede all, encompass all, make all to attain to their goal of perfection and remain after all. Hence these are the four *ḥamalat al-'arsh,* or *the bearers of the Throne of Power,* so far as this world is concerned.

Why are they eight on the day of Resurrection ? The other world is a complete, but at the same time a new, manifestation of the spiritual realities of this life. Hence, there is a new manifestation of the four attributes of the Divine Being by which the world subsists, and thus these four attributes become eight on the day of Resurrection. To clear up any misunderstanding I may add that, as Divine attributes are brought into action through the agency of angels, the four or eight attributes that are considered the bearers of the Throne of Power would also be manifested through angels, and in this sense we may look upon the bearers of the *'Arsh* as being four or eight angels.

2556 This verse speaks clearly of the manifestation of the hidden realities on the day of Resurrection, referred to in the above note.

19 Then as for him who is given his book in his right hand, he will say: Lo! Read my book.

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَٰبَهُۥ بِيَمِينِهِۦ فَيَقُولُ هَآؤُمُ ٱقْرَءُوا۟ كِتَٰبِيَهْ ﴿١٩﴾

20 Surely I knew that I should meet my account.

إِنِّى ظَنَنتُ أَنِّى مُلَٰقٍ حِسَابِيَهْ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 So he will be in a life of bliss,

فَهُوَ فِى عِيشَةٍ رَّاضِيَةٍ ﴿٢١﴾

22 In a lofty Garden,

فِى جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 Its fruits are near.[2557]

قُطُوفُهَا دَانِيَةٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Eat and drink pleasantly for that which you sent on before in bygone days.

كُلُوا۟ وَٱشْرَبُوا۟ هَنِيٓـًٔا بِمَآ أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِى ٱلْأَيَّامِ ٱلْخَالِيَةِ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 And as for him who is given his book in his left hand — he will say: O would that my book had not been given to me!

وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَٰبَهُۥ بِشِمَالِهِۦ فَيَقُولُ يَٰلَيْتَنِى لَمْ أُوتَ كِتَٰبِيَهْ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 And I had not known what my account was!

وَلَمْ أَدْرِ مَا حِسَابِيَهْ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 O would that (death) had made an end (of me)![2558]

يَٰلَيْتَهَا كَانَتِ ٱلْقَاضِيَةَ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 My wealth has not availed me.

مَآ أَغْنَىٰ عَنِّى مَالِيَهْ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 My authority has gone from me.

هَلَكَ عَنِّى سُلْطَٰنِيَهْ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 Seize him, then fetter him,

خُذُوهُ فَغُلُّوهُ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 Then cast him into the burning Fire,

ثُمَّ ٱلْجَحِيمَ صَلُّوهُ ﴿٣١﴾

32 Then insert him in a chain the length of which is seventy cubits.[2559]

ثُمَّ فِى سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا فَٱسْلُكُوهُ ﴿٣٢﴾

2557 These fruits are the manifestation of the fruits of righteous deeds. They are here spoken of as being near so that they are available in this life too.

2558 He would wish that death had made an end of him, *it* referring to *death*. Or the meaning may be that *this state had been my death*, or *that the life of the world had never come to pass.*

2559 It should be noted that in these verses the spiritual torture of this world is represented as a physical punishment in the next. The chain to be put upon the neck, for instance, represents the desires of this world, which keep a man with his head bent upon the earth, and it is these desires that will assume the shape of a chain. Similarly, the entanglements of this world shall be seen as chains on the feet. The heart-burnings of this world will likewise be clearly seen as flames of burning fire. The wicked one has, in fact, in this very world within himself a hell of the passions and inextinguishable desires of this world, and feels the burning of that hell in the failures he encounters. When, therefore, he is cast farther off from his temporal desires and sees an everlasting despair before him, his heart-burnings and bitter sighs for his dear desires assume the shape of burning Fire.

The casting into a chain of the length of seventy cubits is significant. Man's limit of age may as a general rule be fixed at seventy, and a wicked person may live up to that age in his wickedness. He may sometimes even enjoy seventy

33 Surely he believed not in Allāh, the Great,

إِنَّهُ كَانَ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللّٰهِ الْعَظِيْمِ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 Nor did he urge the feeding of the poor.

وَلَا يَحُضُّ عَلٰى طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِيْنِ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 Therefore he has not here this day a true friend,

فَلَيْسَ لَهُ الْيَوْمَ هٰهُنَا حَمِيْمٌ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 Nor any food except refuse,[2560]

وَّلَا طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ غِسْلِيْنٍ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 Which none but the wrongdoers eat.

لَّا يَأْكُلُهُ إِلَّا الْخَاطِئُوْنَ ﴿٣٧﴾

SECTION 2 : **False Allegations refuted**

38 But nay ! I swear by that which you see,

فَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِمَا تُبْصِرُوْنَ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 And that which you see not !

وَمَا لَا تُبْصِرُوْنَ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 Surely, it is the word of an honoured Messenger,

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُوْلٍ كَرِيْمٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 And it is not the word of a poet. Little is it that you believe !

وَّمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَاعِرٍ ۭ قَلِيْلًا مَّا تُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٤١﴾

42 Nor the word of a soothsayer. Little is it that you mind !

وَلَا بِقَوْلِ كَاهِنٍ ۭ قَلِيْلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 It is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds.

تَنْزِيْلٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 And if he had fabricated against Us certain sayings,

وَلَوْ تَقَوَّلَ عَلَيْنَا بَعْضَ الْأَقَاوِيْلِ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 We would certainly have seized him by the right hand,

لَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُ بِالْيَمِيْنِ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 Then cut off his heart's vein.

ثُمَّ لَقَطَعْنَا مِنْهُ الْوَتِيْنَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 And not one of you could have withheld Us from him.[2561]

فَمَا مِنْكُمْ مِّنْ أَحَدٍ عَنْهُ حٰجِزِيْنَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And surely it is a Reminder for the dutiful.

وَإِنَّهُ لَتَذْكِرَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿٤٨﴾

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years, excluding the periods of childhood and decrepitude. These seventy years during which he could work with honesty, wisdom and zeal are wasted away only in the entanglements of the world, and in following sensual passions. He does not try to free himself from the chain of desires, and therefore in the next world the desires which he indulged in for seventy years will be embodied into a chain of seventy cubits length, every cubit representing, as it were, a year.

2560 Literally *ghislīn* signifies that which is *washed off*, to which the commentators add *from the bodies of the disbelievers*. It may be rendered as *refuse* or *filth*.

2561 This verse and the three preceding it show that one who fabricates Divine revelation does not prosper. Compare Deut. 18:20, where the prophecy of the advent of a Prophet like Moses is followed by the words: "But the Prophet which shall presume to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet

49 And We certainly know that some of you are rejectors.

وَإِنَّا لَنَعْلَمُ أَنَّ مِنْكُمْ مُّكَذِّبِيْنَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 And it is indeed a (source of) grief to the disbelievers.[2562]

وَإِنَّهُ لَحَسْرَةٌ عَلَى الْكٰفِرِيْنَ ﴿٥٠﴾

51 And surely it is the certain Truth.[2563]

وَإِنَّهُ لَحَقُّ الْيَقِيْنِ ﴿٥١﴾

52 So glorify the name of thy Lord, the Incomparably Great.

فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيْمِ ﴿٥٢﴾

shall die". Jesus' words in Matt. 7:19: "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire", after comparing a false prophet with a corrupt tree that does not bring forth good fruit, point to a like effect.

2562 Because the punishment of which it warns them must overtake them.

2563 The *ḥaqq al-yaqīn, true certainty* or *certain truth* of this verse, is the same as *al-ḥāqqah* of the opening verse. The ultimate triumph of Truth is a certain truth.

CHAPTER 70

Al-Ma'ārij: THE WAYS OF ASCENT

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 2 *sections*; 44 *verses*)

The title of this chapter is taken from v. 3, where Allāh is called the Lord of *The Ways of Ascent*. While holding out the certainty of the punishment, this chapter points out at first that great ends are achieved in a long period of time. Towards the close of the first section we are told that the *ways* or *means of Ascent* are those by which the faithful attain nearness to the Divine Being. The second section speaks very clearly of the disgrace which the opponents shall meet with, a new nation being raised in their place.

The revelation of this chapter is considered by all authorities to be not later than the close of the early Makkan period.

SECTION 1 **Certainty of the Punishment**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 A questioner asks about the chastisement to befall

سَاَلَ سَآئِلٌۢ بِعَذَابٍ وَّاقِعٍ ۙ﴿۱﴾

2 The disbelievers — there is none to avert it — [2564]

لِّلْكٰفِرِيْنَ لَيْسَ لَهٗ دَافِعٌ ۙ﴿۲﴾

3 From Allāh, Lord of the ways of Ascent.[2565]

مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ذِى الْمَعَارِجِ ؕ﴿۳﴾

4 To Him ascend the angels and the Spirit in a day the measure of which is fifty thousand years.[2566]

تَعْرُجُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ وَالرُّوْحُ اِلَيْهِ فِىْ يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهٗ خَمْسِيْنَ اَلْفَ سَنَةٍ ۚ﴿۴﴾

2564 No particular questioner need be specified. The last chapter speaks in terms of the highest certainty of the final triumph of Truth and of the doom of the opponents, and the question, *When will it be?* was natural. It is repeated very often: "When will this promise be fulfilled if you are truthful?" (36:48; 67:25; &c.).

2565 The Divine Being is here stated to be the Lord of the ways of Ascent

2566, see next page.

5 So be patient with a goodly patience.

فَاصْبِرْ صَبْرًا جَمِيلًا ٥

6 Surely they see it far off,

إِنَّهُمْ يَرَوْنَهُ بَعِيدًا ٦

7 And We see it nigh.

وَنَرَاهُ قَرِيبًا ٧

8 The day when the heaven is as molten brass,

يَوْمَ تَكُونُ السَّمَاءُ كَالْمُهْلِ ٨

9 And the mountains are as wool;

وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ ٩

10 And no friend will ask of friend,

وَلَا يَسْأَلُ حَمِيمٌ حَمِيمًا ١٠

11 (Though) they are made to see them. The guilty one would fain redeem himself from the chastisement of that day by his children,

يُبَصَّرُونَهُمْ ۚ يَوَدُّ الْمُجْرِمُ لَوْ يَفْتَدِي مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمِئِذٍ بِبَنِيهِ ١١

12 And his wife and his brother,

وَصَاحِبَتِهِ وَأَخِيهِ ١٢

13 And his kin that gave him shelter,

وَفَصِيلَتِهِ الَّتِي تُؤْوِيهِ ١٣

14 And all that are in the earth — then deliver him —

وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ يُنْجِيهِ ١٤

15 By no means! Surely it is a flaming Fire,

كَلَّا ۖ إِنَّهَا لَظَىٰ ١٥

16 Plucking out the extremities —

نَزَّاعَةً لِلشَّوَىٰ ١٦

17 It shall claim him who retreats and turns his back,

تَدْعُو مَنْ أَدْبَرَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ١٧

18 And hoards then withholds.

وَجَمَعَ فَأَوْعَىٰ ١٨

19 Surely man is created impatient —

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ خُلِقَ هَلُوعًا ١٩

20 Fretful when evil afflicts him,

إِذَا مَسَّهُ الشَّرُّ جَزُوعًا ٢٠

21 And niggardly when good befalls him —

وَإِذَا مَسَّهُ الْخَيْرُ مَنُوعًا ٢١

22 Except those who pray,

إِلَّا الْمُصَلِّينَ ٢٢

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as indicating that He grants to the faithful the means of Ascent, or the means of exaltation. Compare 56:3, where the Event is spoken of as *abasing, exalting*. The means of exaltation of the believers are pointed out further on in vv. 22-35.

The angels and the Spirit are spoken of here as ascending to God in a day of fifty thousand years. *Al-Rūḥ* or the *Spirit* very often stands for Divine revelation or Gabriel, who brings the revelation to the Prophet. But here it seems to be a collective name for the spirits of the faithful, because it is through Divine revelation that a new spirit is awakened in the faithful; see 2651. The angels are mentioned along with the faithful because it is through an angel that spiritual life is breathed into man, and he starts life as a spiritual wayfarer. A day of the spiritual advancement of man is spoken of as being equal to fifty thousand years to show the immense vastness of that advancement. Or, the day of fifty thousand years may be the day of the final triumph of Truth in the world, from the time when revelation was first granted to man.

23 Who are constant at their prayer,

الذين هم على صلاتهم دآئمون ٢٣

24 And in whose wealth there is a known right

والذين فى أموالهم حق معلوم ٢٤

25 For the beggar and the destitute,

للسآئل والمحروم ٢٥

26 And those who accept the truth of the day of Judgment :

والذين يصدقون بيوم الدين ٢٦

27 And those who are fearful of the chastisement of their Lord —

والذين هم من عذاب ربهم مشفقون ٢٧

28 Surely the chastisement of their Lord is (a thing) not to be felt secure from —

إن عذاب ربهم غير مأمون ٢٨

29 And those who restrain their sexual passions,

والذين هم لفروجهم حفظون ٢٩

30 Except in the presence of their mates or those whom their right hands possess —[2566a] for such surely are not to be blamed,

إلا على أزواجهم أو ما ملكت أيمانهم فإنهم غير ملومين ٣٠

31 But he who seeks to go beyond this, these are the transgressors.

فمن ابتغى ورآء ذلك فأولئك هم العادون ٣١

32 And those who are faithful to their trusts and their covenant,

والذين هم لأمنتهم وعهدهم رعون ٣٢

33 And those who are upright in their testimonies,

والذين هم بشهدتهم قآئمون ٣٣

34 And those who keep a guard on their prayer.

والذين هم على صلاتهم يحافظون ٣٤

35 These are in Gardens, honoured.

أولئك فى جنت مكرمون ٣٥

SECTION 2 : **A New Nation to be raised up**

36 But what is the matter with those who disbelieve, that they hasten on to thee,[2566b]

فمال الذين كفروا قبلك مهطعين ٣٦

37 On the right hand and on the left, in sundry parties ?

عن اليمين وعن الشمال عزين ٣٧

38 Does every man of them desire to be admitted to the Garden of bliss?

أيطمع كل امرئ منهم أن يدخل جنة نعيم ٣٨

2566a See 1714, 1715.

2566b Nearly the same words — *hastening to the Inviter* — occur in 54:8 ; see 2392. Here and in the verses that follow is a description of the time when these very opponents would be hastening on to the Prophet, accepting the truth. V. 38 makes it further clear: Does every man of them desire that he should be made to enter the Garden of bliss ?

39 By no means! Surely We have created them for what they know.[2566c]

كَلَّا ۖ إِنَّا خَلَقْنٰهُمْ مِّمَّا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 But nay! I swear by the Lord of the Eastern lands and the Western lands! that We are certainly Powerful

فَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِرَبِّ الْمَشٰرِقِ وَالْمَغٰرِبِ إِنَّا لَقٰدِرُوْنَ ﴿٤٠﴾

41 To bring in their place (others) better than them, and We shall not be overcome.[2567]

عَلٰٓى أَنْ نُّبَدِّلَ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ ۙ وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَسْبُوْقِيْنَ ﴿٤١﴾

42 So leave them alone to plunge in vain talk and to sport, until they come face to face with that day of theirs which they are promised —

فَذَرْهُمْ يَخُوْضُوْا وَيَلْعَبُوْا حَتّٰى يُلٰقُوْا يَوْمَهُمُ الَّذِيْ يُوْعَدُوْنَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 The day when they come forth from the graves in haste, as hastening on to a goal,

يَوْمَ يَخْرُجُوْنَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ سِرَاعًا كَأَنَّهُمْ إِلٰى نُصُبٍ يُّوْفِضُوْنَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 Their eyes cast down, disgrace covering them. Such is the day which they are promised.[2568]

خَاشِعَةً أَبْصَارُهُمْ تَرْهَقُهُمْ ذِلَّةٌ ۗ ذٰلِكَ الْيَوْمُ الَّذِيْ كَانُوْا يُوْعَدُوْنَ ﴿٤٤﴾

2566c What is negatived here is the fact that the evildoers can enter the Garden of bliss. *Min* in *minmā* (originally *min mā*) signifies *ajal* or the *end* for which man has been created. It is to rise above sin, to be able to ascend to God, the Lord of the ways of Ascent; see 2565. The Garden of bliss stands clearly for the Ascension of man to God which is the real object of his life.

2567 Note the clear prophecy that an evil generation will be brought to naught and another people, the righteous, shall inherit the land. The old order will be changed and a new order established instead of that.

2568 Vv. 43 and 44 give us a clear statement as to the final triumph of Truth and the overthrow of opposition or the triumph of righteousness over the powers of evil. Being spiritually dead, their very homes were graves in a metaphorical sense. As in almost all sūrahs of this period, the final triumph of Truth runs along as an undercurrent in the mention of Resurrection.

سُورَةُ نُوحٍ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٧١)

اٰيَاتُهَا ٢٨ — رُكُوْعَاتُهَا ٢

CHAPTER 71

Nūḥ : NOAH

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 2 *sections*; 28 *verses*)

The threat of certain punishment contained in the last chapter is herein followed by an example. The entire chapter is devoted to the preaching of *Noah*, after whom it is named, and his prayer that the transgressors may be destroyed, so that evil may not prosper on earth, the two subjects being dealt with respectively in the two sections. As regards the date of revelation, the chapter may be placed in the first Makkan period.

SECTION 1 **Noah preaches**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Surely We sent Noah to his people, saying: Warn thy people before there come to them a painful chastisement.

إِنَّآ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوْحًا إِلٰى قَوْمِهٖٓ أَنْ أَنْذِرْ قَوْمَكَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَّأْتِيَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيْمٌ ﴿١﴾

2 He said: O my people, surely I am a plain warner to you:

قَالَ يٰقَوْمِ إِنِّيْ لَكُمْ نَذِيْرٌ مُّبِيْنٌ ﴿٢﴾

3 That you should serve Allāh and keep your duty to Him and obey me —

أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ وَاتَّقُوْهُ وَأَطِيْعُوْنِ ﴿٣﴾

4 He will forgive you some of your sins and grant you respite to an appointed term. Surely the term of Allāh, when it comes, is not postponed. Did you but know!

يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ مِّنْ ذُنُوْبِكُمْ وَيُؤَخِّرْكُمْ إِلٰٓى أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۭ إِنَّ أَجَلَ اللّٰهِ إِذَا جَآءَ لَا يُؤَخَّرُ ۘ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٤﴾

5 He said: My Lord, I have called my people night and day:

قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّيْ دَعَوْتُ قَوْمِيْ لَيْلًا وَّنَهَارًا ﴿٥﴾

6 But my call has only made them flee the more.[2569]

فَلَمْ يَزِدْهُمْ دُعَاۤءِیْۤ اِلَّا فِرَارًا ﴿٦﴾

7 And whenever I call to them that Thou mayest forgive them, they thrust their fingers in their ears and cover themselves with their garments,[2570] and persist and are big with pride.

وَاِنِّیْ كُلَّمَا دَعَوْتُهُمْ لِتَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ جَعَلُوْۤا اَصَابِعَهُمْ فِیْۤ اٰذَانِهِمْ وَاسْتَغْشَوْا ثِيَابَهُمْ وَاَصَرُّوْا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا اسْتِكْبَارًا ﴿٧﴾

8 Then surely I have called to them aloud,

ثُمَّ اِنِّیْ دَعَوْتُهُمْ جِهَارًا ﴿٨﴾

9 Then spoken to them in public and spoken to them in private,

ثُمَّ اِنِّیْۤ اَعْلَنْتُ لَهُمْ وَاَسْرَرْتُ لَهُمْ اِسْرَارًا ﴿٩﴾

10 So I have said: Ask forgiveness of your Lord; surely He is ever Forgiving:

فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوْا رَبَّكُمْ اِنَّهٗ كَانَ غَفَّارًا ﴿١٠﴾

11 He will send down upon you rain, pouring in abundance,

يُّرْسِلِ السَّمَاۤءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِّدْرَارًا ﴿١١﴾

12 And help you with wealth and sons, and make for you gardens, and make for you rivers.[2571]

وَّيُمْدِدْكُمْ بِاَمْوَالٍ وَّبَنِيْنَ وَيَجْعَلْ لَّكُمْ جَنّٰتٍ وَّيَجْعَلْ لَّكُمْ اَنْهٰرًا ﴿١٢﴾

13 What is the matter with you that you hope not for greatness from Allāh?[2572]

مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُوْنَ لِلّٰهِ وَقَارًا ﴿١٣﴾

14 And indeed He has created you by various stages.[2573]

وَقَدْ خَلَقَكُمْ اَطْوَارًا ﴿١٤﴾

15 See you not how Allāh has created the seven heavens alike,

اَلَمْ تَرَوْا كَيْفَ خَلَقَ اللّٰهُ سَبْعَ سَمٰوٰتٍ طِبَاقًا ﴿١٥﴾

16 And made the moon therein a light, and made the sun a lamp?

وَّجَعَلَ الْقَمَرَ فِيْهِنَّ نُوْرًا وَّجَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ سِرَاجًا ﴿١٦﴾

2569 The meaning is, *the more I call them, the more they flee.* The call is not the immediate and effective cause of their flight, which is really due to the stubbornness of their hearts. This is made clear in what follows. Exactly in the same sense a chapter of the Qur'ān is spoken of as "adding uncleanness" to the uncleanness of those in whose hearts is a disease (9:125); and on another occasion, exactly in the same sense, Allāh is spoken of as *adding* to the disease of those in whose hearts is a disease (2:10).

2570 Covering themselves with garments is explained variously: They put *them* (i.e., their garments) *as a covering over their ears, and this denotes their holding back from giving ear;* another explanation is that it is *an allusion* to running away (R). Some take thiyāb as meaning *the heart,* as in 74:4, the meaning being that *they cover their hearts,* refusing to ponder over what is said.

2571 They are promised various blessings, if they turn to Allāh, which really means that their doom shall be averted, for nations are no doubt destroyed when

2572, 2573, see next page.

17 And Allāh has caused you to grow out of the earth as a growth,[2574]

وَاللّٰهُ اَنْۢبَتَكُمْ مِّنَ الْاَرْضِ نَبَاتًا ﴿١٧﴾

18 Then He returns you to it, then will He bring you forth a (new) bringing forth.[2575]

ثُمَّ يُعِيْدُكُمْ فِيْهَا وَيُخْرِجُكُمْ اِخْرَاجًا ﴿١٨﴾

19 And Allāh has made the earth a wide expanse for you,

وَاللّٰهُ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْاَرْضَ بِسَاطًا ﴿١٩﴾

20 That you may go along therein in spacious paths.[2576]

لِّتَسْلُكُوْا مِنْهَا سُبُلًا فِجَاجًا ﴿٢٠﴾

SECTION 2 : **Destruction of Transgressors**

21 Noah said : My Lord, surely they disobey me and follow him whose wealth and children have increased him in naught but loss.

قَالَ نُوْحٌ رَّبِّ اِنَّهُمْ عَصَوْنِيْ وَاتَّبَعُوْا مَنْ لَّمْ يَزِدْهُ مَالُهٗ وَوَلَدُهٗۤ اِلَّا خَسَارًا ﴿٢١﴾

22 And they have planned a mighty plan.

وَمَكَرُوْا مَكْرًا كُبَّارًا ﴿٢٢﴾

23 And they say : Forsake not your gods ; nor forsake Wadd, nor Suwā', nor Yaghūth and Ya'ūq and Nasr.[2577]

وَقَالُوْا لَا تَذَرُنَّ اٰلِهَتَكُمْ وَلَا تَذَرُنَّ وَدًّا وَّلَا سُوَاعًا ۙ وَّلَا يَغُوْثَ وَيَعُوْقَ وَنَسْرًا ﴿٢٣﴾

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they indulge in evil inordinately, and they prosper so long as their good qualities preponderate.

2572 This is the Prophet's address to an evil generation. They are told that they can rise to greatness by giving up their evil ways.

2573 The words undoubtedly speak of the evolution of man. The commentators generally take them to refer to the various conditions through which the foetus passes. But that they imply that man has been brought to the present state of physical perfection after passing through various conditions, is made clear by v. 17 where the first stage is spoken of as a growth from the earth.

2574 Note here again that man is described as having grown out of the earth as a growth, i.e., by a process of development. This is no doubt true, even in the process of creation, which we daily observe working before our eyes. Vegetables grow out of the earth: from these man obtains food, and from the food which he eats is produced the life-germ, which itself goes through a further process of development. But the reference in this growth, and in the stages spoken of in v. 14, is to that great process of development through which man has attained to the present stage of physical perfection.

2575 The new bringing forth is in reference to the Resurrection. It is called a new growth to show that it is not the same as man's life on this earth but a new life, the life Spiritual. This growth begins in this life, but a complete manifestation of it takes place in the Resurrection.

2576 The spacious paths made for man's earthly existence are an indication of the spiritual paths wherein God-fearing man attains to spiritual perfection. But the mention of spacious paths is also to show that the making of spacious roads is necessary for human civilization.

2577 The names of the idols given here are those which existed in Arabia in the Prophet's time, and hence some critics call it an anachronism. But it should be noted that the Holy Qur'ān, while relating the histories of previous prophets, often introduces the Prophet's own history. The same is the case here. We have already seen that, while speaking of Noah, the Holy Qur'an addresses the Prophet's

24 And indeed they have led many astray. And increase Thou the wrongdoers in naught but perdition.[2578]

وَقَدْ أَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا ۚ وَلَا تَزِدِ
الظّٰلِمِينَ إِلَّا ضَلٰلًا ﴿٢٤﴾

25 Because of their wrongs they were drowned, then made to enter Fire, so they found no helpers besides Allāh.

مِمَّا خَطِيٓـٰٔتِهِمْ أُغْرِقُوا فَأُدْخِلُوا
نَارًا ۙ فَلَمْ يَجِدُوا لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ
اللّٰهِ أَنْصَارًا ﴿٢٥﴾

26 And Noah said : My Lord, leave not of the disbelievers any dweller on the land.[2579]

وَقَالَ نُوحٌ رَّبِّ لَا تَذَرْ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ
مِنَ الْكٰفِرِينَ دَيَّارًا ﴿٢٦﴾

27 For if Thou leave them, they will lead astray Thy servants, and will not beget any but immoral, ungrateful ones.

إِنَّكَ إِنْ تَذَرْهُمْ يُضِلُّوا عِبَادَكَ
وَلَا يَلِدُوٓا إِلَّا فَاجِرًا كَفَّارًا ﴿٢٧﴾

28 My Lord, forgive me and my parents and him who enters my house believing, and the believing men and the believing women. And increase not the wrongdoers in aught but destruction !

رَّبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوٰلِدَيَّ وَلِمَنْ
دَخَلَ بَيْتِيَ مُؤْمِنًا وَّلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتِ ۖ وَلَا تَزِدِ الظّٰلِمِينَ إِلَّا تَبَارًا ﴿٢٨﴾

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opponents in vv. 13-20. V. 21 again speaks of Noah, beginning with the words, *Noah said.* Similarly v. 26 begins with the words, *Noah said,* showing that in the intermediate verses there is a reversion to the Prophet's own history, and what is related here is with regard to the Arabs. Even if these verses be taken as referring to Noah, there is no anachronism. Look at any idol-worshipping nation ; take the Hindus, for example, and you find the same names of idols going on through thousands of years. And yet Arabia was not more distantly situated from the territory of Noah's people than are any two parts of India from each other. Moreover, there is reason to believe that the Arabs obtained most of their idols from foreign countries. Thus Hubal, the chief Arab idol in the Ka'bah, "was brought from Belka in Syria into Arabia by 'Amr ibn Loḥay, pretending that it would procure them rain when they wanted it" ; Usāf and Nā'ilah are also said to have been brought from Syria (Sale's Preliminary Discourse, sec. 1). There is nothing strange, therefore, in the circumstances, that the Arab idols were imported from some ancient nations. According to I'Ab, the idols of Noah's people were worshipped by the Arabs, Wadd being worshipped by Kalb, Suwā' by Hudhail, Yaghūth by Murād, Ya'ūq by Hamadān and Nasr by Ḥimyar (B. 65 : lxxi, 1). The commentators say that Wadd was worshipped in the form of a man, Suwā' in that of a woman, Yaghūth in that of a lion, Ya'ūq in that of a horse and Nasr in that of an eagle (Rz).

2578 They only went on adding wrongs to their wrongs, hence the prayer of the messenger to increase them in naught but perdition. In fact, they were bringing perdition on their heads with their own hands. *Ḍalāl* means *error* as well as *loss* or *perdition* (LL).

2579 Noah was speaking only of his own people and praying against them only. All his statements and prayers refer to them, and not to the whole world. Hence *al-arḍ* simply signifies *the land* in which they lived.

سُورَةُ الْجِنِّ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٧٢) آياتها ٢٨ ركوعاتها ٢

CHAPTER 72

Al-Jinn: **THE JINN**

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 2 *sections;* 28 *verses*)

This chapter speaks of the protection which is granted to the prophets against their enemies, and the subject, hinted at in v. 8 of the first section, is made clear in the second section. The title is taken from the mention in v. 1 of certain believers in the Holy Prophet's truth called *jinn.*

The revelation of this chapter is generally ascribed to the time of the Holy Prophet's return from Ṭā'if, which took place two years before the Hijrah, and thus the chapter belongs to a time when opposition had reached its climax. Abū Ṭālib and Khadījah had passed away; a ban had been put in force against the Prophet and the families of Hāshim and 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib; some believers had fled to Abyssinia, and those that remained were severely persecuted; the Quraish were deaf to all preaching and warning, and, finally, a visit to Ṭā'if had resulted only in adding to the circumstances which would have most assuredly driven an ordinary individual to despair. In these circumstances an assurance was sorely needed, and a very emphatic assurance is given in this chapter. But beyond an assurance, we are told here that there are other people, yet hidden from the eye — hence the title, *The Jinn* — who would accept the message of the Holy Qur'ān. This unquestionably foreshadowed its vast conquests outside Arabia, and in the distant future.

SECTION 1 **Foreign Believers**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Say: It has been revealed to me that a party of the jinn[2580] listened, so they said: Surely we have heard a wonderful Qur'ān,

قُلْ أُوْحِيَ إِلَيَّ أَنَّهُ اسْتَمَعَ نَفَرٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَقَالُوْٓا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْاٰنًا عَجَبًا ①

2580 The existence of *jinn,* or ethereal beings like the angels (the former being the spirits of evil and the latter the spirits of good), is a question quite

2 Guiding to the right way — so we believe in it. And we shall not set up any one with our Lord :

يَّهْدِيْٓ اِلَى الرُّشْدِ فَاٰمَنَّا بِهٖ ۭ وَلَنْ نُّشْرِكَ بِرَبِّنَآ اَحَدًا ۝۲

3 And He — exalted be the majesty of our Lord ! — has not taken a consort, nor a son :[2581]

وَّاَنَّهٗ تَعٰلٰى جَدُّ رَبِّنَا مَا اتَّخَذَ صَاحِبَةً وَّلَا وَلَدًا ۝۳

4 And the foolish among us used to forge extravagant lies against Allāh:

وَّاَنَّهٗ كَانَ يَقُوْلُ سَفِيْهُنَا عَلَى اللّٰهِ شَطَطًا ۝۴

5 And we thought that men and jinn did not utter a lie against Allāh :

وَّاَنَّا ظَنَنَّآ اَنْ لَّنْ تَقُوْلَ الْاِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَى اللّٰهِ كَذِبًا ۝۵

6 And persons from among men used to seek refuge with persons from among the jinn, so they increased them in evil doing :[2581a]

وَّاَنَّهٗ كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِّنَ الْاِنْسِ يَعُوْذُوْنَ بِرِجَالٍ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَزَادُوْهُمْ رَهَقًا ۝۶

7 And they thought, as you think, that Allāh would not raise anyone :

وَّاَنَّهُمْ ظَنُّوْا كَمَا ظَنَنْتُمْ اَنْ لَّنْ يَّبْعَثَ اللّٰهُ اَحَدًا ۝۷

8 And we sought to reach heaven, but we found it filled with strong guards and flames :[2582]

وَّاَنَّا لَمَسْنَا السَّمَآءَ فَوَجَدْنٰهَا مُلِئَتْ حَرَسًا شَدِيْدًا وَّشُهُبًا ۝۸

9 And we used to sit in some of the sitting-places thereof to steal a hearing. But he who tries to listen now finds a flame lying in wait for him :

وَّاَنَّا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ مِنْهَا مَقَاعِدَ لِلسَّمْعِ ۭ فَمَنْ يَّسْتَمِعِ الْاٰنَ يَجِدْ لَهٗ شِهَابًا رَّصَدًا ۝۹

10 And we know not whether evil

وَّاَنَّا لَا نَدْرِيْٓ اَشَرٌّ اُرِيْدَ بِمَنْ

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distinct, but it is clear that the jinn spoken of here did not belong to this class ; see 822 for full explanation of the word. The jinn are also referred to in 46:29-31, where they are made to say: "O our people, we have listened to a Book revealed after Moses, verifying that which is before it". This shows that they were Jews. The jinn spoken of here are evidently Christians, as v. 3 shows.

2581 The words of this verse are a clear indication that the persons spoken of here are Christians. That both Jews and Christians living outside Arabia accepted the message of Truth brought by the Prophet is a fact. But from what is stated further on it appears that the reference here is to future Christian nations, and the words here are prophetical, speaking of some future time when Christian nations forming *the bulk of mankind* — such being one of the significances of the word *jinn* (LL) — will accept the truth of the message brought by the Prophet. At any rate the prophetical in these words, whether relating to the near or distant future, is clearly hinted at in the opening words of the verse — *It has been revealed to me that a party of the jinn listened.*

2581a The jinn and men of this verse are undoubtedly the leaders of evil and iniquity and the weaker ones in intellect who followed them blindly ; see 822.

2582 By *reaching heaven* is meant *learning secrets of the heaven.* The reference may be to the diviners and astrologers among them, for which see

is meant for those on earth or whether their Lord means to direct them aright :[2583]

فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا ﴿١٠﴾

11 And some of us are good and others of us are below that — we are sects following different ways :

وَأَنَّا مِنَّا الصَّالِحُونَ وَمِنَّا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ ۖ كُنَّا طَرَائِقَ قِدَدًا ﴿١١﴾

12 And we know that we cannot escape Allāh in the earth, nor can we escape Him by flight :

وَأَنَّا ظَنَنَّا أَنْ لَنْ نُعْجِزَ اللَّهَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَنْ نُعْجِزَهُ هَرَبًا ﴿١٢﴾

13 And when we heard the guidance, we believed in it. So whoever believes in his Lord, he fears neither loss nor injustice :

وَأَنَّا لَمَّا سَمِعْنَا الْهُدَىٰ آمَنَّا بِهِ ۖ فَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِرَبِّهِ فَلَا يَخَافُ بَخْسًا وَلَا رَهَقًا ﴿١٣﴾

14 And some of us are those who submit, and some of us are deviators. So whoever submits, these aim at the right way.

وَأَنَّا مِنَّا الْمُسْلِمُونَ وَمِنَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ ۖ فَمَنْ أَسْلَمَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ تَحَرَّوْا رَشَدًا ﴿١٤﴾

15 And as to deviators, they are fuel of hell :

وَأَمَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَكَانُوا لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا ﴿١٥﴾

16 And if they keep to the (right) way, We would certainly give them to drink of abundant water,[2583a]

وَأَنْ لَوِ اسْتَقَامُوا عَلَى الطَّرِيقَةِ لَأَسْقَيْنَاهُمْ مَاءً غَدَقًا ﴿١٦﴾

17 So that We may try them thereby. And whoever turns away from the reminder of his Lord, He will make him enter into an afflicting chastisement :

لِنَفْتِنَهُمْ فِيهِ ۚ وَمَنْ يُعْرِضْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ رَبِّهِ يَسْلُكْهُ عَذَابًا صَعَدًا ﴿١٧﴾

18 And the mosques are Allāh's, so call not upon any one with Allāh :

وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا ﴿١٨﴾

19 And when the Servant of Allāh stood up praying to Him, they well-nigh crowded him (to death).[2584]

وَأَنَّهُ لَمَّا قَامَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ يَدْعُوهُ كَادُوا يَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِ لِبَدًا ﴿١٩﴾

2101-2104, but more likely it is a prophetical reference to the great scientific discoveries of the modern age relating to heaven.

2583 These words seem to refer to the great tribulations which are meant to direct man's attention to spiritual truth.

2583a By *abundance of water* is meant according to Mujāhid *abundant wealth* (IJ).

2584 The servant of Allāh is the Holy Prophet Muḥammad.

SECTION 2: **Protection of Revelation**

20 Say: I only call upon my Lord, and associate naught with Him.

قُلْ إِنَّمَآ أَدْعُوا رَبِّي وَلَآ أُشْرِكُ بِهِۦٓ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Say: I control not evil nor good for you.

قُلْ إِنِّي لَآ أَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَّلَا رَشَدًا ﴿٢١﴾

22 Say: None can protect me against Allāh, nor can I find any refuge besides Him:

قُلْ إِنِّي لَن يُّجِيرَنِي مِنَ اللهِ أَحَدٌ ۥ وَّلَنْ أَجِدَ مِن دُونِهِۦ مُلْتَحَدًا ﴿٢٢﴾

23 (Mine is naught) but to deliver (the command) of Allāh and His messages. And whoever disobeys Allāh and His Messenger, surely for him is the Fire of hell, to abide therein for ages,

إِلَّا بَلٰغًا مِّنَ اللهِ وَرِسٰلٰتِهِۦ ۚ وَمَن يَّعْصِ اللهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ فَإِنَّ لَهُۥ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Till when they see that which they are promised, they will know who is weaker in helpers and less in numbers.[2585]

حَتّٰٓى إِذَا رَأَوْا مَا يُوعَدُونَ فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ أَضْعَفُ نَاصِرًا وَّأَقَلُّ عَدَدًا ﴿٢٤﴾

25 Say: I know not whether that which you are promised is nigh or if my Lord will appoint for it a distant term.

قُلْ إِنْ أَدْرِيٓ أَقَرِيبٌ مَّا تُوعَدُونَ أَمْ يَجْعَلُ لَهُۥ رَبِّيٓ أَمَدًا ﴿٢٥﴾

26 The Knower of the unseen, so He makes His secrets known to none,

عٰلِمُ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلٰى غَيْبِهِۦٓ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٦﴾

27 Except a messenger whom He chooses.[2586] For surely He makes a guard to go before him and after him,

إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضٰى مِن رَّسُولٍ فَإِنَّهُۥ يَسْلُكُ مِنۢ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِۦ رَصَدًا ﴿٢٧﴾

2585 As a human being left to himself without a friend, without helper, rejected at home and cruelly treated abroad (as he was at Ṭā'if, to which period this chapter belongs), he thus poured out his heart, in this state of utter helplessness. "O Lord, I make my complaint unto Thee of my helplessness and frailty and of my insignificance before mankind. But Thou art the Lord of the poor and feeble, and Thou art my Lord. Into whose hands wilt Thou abandon me? Into the hands of the strangers that beset me round about? Or of the enemy Thou hast given at home to have the mastery over me? . . . I seek for refuge in the light of Thy countenance . . ." (Muir in *Life of Muhammad*). Now contrast with it the revelation which he received just then, which speaks of the opponents of Truth who would soon be brought low — they will know who is weaker in helpers and less in numbers. The source of the Holy Prophet's revelation was other than his own heart, for the same heart could not simultaneously vent feelings of utter helplessness and weakness and those of unbounded confidence in his ultimate triumph.

2586 That the overthrow of opposition to the great message of Truth was certain is stated in v. 24. This is followed by a statement in v. 25 that the Prophet did not know whether this overthrow would come soon or whether it would come in the distant future, but Truth must triumph. And the law is stated

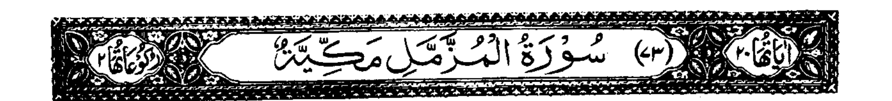
28 That He may know that they have truly delivered the messages of their Lord; and He encompasses what is with them, and He keeps account of all things.[2587]

لِّيَعْلَمَ أَن قَدْ أَبْلَغُوا رِسَٰلَٰتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَحَاطَ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ وَأَحْصَىٰ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عَدَدًا ﴿٢٨﴾

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now that God makes known His will, *the unseen*, the Truth, by His messenger, to convey that Truth to other people. It is God's message and it must be delivered in spite of all opposition. The Divine purpose is accomplished by sending a guard, before and after the messenger, to protect him against all onslaughts, as is made clear in the words that follow.

2587 Note the firm tone of these revelations under the disheartening circumstances to which attention has been drawn in 2585. Such words could not proceed from any but a Divine source — *the message must be delivered, Allāh encompasses all, nothing is out of His reach.*



CHAPTER 73

Al-Muzzammil: THE ONE COVERING HIMSELF UP

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 2 *sections*; 20 *verses*)

The chapter receives its title from the Holy Prophet's description in the first verse as one who had *covered himself up*. The various significances of that word are given in the footnote on that verse, but, having regard to the subject-matter of this chapter, which enjoins prayer, the word *Muzzammil* signifies *One who has prepared himself for prayer*. The chapter opens with an injunction to the Holy Prophet to pass the night in prayer, ending with a general injunction to all believers to be ever mindful of prayer. The latter part of the first section enjoins the Holy Prophet to bear patiently the ill-treatment of his enemies, who would soon receive their due punishment, as did Pharaoh when he wanted to destroy Moses. The previous chapter promises protection to the Prophet, and the Prophet is here told to seek that protection through prayer, especially prayer during the night.

The revelation of this chapter belongs to the early Makkan period, and the commentators generally think it to be one of the earliest revelations, being, according to some, the third in order of revelation. General opinion, however, represents the last verse, which forms the second section of this chapter, to have been revealed at Madīnah because fighting in the way of Allāh is mentioned there. But see 2595, where it is shown that the reference may be prophetical, and therefore that verse may also belong to the same early period.

SECTION 1 **The Prophet enjoined to pray**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful. — بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

1 O thou covering thyself up![2588] — يٰۤاَيُّهَا الْمُزَّمِّلُ ۙ﴿۱﴾

2 Rise to pray by night except a little, — قُمِ الَّيْلَ اِلَّا قَلِيْلًا ۙ﴿۲﴾

2588 *Zammala* means *he wrapped him in his garments*, and *tazammala, he wrapped himself up in his garments* (LL). The Prophet is here called *Muzzammil*, originally, *mutazammil, one who had wrapped himself up in his garments*. The ordinary explanation is that the Prophet wrapped himself up in his clothes on receiving the Call, his first revelation. He is reported to have come back home trembling after his first spiritual experience, and to have said to his wife *zammilū-nī, zammilū-nī, cover me, cover me* (B. 1:1). But various other

3 Half of it, or lessen it a little,

4 Or add to it, and recite the Qur'ān in a leisurely manner.

5 Surely We shall charge thee with a weighty word.[2589]

6 The rising by night is surely the firmest way to tread and most effective in speech.[2590]

7 Truly thou hast by day prolonged occupation.

8 And remember the name of thy Lord and devote thyself to Him with (complete) devotion.

9 The Lord of the East and the West — there is no God but He — so take Him for Protector.

10 And bear patiently what they say and forsake them with a becoming withdrawal.

11 And leave Me and the deniers, possessors of plenty, and respite them a little.

12 Surely with Us are heavy fetters and a flaming Fire,

13 And food that chokes and a painful chastisement.

14 On the day when the earth and the mountains quake and the mountains become (as) heaps of sand let loose.[2591]

15 Surely We have sent to you a

نِّصْفَهُ أَوِ انْقُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا ﴿٣﴾
أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا ﴿٤﴾
إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا ﴿٥﴾
إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْأً وَّأَقْوَمُ قِيلًا ﴿٦﴾
إِنَّ لَكَ فِي النَّهَارِ سَبْحًا طَوِيلًا ﴿٧﴾
وَاذْكُرِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلًا ﴿٨﴾
رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَاتَّخِذْهُ وَكِيلًا ﴿٩﴾
وَاصْبِرْ عَلَى مَا يَقُولُونَ وَاهْجُرْهُمْ هَجْرًا جَمِيلًا ﴿١٠﴾
وَذَرْنِي وَالْمُكَذِّبِينَ أُولِي النَّعْمَةِ وَمَهِّلْهُمْ قَلِيلًا ﴿١١﴾
إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنْكَالًا وَّجَحِيمًا ﴿١٢﴾
وَّطَعَامًا ذَا غُصَّةٍ وَّعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٣﴾
يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ وَكَانَتِ الْجِبَالُ كَثِيبًا مَّهِيلًا ﴿١٤﴾
إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ رَسُولًا ۵ شَاهِدًا

explanations are given and some take it as an allusion to his preparation for prayers. The Prophet's own words, as recorded in *Bukhārī,* make it clear that the reference here is to his covering himself up on receiving the first revelation. He is in fact told that he should not fear or tremble on account of the tremendous responsibility placed on him of reforming humanity, but should seek the help of God through prayer to Him, the most effective prayer being prayer in the night, when the world is asleep.

2589 Being burdened with the guidance of the whole world was indeed a weighty word, the weightiest word with which any human being has been charged in the whole history of humanity.

2590 The praying at night is here described as being firstly *the firmest way to tread* — to tread the way of *Life,* to tread upon all evil inclinations — and, secondly, *the most effective in speech* — what one says to other people becomes most effective. The speaker, the inviter to Truth, has his heart strengthened with force Divine through his lengthened devotions in the still of the night, and his

2591, see next page.

Messenger, a witness against you, as We sent a messenger to Pharaoh.[2592]

16 But Pharaoh disobeyed the messenger, so We seized him with a violent grip.

17 How, then, if you disbelieve, will you guard yourselves on the day which will make children grey-headed?

18 The heaven being rent asunder thereby. His promise is ever fulfilled.[2593]

19 Surely this is a Reminder; so let him, who will, take a way to his Lord.

عَلَيْكُمْ كَمَآ أَرْسَلْنَآ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ رَسُولًا ﴿١٥﴾
فَعَصَىٰ فِرْعَوْنُ الرَّسُولَ فَأَخَذْنَٰهُ أَخْذًا وَبِيلًا ﴿١٦﴾
فَكَيْفَ تَتَّقُونَ إِنْ كَفَرْتُمْ يَوْمًا يَجْعَلُ الْوِلْدَانَ شِيبًا ﴿١٧﴾
السَّمَآءُ مُنْفَطِرٌ بِهِ ۚ كَانَ وَعْدُهُ مَفْعُولًا ﴿١٨﴾
إِنَّ هَٰذِهِ تَذْكِرَةٌ ۚ فَمَنْ شَآءَ اتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا ﴿١٩﴾

SECTION 2 : **Prayer enjoined on Muslims**

20 Thy Lord knows indeed that thou passest in prayer nearly two-thirds of the night, and (sometimes) half of it, and (sometimes) a third of it, as do a party of those with thee. And Allāh measures the night and the day. He knows that (all of) you are not able to do it, so He has turned

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَقُومُ أَدْنَىٰ مِنْ ثُلُثَيِ الَّيْلِ وَنِصْفَهُ وَثُلُثَهُ وَطَآئِفَةٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ مَعَكَ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يُقَدِّرُ الَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ ۚ عَلِمَ أَنْ لَّنْ تُحْصُوهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاقْرَءُوا

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word therefore carries the Divine force with it and enters the hearts of those who listen to him. Thus the night devotion, we are told, gives a man the strength to do the greatest deeds and makes him perfect, giving him at the same time strength to make others perfect because his words, coming out of a sincere heart, which bows to none but God, carry conviction to the hearts of others. Thus was the Prophet fortified doubly, in his deeds as well as in his words, to carry his message to other people, and thus should his true followers try to get strength from the same Divine source in the dead of night, when all veils between man and God are removed by utter silence prevailing everywhere, the only cry being the cry of the devotee. The Divine light in its full brilliance then illumines the heart of man and the heart of man reflects that light and illumines the world.

2591 Vv. 12-14 speak of the wretched condition in which the present possessors of ease and plenty would find themselves, and how the great obstacles to the spread of truth would be removed before the advance of Truth; see 1604.

2592 The Holy Prophet's likeness to Moses is stated in the clearest terms in this, one of the earliest revelations, and thus the Holy Prophet's claim to be the promised prophet of Deut. 18:18, who is expressly stated to be the "*like*" of Moses, is as old as his revelation.

2593 Note the clear and decided tone of these verses, which at so early a period warned the opponents of the evil fate which they were destined to meet. The horrors of that day are spoken of as *making children grey-headed* and *rending heaven asunder*. The commentators admit that it is an allegorical description of the horrors of the day, for you say, speaking of a terrible day, that it is *a day*

to you (mercifully);[2594] so read of the Qur'ān that which is easy for you. He knows that there are sick among you, and others who travel in the land seeking of Allāh's bounty, and others who fight in Allāh's way.[2595] So read as much of it as is easy (for you), and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and offer to Allāh a goodly gift. And whatever of good you send on beforehand for yourselves, you will find it with Allāh — that is best and greatest in reward. And ask forgiveness of Allāh. Surely Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful.

مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْاٰنِ ؕ عَلِمَ اَنْ
سَيَكُوْنُ مِنْكُمْ مَّرْضٰى ۙ وَ اٰخَرُوْنَ
يَضْرِبُوْنَ فِى الْاَرْضِ يَبْتَغُوْنَ مِنْ
فَضْلِ اللّٰهِ ۙ وَ اٰخَرُوْنَ يُقَاتِلُوْنَ فِىْ
سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۖ فَاقْرَءُوْا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنْهُ ۙ
وَ اَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَ اٰتُوا الزَّكٰوةَ
وَ اَقْرِضُوا اللّٰهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا ؕ وَ مَا
تُقَدِّمُوْا لِاَنْفُسِكُمْ مِّنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوْهُ
عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا وَّ اَعْظَمَ اَجْرًا ؕ
وَ اسْتَغْفِرُوا اللّٰهَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ۝٢٠

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which makes grey the forelocks of children (Rz). The coupling of this decidedly allegorical description with the *rending asunder of heaven* is conclusive proof that the latter description must also be taken allegorically; in fact, as such, the description is applicable to both the day of Resurrection and the doom of the opponents in this life. Such phrases as *the rolling up of heaven* (21 : 104), *the rending asunder of heaven* (as here and in 82 : 1), *the removing the covering of heaven* (81 : 11), and other similar phrases, all really speak of *the sweeping away of the old order of things to give place to a new*, attended by the necessary terrors and disasters, and hence the description applies to the doom of a nation in this world as well as to the entirely new order of things which will be ushered in with the Resurrection. See also 1665 and 2677.

2594 The first portion of the verse simply states the fact that the Holy Prophet and those with him passed sometimes two-thirds, sometimes a half, and sometimes a third of the night in prayer; and hence it is meaningless to say that the first portion of the verse is abrogated by the second. The latter portion of the verse states that, though the Holy Prophet and his early zealous companions passed a great part of the night in prayer, all Muslims could not follow their example, and hence they are told that they might pray by night so long as it was easy to them and not a burden. By the reading of the Qur'ān is here meant its recital in the night-prayer called *tahajjud*.

2595 The mention here of fighting is very probably a prophetical statement, as we find in many other places in the Holy Qur'ān; hence the occurrence of the word is no argument that the verse was not revealed at Makkah.



CHAPTER 74

Al-Muddaththir: THE ONE WRAPPING HIMSELF UP

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 2 *sections*; 56 *verses*)

This chapter is by general consent admitted to be the second in the order of revelation. A period probably of six months had elapsed since the first revelation before the second was received, and this period is known as the *fatrah* or *intermission*. This period of *fatrah* pressed heavily on the Holy Prophet, and he was greatly grieved on account of this intermission. Once more, however, after the *fatrah* had passed away, the angel of the Lord appeared to him, and the Prophet sought to *wrap himself up* in his clothes, hence the title. He is told not to seek seclusion but to arise and warn a people sunk low in vice and immorality. Thus, while the previous chapter tells the Prophet how to attain to perfection through prayer to God, here he is told to make others perfect by warning them of the evil consequences of their evil deeds.

SECTION 1 **The Prophet is enjoined to Warn**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسۡمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ

1 O thou who wrappest thyself up,[2596]

یٰۤاَیُّهَا الۡمُدَّثِّرُ ۙ﴿۱﴾

2 Arise and warn,[2597]

قُمۡ فَاَنۡذِرۡ ۪ۙ﴿۲﴾

3 And thy Lord do magnify,

وَ رَبَّكَ فَكَبِّرۡ ۪ۙ﴿۳﴾

4 And thy garments do purify,[2598]

وَ ثِیَابَكَ فَطَهِّرۡ ۪ۙ﴿۴﴾

5 And uncleanness do shun,

وَ الرُّجۡزَ فَاهۡجُرۡ ۪ۙ﴿۵﴾

6 And do no favour seeking gain,[2599]

وَ لَا تَمۡنُنۡ تَسۡتَكۡثِرُ ۪ۙ﴿۶﴾

2596 *Muddaththir* is originally *mutadaththir,* meaning one wearing a *dithār*, i.e., *anyone wrapping himself up in a dithār* or a *garment* (LL). Some take the word metaphorically, the meaning being one *clad in the garments of prophethood* or *one obscure.*

2597 Compare with the address contained in the last chapter. There the Prophet is commanded to engage himself in devotion so that he should attain to perfection; here he is commanded to convey the message and to warn, to make others perfect.

2598 Purification of the garments does not relate only to the outward act of purification, but also to the purification of the heart, as is shown in the next verse, which contains a command to shun every kind of uncleanness.

2599 The reference is in particular to the great favour which the Prophet

7 And for the sake of thy Lord, be patient.

8 For when the trumpet is sounded,

9 That will be — that day — a difficult day,

10 For the disbelievers, anything but easy.

11 Leave Me alone with him whom I created,

12 And gave him vast riches,

13 And sons dwelling in his presence,

14 And made matters easy for him,

15 And yet he desires that I should give more![2600]

16 By no means! Surely he is inimical to Our messages.

17 I will make a distressing punishment overtake him.[2601]

18 Surely he reflected and determined,

19 But may he be destroyed how he determined!

20 Again, may he be destroyed how he determined!

21 Then he looked,

22 Then frowned and scowled,

23 Then turned back and was big with pride,

وَلِرَبِّكَ فَاصْبِرْ ﴿٧﴾

فَإِذَا نُقِرَ فِي النَّاقُورِ ﴿٨﴾

فَذٰلِكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَّوْمٌ عَسِيرٌ ﴿٩﴾

عَلَى الْكٰفِرِينَ غَيْرُ يَسِيرٍ ﴿١٠﴾

ذَرْنِي وَمَنْ خَلَقْتُ وَحِيدًا ﴿١١﴾

وَّجَعَلْتُ لَهُ مَالًا مَّمْدُودًا ﴿١٢﴾

وَّبَنِينَ شُهُودًا ﴿١٣﴾

وَّمَهَّدْتُّ لَهُ تَمْهِيدًا ﴿١٤﴾

ثُمَّ يَطْمَعُ أَنْ أَزِيدَ ﴿١٥﴾

كَلَّا ۖ إِنَّهُ كَانَ لِاٰيٰتِنَا عَنِيدًا ﴿١٦﴾

سَأُرْهِقُهُ صَعُودًا ﴿١٧﴾

إِنَّهُ فَكَّرَ وَقَدَّرَ ﴿١٨﴾

فَقُتِلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ﴿١٩﴾

ثُمَّ قُتِلَ كَيْفَ قَدَّرَ ﴿٢٠﴾

ثُمَّ نَظَرَ ﴿٢١﴾

ثُمَّ عَبَسَ وَبَسَرَ ﴿٢٢﴾

ثُمَّ أَدْبَرَ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ ﴿٢٣﴾

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did to others by warning them and guiding them to the right way. But the words are general; even when conferring a worldly benefit on another, there should be no intention to receive any return for it.

2600 This description is general, but the case of Walīd ibn Mughīrah is specially noted by almost all commentators. Rz gives details of an occurrence in which Walīd was specially concerned. Abū Jahl and other leaders in the persecution of the Holy Prophet assembled together to ponder what name to give to the Prophet. Somebody suggested that he was a poet, but Walīd said that his word was not like that of a poet. Another suggested that he was a soothsayer, but Walīd rejected this, too, on the ground that Muḥammad never spoke a lie, whereas the soothsayers often proved liars. A third suggestion was that he was a madman, but this too was found inconsistent with the circumstances of the Holy Prophet's life. Then Walīd left the company, his comrades thinking that he was going over to Islām. Abū Jahl followed him to question him about the matter, and was told that, after pondering deeply on the question, he had come to the conclusion that the Prophet was a *sāḥir*, i.e., an *enchanter*, because, he said, "It is the enchanter who separates the father from the son, the brother from the brother, and the husband from the wife". Thereupon a proclamation was made in the streets of Makkah that the Prophet was a *sāḥir*.

2601 Three of Walīd's sons became converts to Islām, and the rest perished, his wealth began to diminish, and ultimately he himself died in disgrace and poverty.

24 Then said : This is naught but magic from of old !

فَقَالَ إِنْ هٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ يُّؤْثَرُ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 This is naught but the word of a mortal !

إِنْ هٰذَآ إِلَّا قَوْلُ الْبَشَرِ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 I will cast him into hell.

سَأُصْلِيهِ سَقَرَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And what will make thee realize what hell is ?

وَمَآ أَدْرٰىكَ مَا سَقَرُ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 It leaves naught, and spares naught.

لَا تُبْقِي وَلَا تَذَرُ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 It scorches the mortal.

لَوَّاحَةٌ لِّلْبَشَرِ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 Over it are nineteen.[2602]

عَلَيْهَا تِسْعَةَ عَشَرَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And We have made none but angels wardens of the Fire, and We have not made their number but as a trial for those who disbelieve, that those who have been given the Book may be certain and those who believe may increase in faith, and those who have been given the Book and the believers may not doubt ; and that those in whose hearts is a disease and the disbelievers may say : What does Allāh mean by this parable ? Thus Allāh leaves in error whom He pleases, and guides whom He pleases. And none knows the hosts of thy Lord but He. And this is naught but a Reminder to mortals.

وَمَا جَعَلْنَآ أَصْحٰبَ النَّارِ إِلَّا مَلٰٓئِكَةً وَّمَا جَعَلْنَا عِدَّتَهُمْ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيَسْتَيْقِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتٰبَ وَيَزْدَادَ الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوٓا إِيمَانًا وَّلَا يَرْتَابَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتٰبَ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَلِيَقُولَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ وَّالْكٰفِرُونَ مَاذَآ أَرَادَ اللّٰهُ بِهٰذَا مَثَلًا كَذٰلِكَ يُضِلُّ اللّٰهُ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَّشَآءُ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ جُنُودَ رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَمَا هِيَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٰى لِلْبَشَرِ ﴿٣١﴾

SECTION 2 : **The Warning**

32 Nay, by the moon !

كَلَّا وَالْقَمَرِ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 And the night when it departs !

وَالَّيْلِ إِذْ أَدْبَرَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 And the dawn when it shines!—

وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَآ أَسْفَرَ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 Surely it is one of the gravest (misfortunes),

إِنَّهَا لَإِحْدَى الْكُبَرِ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 A warning to mortals,

نَذِيرًا لِّلْبَشَرِ ﴿٣٦﴾

2602 It should be noted that this is called a *parable* in the next verse:

37 To him among you who will go forward or will remain behind.[2603]

38 Every soul is held in pledge for what it earns,

39 Except the people of the right hand.

40 In Gardens, they ask one another,

41 About the guilty :

42 What has brought you into hell?

43 They will say : We were not of those who prayed ;

44 Nor did we feed the poor ;[2603a]

45 And we indulged in vain talk with vain talkers ;

46 And we called the day of Judgment a lie ;

47 Till the inevitable overtook us.

48 So the intercession of intercessors will not avail them.

49 What is then the matter with them, that they turn away from the Reminder.

50 As if they were frightened asses,

51 Fleeing from a lion ?

52 Nay, every one of them desires that he should be given pages spread out —[2604]

لِمَنْ شَآءَ مِنْكُمْ اَنْ يَّتَقَدَّمَ اَوْ يَتَاَخَّرَ ﴿٣٧﴾

كُلُّ نَفْسٍۭ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ رَهِيْنَةٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

اِلَّاۤ اَصْحٰبَ الْيَمِيْنِ ﴿٣٩﴾

فِيْ جَنّٰتٍ يَتَسَآءَلُوْنَ ﴿٤٠﴾

عَنِ الْمُجْرِمِيْنَ ﴿٤١﴾

مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِيْ سَقَرَ ﴿٤٢﴾

قَالُوْا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّيْنَ ﴿٤٣﴾

وَلَمْ نَكُ نُطْعِمُ الْمِسْكِيْنَ ﴿٤٤﴾

وَكُنَّا نَخُوْضُ مَعَ الْخَآئِضِيْنَ ﴿٤٥﴾

وَكُنَّا نُكَذِّبُ بِيَوْمِ الدِّيْنِ ﴿٤٦﴾

حَتّٰۤى اَتٰىنَا الْيَقِيْنُ ﴿٤٧﴾

فَمَا تَنْفَعُهُمْ شَفَاعَةُ الشّٰفِعِيْنَ ﴿٤٨﴾

فَمَا لَهُمْ عَنِ التَّذْكِرَةِ مُعْرِضِيْنَ ﴿٤٩﴾

كَاَنَّهُمْ حُمُرٌ مُّسْتَنْفِرَةٌ ﴿٥٠﴾

فَرَّتْ مِنْ قَسْوَرَةٍ ﴿٥١﴾

بَلْ يُرِيْدُ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ اَنْ يُّؤْتٰى صُحُفًا مُّنَشَّرَةً ﴿٥٢﴾

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what does Allāh mean by this parable? All that the Qur'ān says is that *over it are nineteen.* The commentators think that nineteen angels, or nineteen classes, or nineteen ranks may be meant. The particular number is considered to be due to the misuse of nineteen faculties which are enumerated by the commentators (Rz).

2603 The light of Truth would shine forth, we are told in the above verses, but not without a grave misfortune to those who refuse to go forward, and this is a warning. Those who go forward, on the other hand, will not be affected by that, the gravest of misfortunes, for the people of the right hand will be in Gardens, every soul being pledged for what it earns. The prophetical strain adopted here regarding the doom of the opponents is continued to the end of the chapter.

2603a Note the reply to v. 42 — *What has brought you into hell?* It is neglect of two chief duties: *we did not pray* and *we did not feed the poor.* These are thus the two pillars of faith, service of God and service of humanity.

2604 Every one of them would have a revelation granted to him direct from heaven. To this they gave expression repeatedly: Why does not Allāh speak to us? (2:118).

53 By no means! But they fear not the Hereafter.

54 Nay, it is surely a Reminder.

55 So whoever pleases may mind it.

56 And they will not mind unless Allāh please.[2605] He is Worthy that duty should be kept to Him and Worthy to forgive.[2605a]

كَلَّا ؕ بَلْ لَّا يَخَافُوْنَ الْاٰخِرَةَ ؕ﴿۵۳﴾

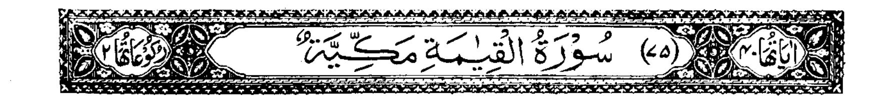
كَلَّآ اِنَّهٗ تَذْكِرَةٌ ﴿ۚ۵۴﴾

فَمَنْ شَآءَ ذَكَرَهٗ ؕ﴿۵۵﴾

وَ مَا يَذْكُرُوْنَ اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّشَآءَ اللّٰهُ ؕ هُوَ اَهْلُ التَّقْوٰى وَ اَهْلُ الْمَغْفِرَةِ ﴿ع۵۶﴾

2605 In the Qur'ān God does not compel men to adopt one way or another. He points out the right course from the wrong and leaves it to the choice of the individual: *So whoever pleases may mind it* (v. 55); *Surely we have shown him the way — he may be thankful or unthankful* (76:3). Similar verses abound in the Holy Qur'ān. What, then, does the statement, *and they will not mind, unless Allāh please,* mean? This statement is subject to the Divine laws already explained. Allāh is pleased to guide those in the right way and to make those "mind" who open their hearts to receive it. Note how clearly the verses preceding it depict the peculiar condition of those who do not even listen to the Reminder: *What is then the matter with them, that they turn away from the Reminder, as if they were frightenea asses, fleeing from a lion?* (vv. 49-51). For a similar statement occurring in 76:30, see 2633a.

2605a God is Worthy that duty to Him should be observed and therefore whoever fails to observe that duty must suffer. But God is not a hard taskmaster; if man fails to observe his duty, God in His unbounded love comes to his help and covers his faults with His vast forgiveness. The epithet here used — *Worthy to forgive* — indicates that forgiveness is in His nature; even if man does not ask for forgiveness, He forgives.



CHAPTER 75

Al-Qiyāmah : THE RESURRECTION

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH : 2 *sections ;* 40 *verses*)

This chapter is entitled *The Resurrection* from the occurrence of that word in its first verse. The object of an oath, as already pointed out, is to point to an evidence of what is manifest to establish a truth. It is striking that the resurrection is here spoken of as the evidence of the Resurrection. It is really the spiritual resurrection that is evidence of the great Resurrection. The clue to this is contained in v. 2: *I swear by the self-accusing spirit.* The self-accusing spirit is the first stage in man's spiritual resurrection. It is the stage in which the inner self of man asserts itself, when he does evil. The human in man becomes stronger than the animal in him. While the first stage is that of the *animal,* the *ammārah* (12:53; 1239), the second may properly be called the *human* stage. The third stage, that of the growth of the *Divine* in man, is called the *mutma'innah* (89:27); see 2732. The awakening of the spiritual in man is thus spoken of as being an evidence of the great Resurrection, while the resurrection referred to in v. 1 is the rising to life spiritual of dead humanity brought about through the Prophet. The revelation of this chapter must be placed at a very early date.

SECTION 1 **The Truth of the Resurrection**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Nay, I swear by the day of resurrection !

لَآ أُقْسِمُ بِيَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ ①

2 Nay, I swear by the self-accusing spirit ![2606]

وَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ ②

3 Does man think that We shall not gather his bones ?[2606a]

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَلَّنْ نَّجْمَعَ عِظَامَهُ ③

2606 By the resurrection is here meant the spiritual resurrection of the Arabs, to be brought about through the Prophet. The primary significance of *qiyāmah* is only *rising :* " *Al-qiyāmah* originally signifies *the rising of a man all at once* " (R). *Al-qiyāmah* is now a term which is synonymous with the great Resurrection, but it has not lost its original significance, and means also the rising to life of those who are spiritually dead. The *lā* in the beginning of this verse and the next carries the same significance as in 4:65. According to Kf, *lā* in such cases is *to give emphasis to the oath.* For the *nafs lawwāmah,* see introductory note above.

2606a *The gathering of the bones* stands for a new life. Man wonders as to

4 Yea, We are Powerful to make complete his whole make.[2607]

بَلٰى قٰدِرِيْنَ عَلٰٓى اَنْ نُّسَوِّيَ بَنَانَهٗ ﴿٤﴾

5 Nay, man desires to go on doing evil in front of him.

بَلْ يُرِيْدُ الْاِنْسَانُ لِيَفْجُرَ اَمَامَهٗ ﴿٥﴾

6 He asks: When is the day of Resurrection?

يَسْـَٔلُ اَيَّانَ يَوْمُ الْقِيٰمَةِ ﴿٦﴾

7 So when the sight is confused,[2608]

فَاِذَا بَرِقَ الْبَصَرُ ﴿٧﴾

8 And the moon becomes dark,[2609]

وَخَسَفَ الْقَمَرُ ﴿٨﴾

9 And the sun and the moon are brought together —[2610]

وَجُمِعَ الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ ﴿٩﴾

10 Man will say on that day: Whither to flee?

يَقُوْلُ الْاِنْسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍ اَيْنَ الْمَفَرُّ ﴿١٠﴾

11 No! There is no refuge!

كَلَّا لَا وَزَرَ ﴿١١﴾

12 With thy Lord on that day is the place of rest.

اِلٰى رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذِ ِۨالْمُسْتَقَرُّ ﴿١٢﴾

13 Man will that day be informed of what he sent before and what he put off.[2612]

يُنَبَّؤُا الْاِنْسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍۭ بِمَا قَدَّمَ وَاَخَّرَ ﴿١٣﴾

14 Nay, man is evidence against himself,

بَلِ الْاِنْسَانُ عَلٰى نَفْسِهٖ بَصِيْرَةٌ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Though he put up excuses.

وَّلَوْ اَلْقٰى مَعَاذِيْرَهٗ ﴿١٥﴾

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how he will be raised to life when his flesh is eaten and he has become bones. The answer to this question is given in the next verse.

2607 The word *banān* primarily means only *the fingers,* or *the ends of the fingers,* but is also applicable to all members of the body (LL), and therefore might also be translated as *the whole make of his body.* But even if the primary significance, *fingers,* be adopted, the meaning will still be the same, because the superiority of man lies in his hand, and especially in the make of his fingers, without which his advancement would have been impossible. God, Who made a complete man out of nothing, we are here told, has also the power to give life to bones or to raise him a second time.

2608 *Bariqa* means *he became confounded and unable to see his right course* (LL). Some great calamity is implied which would confound the opponents. Some commentators take these to be the signs of the approach of the death of a person (Rz).

2609 The darkening of the moon may imply either a lunar eclipse, for which see the next note, or it may mean the total darkening of the moon, which may imply the total disruption of the present system.

2610 The *bringing together of the sun and the moon* implies *the disappearance of the light of both.* It may be a partial disappearance, as in the case of an eclipse, and in that case the reference may be to what is stated in a report relating to the appearance of the Mahdī, in whose time the sun and the moon will both be eclipsed in the month of Ramaḍān (Baihaqī). The name of the Messiah and Mahdī being associated with the final triumph of Islām in the world, we are thus told that Islām will not only triumph in Arabia but in the whole of the world at a later period in its history. If the total disappearance of the light of both the sun and the moon is meant, the reference would be to the final disruption of the solar system, and the manifestation of the Greater Resurrection.

2612, see next page.

16 Move not thy tongue therewith to make haste with it.[2614]

لَا تُحَرِّكْ بِهٖ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهٖ ﴿١٦﴾

17 Surely on Us rests the collecting of it and the reciting of it.[2615]

إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهٗ وَقُرْاٰنَهٗ ﴿١٧﴾

18 So when We recite it, follow its recitation.

فَإِذَا قَرَاْنٰهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْاٰنَهٗ ﴿١٨﴾

19 Again on Us rests the explaining of it.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهٗ ﴿١٩﴾

20 Nay, but you love the present life,

كَلَّا بَلْ تُحِبُّوْنَ الْعَاجِلَةَ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 And neglect the Hereafter.

وَتَذَرُوْنَ الْاٰخِرَةَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 (Some) faces that day will be bright,

وُجُوْهٌ يَّوْمَئِذٍ نَّاضِرَةٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 Looking to their Lord.[2616]

إِلٰى رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ ﴿٢٣﴾

2612 *What he sent before* implies the evil deeds which he did but ought not to have done; *what he put off* being the good deeds which he failed to do but which he ought to have done.

2614 The preceding verses speak of the distress which must befall those who do not forsake the wrong course. The Prophet naturally desired to make it clear to them, and therefore, he was anxious that the warning should be given immediately in plainer words. So, he is told not to make haste with it. Hence the statement made in the verses that follow, viz., that the recitation and collection of the whole of the Qur'ān, together with its effective explanation to the opponents, were matters which Allāh had decided to bring about, and the Prophet should have no anxiety on that account. Compare 20:113, 114: "And thus have We revealed it an Arabic Qur'ān, and have distinctly set forth therein of threats that they may keep their duty, or that it may produce a reminder for them. . . . And make not haste with the Qur'ān before its revelation is made complete to thee and say, My Lord, increase me in knowledge".

2615 There can be no clearer evidence that the collection of the verses into chapters and of the chapters into one whole is here claimed by the Qur'ān to be a matter which, like its revelation, was to be entirely carried out under Divine guidance by the Holy Prophet himself. The Holy Book was thus from the first intended to be arranged and collected into one whole. It is curious to observe that Rodwell, who has paid little regard to the proper and orderly arrangement of the Qur'ān, is constrained to remark in a footnote to this verse: "In either case we are led to the conclusion that from the first Muḥammad had formed the plan of promulgating a written book" But the words of the Qur'ān clearly indicate much more; the collection of the Qur'ān was to be accomplished under Divine guidance, and collection includes the arrangement of the parts. In fact, it could not be called a *book* unless its various portions were arranged into one whole. On the other hand, if the order of revelation were to be followed in the arrangement of its parts, its *collection* would not have been spoken of as something distinct from its *revelation,* which is implied in the word *recitation.*

2616 As *that day* represents both the day of the breathing of the life spiritual here and the day of the Resurrection, the words *looking to their Lord* have also a double significance, indicating looking to the Lord for their reward in the former case, and, the highest bliss of all, the sight of the Lord in the Hereafter. It should be noted that the sight of the Lord does not imply that the Lord will have a body; it is not with the material eye that the Lord will be seen, but by the spiritual eye, which the righteous will possess on the day of Resurrection.

24 And (other) faces that day will be gloomy,

وَوُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَاسِرَةٌ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 Knowing that a great disaster will be made to befall them.[2617]

تَظُنُّ أَنْ يُفْعَلَ بِهَا فَاقِرَةٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 Nay, when it comes up to the throat,

كَلَّآ إِذَا بَلَغَتِ التَّرَاقِيَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And it is said: Who will ascend (with it)?[2618]

وَقِيلَ مَنْ رَاقٍ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 And he is sure that it is the parting,

وَّظَنَّ أَنَّهُ الْفِرَاقُ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 And affliction is combined with affliction —[2619]

وَالْتَفَّتِ السَّاقُ بِالسَّاقِ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 To thy Lord on that day is the driving.

إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْمَسَاقُ ﴿٣٠﴾

SECTION 2: **The Dead Rise**

31 So he accepted not the truth, nor prayed,[2620]

فَلَا صَدَّقَ وَلَا صَلَّىٰ ﴿٣١﴾

32 But denied and turned back,

وَلَٰكِنْ كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 Then he went to his people in haughtiness.

ثُمَّ ذَهَبَ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ يَتَمَطَّىٰ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 Nearer to thee and nearer,

أَوْلَىٰ لَكَ فَأَوْلَىٰ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 Again, nearer to thee and nearer (is woe).[2621]

ثُمَّ أَوْلَىٰ لَكَ فَأَوْلَىٰ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 Does man think that he will be left aimless?[2622]

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى ﴿٣٦﴾

37 Was he not a small life-germ in sperm emitted?

أَلَمْ يَكُ نُطْفَةً مِنْ مَنِيٍّ يُمْنَىٰ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 Then he was a clot; so He created (him), then made (him) perfect.

ثُمَّ كَانَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقَ فَسَوَّىٰ ﴿٣٨﴾

39 Then He made of him two kinds, the male and the female.

فَجَعَلَ مِنْهُ الزَّوْجَيْنِ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنْثَىٰ ﴿٣٩﴾

2617 Note that this great disaster also befell them in this life, and thus it demonstrated the truth of the Hereafter.

2618 *Man rāq-in* means *who will ascend* with it? Will the angels of mercy ascend with it or the angels of punishment? (T, R). But *rāq* also means a *charmer;* also a *physician* (IJ); the significance being, *Where is the charmer or the physician that could now avert the doom?*

2619 For *sāq,* meaning *affliction,* see 1855

2620 The description applies to every opponent.

2621 The haughty opponent is warned that destruction is very near. Or, the meaning is, *Woe to thee!* The repetition shows that the opponents were threatened with a double punishment, viz., in this life and in the Hereafter (Rz). In fact, the double punishment is spoken of throughout the chapter.

2622 The verse draws attention to the seriousness of life and to man's res-

40 Is not He Powerful to give life to the dead ?[2623]

أَلَيْسَ ذٰلِكَ بِقٰدِرٍ عَلٰٓى أَنْ يُّحْيِۦَ الْمَوْتٰى ۝٤٠

ponsibility for his actions — a doctrine denied as much to-day as it was by the Arabs.

2623 The giving of "life to the dead" not only signifies raising after death, but also spiritually raising a dead people to life.



CHAPTER 76

Al-Insān : THE MAN

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 2 *sections ;* 31 *verses*)

The last chapter having shown the truth of the Resurrection, this deals with man's attainment to perfection, which is the true object of his life, and is called *The Man,* the word itself occurring in the opening verse of the chapter. The first section shows how man is created out of nothing, and then the way to perfection is pointed out to him. It is then shown that in the attainment of perfection there are two stages, the first stage being the perfect suppression of all evil tendencies or the stage of attaining to sinlessness, but the goal lies far beyond. It is the way uphill, as it is termed elsewhere and briefly hinted at here. The pilgrim must be prepared to accomplish the most difficult tasks and to perform astonishing deeds of sacrifice in the way of Allāh. The second section shows that, if those addressed by the Holy Prophet do not accept his message, Allāh will cause another people to take their place, for the Qur'ān, being the perfect revelation of the Almighty, must accomplish the object which it has set before itself, and that object is none other than to enable man to attain to perfection. Its revelation belongs to a very early Makkan period.

SECTION 1 **Attainment of Perfection**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 Surely there came over man a time when he was nothing that could be mentioned.

هَلْ اَتٰى عَلَى الْاِنْسَانِ حِيْنٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُنْ شَيْـًٔا مَّذْكُوْرًا ۝١

2 Surely We have created man from sperm mixed (with ovum), to try him, so We have made him hearing, seeing.

اِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْاِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ اَمْشَاجٍ ۖ نَّبْتَلِيْهِ فَجَعَلْنٰهُ سَمِيْعًا بَصِيْرًا ۝٢

3 We have truly shown him the way ; he may be thankful or unthankful.[2624]

اِنَّا هَدَيْنٰهُ السَّبِيْلَ اِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَّ اِمَّا كَفُوْرًا ۝٣

2624 The right way is shown clearly ; it is for man himself to walk in it and thus be thankful, or away from it and thus be unthankful. Or the meaning may be *he may accept or reject.*

4 Surely We have prepared for the disbelievers chains and shackles and a burning Fire.[2625]

إِنَّآ أَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكٰفِرِينَ سَلٰسِلَا۟ وَأَغْلٰلًا وَّسَعِيرًا ﴿٤﴾

5 The righteous truly drink of a cup tempered with camphor —[2626]

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِنْ كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا ﴿٥﴾

6 A fountain from which the servants of Allāh drink,[2626a] making it flow in abundance.

عَيْنًا يَّشْرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ اللّٰهِ يُفَجِّرُونَهَا تَفْجِيرًا ﴿٦﴾

7 They fulfil vows and fear a day, the evil of which is widespread.

يُوفُونَ بِالنَّذْرِ وَيَخَافُونَ يَوْمًا كَانَ شَرُّهُۥ مُسْتَطِيرًا ﴿٧﴾

8 And they give food, out of love for Him, to the poor and the orphan and the captive.

وَيُطْعِمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلٰى حُبِّهِۦ مِسْكِينًا وَّيَتِيمًا وَّأَسِيرًا ﴿٨﴾

9 We feed you, for Allāh's pleasure only — We desire from you neither reward nor thanks.[2626b]

إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللّٰهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَآءً وَّلَا شُكُورًا ﴿٩﴾

10 Surely we fear from our Lord a stern, distressful day.

إِنَّا نَخَافُ مِنْ رَّبِّنَا يَوْمًا عَبُوسًا قَمْطَرِيرًا ﴿١٠﴾

11 So Allāh will ward off from them the evil of that day, and cause them to meet with splendour and happiness ;

فَوَقٰىهُمُ اللّٰهُ شَرَّ ذٰلِكَ الْيَوْمِ وَلَقّٰىهُمْ نَضْرَةً وَّسُرُورًا ﴿١١﴾

2625 See 2559.

2626 The original for *camphor* is *kāfūr,* which is derived from *kafr* meaning *to cover* or *to suppress.* Medically camphor is a cool and refreshing aromatic, but here it is used in reference to its original significance. The cup of which the righteous drink is the cup of the love of Allāh, and its mixture with *kāfūr* is to indicate that by this cup all low desires and sexual passions which lead man away from the path of righteousness are suppressed, in the same manner as poisonous matter is suppressed by camphor. Man needs an intoxication and for it he generally resorts to alcoholic drinks, which bring in their train evil and slavery to sexual passions. The Prophet intoxicated his followers with the love of Allāh, and as a result of this, their evil tendencies were altogether suppressed. Vv. 7 and 8 show clearly that it is of the change brought about in this very life that the Holy Qur'ān is speaking here. In the spiritual advancement of man this is the first stage, because it is not until the evil tendencies of man are completely suppressed that he is able to advance to the higher stages of spiritual perfection.

2626a *The fountain from which the servants of Allāh drink* is the fountain of the love of God referred to in the previous verse. It is not a cup which may be exhausted with one draught ; it is a fountain. The faithful are here spoken of as the servants of Allāh — 'ibād Allāh — because an *'abd* is really one who is entirely lost in the love of God. But here we are further told that they not only drink of it themselves but they make it to flow forth in such abundance that others also may partake of it.

2626b The fulfilment of vows spoken of in v. 7 is in relation to the service of God, or the act of bringing themselves closer and closer to God, while the feeding of the poor spoken of here is in relation to the service of humanity. Thus they combine the service of God with the service of humanity. The words for *Allāh's pleasure* (Ar., *wajh*) clearly show that it is of the love of God that these verses speak. Man worships Allāh for the love of Allāh, but the Holy Qur'ān requires him to serve humanity also for the love of Allāh.

12 And reward them, for their steadfastness, with a Garden and with silk,

وَجَزٰىهُمۡ بِمَا صَبَرُوۡا جَنَّةً وَّحَرِيۡرًا ﴿۱۲﴾

13 Reclining therein on raised couches; they will see therein neither (excessive heat of) sun nor intense cold.

مُّتَّكِـِٕيۡنَ فِيۡهَا عَلَى الۡاَرَآئِكِ ۚ لَا يَرَوۡنَ فِيۡهَا شَمۡسًا وَّلَا زَمۡهَرِيۡرًا ﴿۱۳﴾

14 And close down upon them are its shadows, and its fruits are made near (to them), easy to reach.

وَدَانِيَةً عَلَيۡهِمۡ ظِلٰلُهَا وَذُلِّلَتۡ قُطُوۡفُهَا تَذۡلِيۡلًا ﴿۱۴﴾

15 And round about them are made to go vessels of silver and goblets of glass,

وَيُطَافُ عَلَيۡهِمۡ بِاٰنِيَةٍ مِّنۡ فِضَّةٍ وَّاَكۡوَابٍ كَانَتۡ قَوَارِيۡرَا۠ ﴿۱۵﴾

16 Crystal-clear, made of silver — they have measured them according to a measure.[2627]

قَوَارِيۡرَا۠ مِنۡ فِضَّةٍ قَدَّرُوۡهَا تَقۡدِيۡرًا ﴿۱۶﴾

17 And they are made to drink therein a cup tempered with ginger —[2628]

وَيُسۡقَوۡنَ فِيۡهَا كَاۡسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنۡجَبِيۡلًا ۚ ﴿۱۷﴾

18 (Of) a fountain therein called Salsabīl.[2628a]

عَيۡنًا فِيۡهَا تُسَمّٰى سَلۡسَبِيۡلًا ﴿۱۸﴾

19 And round about them will go youths, never altering in age; when thou seest them thou wilt think them to be scattered pearls.[2629]

وَيَطُوۡفُ عَلَيۡهِمۡ وِلۡدَانٌ مُّخَلَّدُوۡنَ ۚ اِذَا رَاَيۡتَهُمۡ حَسِبۡتَهُمۡ لُؤۡلُؤًا مَّنۡثُوۡرًا ﴿۱۹﴾

20 And when thou lookest thither, thou seest blessings and a great kingdom.[2630]

وَاِذَا رَاَيۡتَ ثَمَّ رَاَيۡتَ نَعِيۡمًا وَّمُلۡكًا كَبِيۡرًا ﴿۲۰﴾

2627 That is, everyone will receive them according to the measure of his deeds.

2628 The Arabic word for ginger is *zanjabīl*. It is said to have *a property that is heating or warming, strengthening to the venereal faculty, clearing to the phlegm, sharpening to the intellect and exhilarating* (LL). The first cup of the love of God is spoken of in v. 5, as being tempered with camphor and bringing about suppression of evil, and this second cup is now spoken of as strengthening and exhilarating, i.e., enabling man to perform great and noble deeds. The love of God thus not only suppresses the evil inclinations of man, but also enables him to attain a still higher stage of spiritual advancement, giving him the strength to perform wonderful deeds of self-sacrifice.

2628a *Salsabīl* means *easy, sweet, rapid-flowing* (R). According to some it is made up of *sal*, meaning *ask thou*, and *sabīl, way*, as if it meant, *Ask thy Lord a way to it*. It is now applied to *an artificial fountain throwing up water* (LL).

2629 Because these are heavenly blessings, and decay cannot overtake them, see 2430.

2630 The word *thamma* — it is different from *thumma* — meaning *there* or *thither* is used here in reference to the spiritual kingdom which is granted to the faithful. They are granted blessings and a great kingdom in this life as well, to which man shuts his eyes on account of his ignorance. Note, however, that the faithful followers of the Prophet were granted material blessings and a great

21 On them are garments of fine green silk and thick brocade, and they are adorned with bracelets of silver, and their Lord makes them to drink a pure drink.[2631]

عٰلِيَهُمْ ثِيَابُ سُنْدُسٍ خُضْرٌ وَّ اِسْتَبْرَقٌ وَّ حُلُّوْۤا اَسَاوِرَ مِنْ فِضَّةٍ ۚ وَ سَقٰىهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُوْرًا ﴿۲۱﴾

22 Surely this is a reward for you, and your striving is recompensed.

اِنَّ هٰذَا كَانَ لَكُمْ جَزَآءً وَّ كَانَ سَعْيُكُمْ مَّشْكُوْرًا ﴿۲۲﴾

SECTION 2: **Another Generation will be Raised up**

23 Surely We have revealed the Qur'ān to thee, in portions.

اِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْاٰنَ تَنْزِيْلًا ﴿۲۳﴾

24 So wait patiently for the judgment of thy Lord,[2632] and obey not a sinner or an ungrateful one among them.

فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَ لَا تُطِعْ مِنْهُمْ اٰثِمًا اَوْ كَفُوْرًا ﴿۲۴﴾

25 And glorify the name of thy Lord morning and evening.

وَ اذْكُرِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَّ اَصِيْلًا ﴿۲۵﴾

26 And during part of the night adore Him, and glorify Him throughout a long night.

وَ مِنَ الَّيْلِ فَاسْجُدْ لَهٗ وَ سَبِّحْهُ لَيْلًا طَوِيْلًا ﴿۲۶﴾

27 Surely these love the transitory life and neglect a grievous day before them.

اِنَّ هٰۤؤُلَآءِ يُحِبُّوْنَ الْعَاجِلَةَ وَ يَذَرُوْنَ وَرَآءَهُمْ يَوْمًا ثَقِيْلًا ﴿۲۷﴾

28 We created them and made firm their make, and, when We will, We can bring in their place the like of them by change.[2633]

نَحْنُ خَلَقْنٰهُمْ وَ شَدَدْنَاۤ اَسْرَهُمْ ۚ وَ اِذَا شِئْنَا بَدَّلْنَاۤ اَمْثَالَهُمْ تَبْدِيْلًا ﴿۲۸﴾

29 Surely this is a Reminder; so whoever will, let him take a way to his Lord.

اِنَّ هٰذِهٖ تَذْكِرَةٌ ۚ فَمَنْ شَآءَ اتَّخَذَ اِلٰى رَبِّهٖ سَبِيْلًا ﴿۲۹﴾

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temporal kingdom as well, a kingdom which they inherited from the Prophet himself and which subsists to this day, and is indeed widening daily.

2631 As they led pure lives here, they were made to drink a pure drink in this very life. They will have a pure drink in the Hereafter, too, the heavenly life being the purest that can be imagined.

2632 This shows that the blessings mentioned in the previous section will also find a manifestation in this life; the Divine judgment will bring about the fall of one party and the rise of another.

2633 The mention of the grievous day in the previous verse and the statement here that another people will take the place of these are clear prophecies for this life. Hence it is called a warning in the verse that follows.

30 And you will not, unless Allāh please.[2633a] Surely Allāh is ever Knowing, Wise —

وَمَا تَشَآءُوْنَ اِلَّآ اَنْ يَّشَآءَ اللّٰهُ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ كَانَ عَلِيْمًا حَكِيْمًا ۖ ﴿۳۰﴾

31 He admits whom He pleases to His mercy; and the wrongdoers — He has prepared for them a painful chastisement.

يُّدْخِلُ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ فِيْ رَحْمَتِهٖ ؕ وَالظّٰلِمِيْنَ اَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا اَلِيْمًا ﴿۳۱﴾

2633a As the context clearly shows, the faithful are spoken of here; the previous verse states that *whoever will, may take a way to his Lord,* and the verse that follows refers to the faithful in the words, *He admits whom He pleases to His mercy.* The meaning is that true and sincere believers have so completely submitted themselves to the Divine will and are so completely resigned that they have no desires of their own, and all their desires are in accordance with Allāh's pleasure.

Taking the words as a general statement, there can still be little doubt as to their real significance. The chapter opens with the clear statement, *Surely We have shown him the way: he may accept or reject;* so that man has not been constrained by God to adopt a particular course, whether for good or for evil. The end of the chapter is equally clear: *Surely this is a Reminder; so whoever will, may take a way to his Lord.* The words — *you will not, unless Allāh please* — therefore mean that *man's choice would have no effect, if it did not please Allāh.* We can easily see that there are two things necessary for the guidance of man: firstly, the revelation of the Reminder by Allāh, and secondly, the acceptance of that Reminder by man. If Allāh had not pleased to reveal the Reminder, man's choice would have been nowhere.

سُوْرَةُ الْمُرْسَلٰتِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (٧٧) — اٰيَاتُهَا ٥٠ — رُكُوْعَاتُهَا ٢

CHAPTER 77

Al-Mursalāt : THOSE SENT FORTH

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 2 *sections*; 50 *verses*)

This chapter is, as it were, a supplement to the one that precedes it, for while it is shown therein how the righteous attain to perfection — being the acceptors of the message — here the fate of the rejectors is made clear. *Those sent forth* are the Divine messengers, the rejection of whose message brings evil consequences, and that word, occurring in the first verse, gives its name to this chapter.

The fourth year of the call is regarded as the probable date of the revelation of this chapter.

SECTION 1 **Consequences of Rejection**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 By those sent forth to spread goodness!

وَالْمُرْسَلٰتِ عُرْفًا ۝١

2 Then those driving off the chaff!

فَالْعٰصِفٰتِ عَصْفًا ۝٢

3 And those spreading (goodness), far and wide!

وَّالنّٰشِرٰتِ نَشْرًا ۝٣

4 Then those making a distinction!

فَالْفٰرِقٰتِ فَرْقًا ۝٤

5 Then those offering the Reminder,

فَالْمُلْقِيٰتِ ذِكْرًا ۝٥

6 To clear or to warn! —

عُذْرًا اَوْ نُذْرًا ۝٦

7 Surely that which you are promised will come to pass.[2634]

اِنَّمَا تُوْعَدُوْنَ لَوَاقِعٌ ۝٧

2634 As stated in 2099, attention is drawn in what are called oaths to certain indisputable facts, which lead to a conclusion. The conclusion here is that the opponents are doomed (v. 12). The characteristics described in the first six verses apply to prophets whose opponents were destroyed. This is made clear by the mention of the appointed time of the messengers in v. 11, by which, of

English	Arabic
8 So when the stars are made to disappear,	فَإِذَا النُّجُومُ طُمِسَتْ ۝٨
9 And when the heaven is rent asunder,	وَإِذَا السَّمَآءُ فُرِجَتْ ۝٩
10 And when the mountains are carried away as dust,[2635]	وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ نُسِفَتْ ۝١٠
11 And when the messengers are made to reach their appointed time,	وَإِذَا الرُّسُلُ أُقِّتَتْ ۝١١
12 To what day is the doom fixed?	لِأَيِّ يَوْمٍ أُجِّلَتْ ۝١٢
13 To the day of Decision.	لِيَوْمِ الْفَصْلِ ۝١٣
14 And what will make thee comprehend what the day of Decision is?	وَمَآ أَدْرٰىكَ مَا يَوْمُ الْفَصْلِ ۝١٤
15 Woe on that day to the rejectors!	وَيْلٌ يَّوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِيْنَ ۝١٥
16 Did We not destroy the former generations?	أَلَمْ نُهْلِكِ الْأَوَّلِيْنَ ۝١٦
17 Then We followed them up with later ones.	ثُمَّ نُتْبِعُهُمُ الْاٰخِرِيْنَ ۝١٧
18 Thus do We deal with the guilty.	كَذٰلِكَ نَفْعَلُ بِالْمُجْرِمِيْنَ ۝١٨
19 Woe on that day to the rejectors![2636]	وَيْلٌ يَّوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِيْنَ ۝١٩
20 Did We not create you from ordinary water?	أَلَمْ نَخْلُقْكُّمْ مِّنْ مَّآءٍ مَّهِيْنٍ ۝٢٠
21 Then We placed it in a secure resting-place,	فَجَعَلْنٰهُ فِيْ قَرَارٍ مَّكِيْنٍ ۝٢١
22 Till an appointed term,	إِلٰى قَدَرٍ مَّعْلُوْمٍ ۝٢٢

course, is meant the appointed time of the destruction of the enemies of Truth. They are told to consider how Truth was spread by former prophets. In the first verse they are spoken of as being sent with *'urf* or *ma'rūf*, i.e., *goodness*; in the second, as *driving off the chaff* of falsehood before them; in the third, as scattering the seed of goodness far and wide or giving life to dead earth; in the fourth, as ultimately bringing about a distinction (*farq* or *furqān*) between truth and falsehood, and they give the Reminder that one party may be cleared and the other warned. These considerations about the former prophets should lead the opponents to the certain conclusion that the same Divine law was working in the case of the Holy Prophet, and their doom was also certain.

2635 The disappearance of the stars (v. 8) was a sign for the Arabs of the befalling of a calamity (2371); the rending asunder of the heaven (v. 9) indicated the same, because the heaven was considered a protection. Compare 21:32: *And We have made the heaven a guarded canopy*; see 2593. The passing away of the mountains signified the disappearance from among them of their great men, whose protection they sought in time of distress. All these things, as the next verse shows, would be brought about when came the appointed time of the messengers, i.e., the time of the destruction of their opponents.

2636 Note the clear words of this and the three previous verses. The former generations were destroyed because of their wickedness and others were brought up in their place; such will always be the fate of the guilty — the day of their doom is the day of Decision. A complete manifestation of that day is, however, reserved for the Hereafter.

23 So We determined — how well are We at determining!

فَقَدَرْنَا فَنِعْمَ الْقَادِرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Woe on that day to the rejectors!

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 Have We not made the earth draw to itself

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ كِفَاتًا ﴿٢٥﴾

26 The living and the dead,[2637]

أَحْيَاءً وَأَمْوَاتًا ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And made therein lofty mountains, and given you to drink of sweet water?

وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ شَامِخَاتٍ وَأَسْقَيْنَاكُمْ مَاءً فُرَاتًا ﴿٢٧﴾

28 Woe on that day to the rejectors!

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 Walk on to that which you called a lie.

انْطَلِقُوا إِلَىٰ مَا كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تُكَذِّبُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 Walk on to the shadow, having three branches,[2638]

انْطَلِقُوا إِلَىٰ ظِلٍّ ذِي ثَلَاثِ شُعَبٍ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 Neither cool, nor availing against the flame.

لَا ظَلِيلٍ وَلَا يُغْنِي مِنَ اللَّهَبِ ﴿٣١﴾

32 It sends up sparks like palaces,

إِنَّهَا تَرْمِي بِشَرَرٍ كَالْقَصْرِ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 As if they were tawny camels.[2638a]

كَأَنَّهُ جِمَالَتٌ صُفْرٌ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 Woe on that day to the rejectors!

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

35 This is the day on which they speak not,

هَٰذَا يَوْمُ لَا يَنْطِقُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 Nor are they allowed to offer excuses.

وَلَا يُؤْذَنُ لَهُمْ فَيَعْتَذِرُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37 Woe on that day to the rejectors!

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾

38 This is the day of Decision; We have gathered you and those of yore.[2638b]

هَٰذَا يَوْمُ الْفَصْلِ جَمَعْنَاكُمْ وَالْأَوَّلِينَ ﴿٣٨﴾

2637 The word *kifāt* carries the significance adopted in the translation, *drawing things to itself*, referring to the law of gravitation. It further shows that all mortals, living or dead, must remain on earth, and the belief relating to the ascent of Jesus to the fourth heaven is erroneous. But *kifāt* also means *hastening on* and *being swift in running* or *plying* or *driving* and *urging vehemently* (LL), the reference being to the motion of earth in space.

2638 According to I'Ab, the address here is to the people of the Cross (RM), the believers in Trinity, and this may be the reason for calling their punishment *dhī thalāthi shu'ab, a shadow having three branches.* The word *ẓill* used here means properly *shade* or *light of the sun without the rays* (LL), but the word is extensively used to carry a number of other significances, such as *covering, protection,* a *plentiful* or an *easy state of life* (T, LL). The three branches of it are the three characteristics thereof stated in the verses that follow; see 2638a.

2638a They reject the Truth and seek comfort and ease in material benefits. They are given a shade, but it does not serve the purpose of shade. It is devoid

2638b, see next page.

39 So if you have a plan, plan against me (now).[2639]

فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ كَيْدٌ فَكِيدُونِ ﴿٣٩﴾

40 Woe on that day to the rejectors !

وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

SECTION 2 : **Consequences of Rejection**

41 Surely the dutiful are amid shades and fountains,

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي ظِلَٰلٍ وَّعُيُونٍ ﴿٤١﴾

42 And fruits such as they desire.

وَّفَوَاكِهَ مِمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43 Eat and drink pleasantly for what you did.

كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيٓـًٔا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44 Thus do We reward the doers of good.

إِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٤٤﴾

45 Woe on that day to the rejectors !

وَيْلٌ يَّوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

46 Eat and enjoy yourselves for a little ; surely you are guilty.

كُلُوا وَتَمَتَّعُوا قَلِيلًا إِنَّكُمْ مُّجْرِمُونَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47 Woe on that day to the rejectors !

وَيْلٌ يَّوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

48 And when it is said to them, Bow down, they bow not down.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ ارْكَعُوا لَا يَرْكَعُونَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49 Woe on that day to the rejectors !

وَيْلٌ يَّوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50 In what narration after it, will they believe ?

فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾

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of the coolness of shade — they cannot find solace in it. Nor does it avail them against *flames,* which stand here for the distresses of life. More than this, what they mistook for ease and plenty is itself a source of distress. Sparks arise therefrom, not the tiny sparks of an ordinary fire but sparks big as palaces. In fact, the very palaces which they make for their comfort turn into sparks, which set fire to all around them. Perhaps there is a deeper reference here to the modern implements of destruction on account of their magnitude and extensive destructive effect. These sparks are further compared to *tawny camels,* which is true not only as regards their colour but also because of the succession with which these big sparks follow one another, like camels walking one after another in a line.

2638b This gathering together will take place in the Resurrection, but the opponents of Truth, earlier as well as later, are gathered together in punishment in this life, too.

2639 The opponents are even so early challenged to execute their plans against the Holy Prophet.

PART XXX

CHAPTER 78

Al-Nabá : THE ANNOUNCEMENT

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 2 *sections*; 40 *verses*)

This chapter is entitled *al-Naba'*, or the Message of Importance, and the important message which it gives to humanity is that God will give life to a dead earth through the Prophet. The day of Decision is again spoken of here to show that Truth will ultimately triumph and opposition to it will meet with its doom. Its revelation belongs to the early Makkan period.

SECTION 1 **The Day of Decision**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 Of what do they ask one another?

عَمَّ يَتَسَآءَلُوْنَ ۝١

2 Of the tremendous announcement[2640]

عَنِ النَّبَاِ الْعَظِيْمِ ۝٢

3 About which they differ.

الَّذِيْ هُمْ فِيْهِ مُخْتَلِفُوْنَ ۝٣

2640 *Naba'* means *an announcement of great utility* leading to knowledge (R), or *a piece of information, news, tidings* (LL). The original words are *naba' 'aẓīm*, meaning *a tremendous* or *very great announcement*, which also occur in 38:67. Some commentators take it to signify the Holy Qur'ān, others the prophethood of Muḥammad and still others the day of Resurrection. In fact, all three are included. The Qur'ān was revealed as the greatest of the Divine messages hitherto given to humanity, because it was a message for the whole of humanity, compared with the smaller messages to this or that nation. It was, moreover, the most complete message. It gave the great news that the whole of humanity, not this or that nation, would receive life through it. They differed about it not only in the sense that they rejected it, but also because they put in different suggestions, some saying that the Prophet was a madman, others that he was a dreamer, others still that he was a poet or a fabricator, and so on.

4 Nay, they will soon know ;	كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٤﴾
5 Nay, again, they will soon know.	ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٥﴾
6 Have We not made the earth an expanse	اَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْاَرْضَ مِهٰدًا ﴿٦﴾
7 And the mountains as pegs ?[2641]	وَّالْجِبَالَ اَوْتَادًا ﴿٧﴾
8 And We have created you in pairs,	وَّخَلَقْنٰكُمْ اَزْوَاجًا ﴿٨﴾
9 And made your sleep for rest,	وَّجَعَلْنَا نَوْمَكُمْ سُبَاتًا ﴿٩﴾
10 And made the night a covering,	وَّجَعَلْنَا الَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا ﴿١٠﴾
11 And made the day for seeking livelihood.	وَّجَعَلْنَا النَّهَارَ مَعَاشًا ﴿١١﴾
12 And We have made above you seven strong (bodies),	وَّبَنَيْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعًا شِدَادًا ﴿١٢﴾
13 And made a shining lamp,[2642]	وَّجَعَلْنَا سِرَاجًا وَّهَّاجًا ﴿١٣﴾
14 And We send down from the clouds water pouring forth in abundance,	وَّاَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْمُعْصِرٰتِ مَآءً ثَجَّاجًا ﴿١٤﴾
15 That We may bring forth thereby grain and herbs,	لِّنُخْرِجَ بِهٖ حَبًّا وَّنَبَاتًا ﴿١٥﴾
16 And luxuriant gardens.	وَّجَنّٰتٍ اَلْفَافًا ﴿١٦﴾
17 Surely the day of Decision is appointed —[2643]	اِنَّ يَوْمَ الْفَصْلِ كَانَ مِيْقَاتًا ﴿١٧﴾
18 The day when the trumpet is blown, so you come forth in hosts,	يَّوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّوْرِ فَتَاْتُوْنَ اَفْوَاجًا ﴿١٨﴾
19 And the heaven is opened so it becomes as doors,	وَّفُتِحَتِ السَّمَآءُ فَكَانَتْ اَبْوَابًا ﴿١٩﴾
20 And the mountains are moved off, so they remain a semblance.[2644]	وَّسُيِّرَتِ الْجِبَالُ فَكَانَتْ سَرَابًا ﴿٢٠﴾

2641 The earth is called *mihād* or *a place made even for walking upon* (R). The words here are similar to what is said in 2:22, where the earth is spoken of as being made a *firāsh*, i.e., *an expanse*. The mountains are likened to pegs on the surface of the earth.

2642 *The seven strong bodies* of the previous verse are apparently the seven major planets of the solar system, the words *above you* clearly showing that the earth itself belongs to the same class, and the sun, the centre of the solar system, is spoken of in the words *a shining lamp*.

2643 That there is a day of Decision in this life, too, which is synonymous with the ultimate triumph of Truth and the doom of opposition to its spread is amply clear from all these early sūrahs.

2644 The description contained in vv. 18-20 is a prophetical description applying to the final triumph of Truth. People will come forth in hosts, *afwāj-an*, to accept the Truth ; see ch. 110 — *when the help of Allāh and victory comes and thou seest people entering the religion of Allāh in hosts, afwāj-an ;*

21 Surely hell lies in wait,

إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا ﴿٢١﴾

22 A resort for the inordinate,

لِّلطَّاغِينَ مَآبًا ﴿٢٢﴾

23 Living therein for long years.[2645]

لَّابِثِينَ فِيهَآ أَحْقَابًا ﴿٢٣﴾

24 They taste not therein coolness nor drink,

لَّا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا بَرْدًا وَّلَا شَرَابًا ﴿٢٤﴾

25 But boiling and intensely cold water,

إِلَّا حَمِيمًا وَّغَسَّاقًا ﴿٢٥﴾

26 Requital corresponding.[2646]

جَزَآءً وِّفَاقًا ﴿٢٦﴾

27 Surely they feared not the reckoning,

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا لَا يَرْجُونَ حِسَابًا ﴿٢٧﴾

28 And rejected Our messages, giving the lie (thereto).

وَّكَذَّبُوا بِآيٰتِنَا كِذَّابًا ﴿٢٨﴾

29 And We have recorded everything in a book,

وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنٰهُ كِتٰبًا ﴿٢٩﴾

30 So taste, for We shall add to you naught but chastisement.[2647]

فَذُوقُوا فَلَنْ نَّزِيدَكُمْ إِلَّا عَذَابًا ﴿٣٠﴾

SECTION 2: **The Day of Decision**

31 Surely for those who keep their duty is achievement,[2648]

إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا ﴿٣١﴾

32 Gardens and vineyards,

حَدَآئِقَ وَأَعْنَابًا ﴿٣٢﴾

33 And youthful (companions), equals in age,[2649]

وَّكَوَاعِبَ أَتْرَابًا ﴿٣٣﴾

34 And a pure cup.

وَّكَأْسًا دِهَاقًا ﴿٣٤﴾

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the heaven is opened and the dead earth receives life, v. 19; the mountains — the great opposing forces — melt away, and all that remains of opposition is a mere semblance.

2645 *Ḥuqub*, of which *aḥqāb* is a plural, denotes *eighty years*, or *seventy years*, or *a year* or *years*, or *a long time* (see LL, which quotes various authorities for each of these meanings). Whatever significance may be adopted, the use of the word leaves no doubt that the punishment of hell is not eternal. The use of a word which signifies a limited period in the case of the punishment of hell, while such words are never used regarding the bliss of heavenly life, is a clear indication that the latter will never come to an end, while the former shall; see 1201.

2646 The punishment of hell is described here as a *requital corresponding to the sin*. It may have been noted that various names are given to hell itself, and various sorts of punishment are spoken of. Thus every sinner has his own hell, corresponding to his sin.

2647 As they in their inordinacy added evil to evil, they shall have correspondingly punishment added to punishment. The addition in punishment lasts only until the evil is requited. See also 1201 where it is shown that hell is not eternal.

2648 Note that the reward of good is *achievement* — achievement of the

2649, see next page.

35 They hear not therein vain words, nor lying —

36 A reward from thy Lord, a gift sufficient ;

37 The Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, the Beneficent, they are not able to address Him.

38 The day when the spirit and the angels stand in ranks ;[2651] none shall speak except he whom the Beneficent permits and he speaks aright.

39 That is the True Day, so whoever desires may take refuge with his Lord.

40 Truly We warn you of a chastisement near at hand —[2652] the day when man will see what his hands have sent before, and the disbeliever will say : O would that I were dust !

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَّلَا كِذّٰبًا ﴿٣٥﴾
جَزَآءً مِّنْ رَّبِّكَ عَطَآءً حِسَابًا ﴿٣٦﴾
رَّبِّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا
الرَّحْمٰنِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُ خِطَابًا ﴿٣٧﴾
يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الرُّوحُ وَالْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ صَفًّا
لَّا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ
الرَّحْمٰنُ وَقَالَ صَوَابًا ﴿٣٨﴾
ذٰلِكَ الْيَوْمُ الْحَقُّ فَمَنْ شَآءَ اتَّخَذَ
إِلٰى رَبِّهِ مَاٰبًا ﴿٣٩﴾
إِنَّآ أَنْذَرْنٰكُمْ عَذَابًا قَرِيبًا يَّوْمَ
يَنْظُرُ الْمَرْءُ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدٰهُ وَيَقُولُ
الْكٰفِرُ يٰلَيْتَنِي كُنْتُ تُرٰبًا ﴿٤٠﴾

object of this life as also of the great goal of the next life. It is this *achievement* which becomes a Garden.

2649 *Kawā'ib* is the plural of *Kā'ib,* which when applied to a girl, means *youthful* or *one nearing maturity* (LL). But it should be noted that neither the word *kawā'ib* nor *atrāb* is preceded or followed by any qualifying word, and hence *kawā'ib* only means *showing freshness of youth ;* see further 2356.

2651 The Spirit (*al-Rūḥ*) and the angels are spoken of together on three occasions in the Holy Qur'ān ; in 70 : 4, as ascending to God, for which see 2566 ; in 97 : 4, as descending on earth in *lailat al-Qadr,* for which see 2779 ; and here as standing in ranks on the day of Judgment. In 16 : 2, the angels are spoken of as descending with *al-rūḥ,* which is evidently Divine revelation. *Al-Rūḥ* here means *Gabriel,* or a *higher class of angels above the ordinary angels,* or *the spirit of man when it leaves the earthly body* (RM). In the last-mentioned case the word *al-rūḥ* can be applied only to the faithful, people in whom the Divine Spirit finds an awakening. As shown in 653 and 2181, the word *al-rūḥ* really signifies *Divine inspiration* or *Divine revelation,* and Gabriel is called *al-Rūḥ* because he brings the Divine revelation to the Prophet. The human spirit can, in fact, be called *al-rūḥ* only when it receives light through Divine inspiration. The meaning would thus be that on the day of Judgment the faithful and the angels will stand in ranks in the presence of God.

2652 The punishment of which the disbelievers are warned throughout this chapter is *a punishment near at hand,* which term, like the *nearer punishment* of 32 : 21, indicates the punishment of this life.



CHAPTER 79

Al-Nāzi'āt : THOSE WHO YEARN

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 2 *sections*; 46 *verses*)

This chapter is entitled *al-Nāzi'āt,* which word occurs in the first verse as being a description of the groups or parties of the faithful who were destined to bring about a transformation in the world. Their chief characteristics are mentioned in the first four verses as being those who yearned ardently after God, and who went forth cheerfully braving all opposition, then ran swiftly in the cause of Truth, and went ahead of all such communities who had a similar yearning in the past and regulated affairs; and these verses are followed by predicting the great revolution which would be brought about by their exertions. It is an early Makkan revelation.

SECTION 1 **The Great Commotion**

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.	بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○
1 By those yearning vehemently!	وَالنّٰزِعٰتِ غَرْقًا ۙ ①
2 And those going forth cheerfully!	وَّالنّٰشِطٰتِ نَشْطًا ۙ ②
3 And those running swiftly!	وَّالسّٰبِحٰتِ سَبْحًا ۙ ③
4 And those that are foremost going ahead!	فَالسّٰبِقٰتِ سَبْقًا ۙ ④
5 And those regulating the Affair![2653]	فَالْمُدَبِّرٰتِ اَمْرًا ۘ ⑤

2653 *Nāzi'āt* is the plural of *nāzi',* which is derived from *naza'a,* signifying *he yearned for* or *after* a thing, and *naza'a fi-l-qaus* means *he drew the bow* (LL). *Gharq* means originally *sinking* in water, but it is sometimes used in the sense of *ighrāq,* and is so used here, meaning, when used in connection with a bow, *he drew the bow to the full* or *vehemently* (LL). *Nashaṭa* signifies *he was brisk* or *lively* or *pleased* or *happy* or *cheerful* (LL). The commentators generally think that different kinds of angels are spoken of here, but see 2099, where it is shown

6 The day when the quaking one shall quake —[2654]

يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الرَّاجِفَةُ ﴿٦﴾

7 The consequence will follow it.[2655]

تَتْبَعُهَا الرَّادِفَةُ ﴿٧﴾

8 Hearts that day will palpitate,

قُلُوبٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَّاجِفَةٌ ﴿٨﴾

9 Their eyes downcast.

أَبْصَارُهَا خَاشِعَةٌ ﴿٩﴾

10 They say: Shall we indeed be restored to (our) first state?[2656]

يَقُولُونَ ءَإِنَّا لَمَرْدُودُونَ فِي الْحَافِرَةِ ﴿١٠﴾

11 What! After we are rotten bones?

ءَإِذَا كُنَّا عِظَامًا نَّخِرَةً ﴿١١﴾

12 They say: That would then be a return with loss.

قَالُوا تِلْكَ إِذًا كَرَّةٌ خَاسِرَةٌ ﴿١٢﴾

13 It is only a single cry,

فَإِنَّمَا هِيَ زَجْرَةٌ وَّاحِدَةٌ ﴿١٣﴾

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that this is a description of the believers. The commencement of the early Makkan sūrahs very often refers prophetically to later Madīnan events, the occurrence of which served as a proof of the truth of the statements made. Though the words may also apply to the later wars, I prefer the significance that they give a description of the spiritual characteristics of the faithful. There was undoubtedly a vehement yearning in the hearts of the believers for their Maker (v. 1), and it was this ardent desire that made them go forth in the way of God cheerfully in spite of the severest opposition (v. 2); they ran swiftly (v. 3), so that they traversed eastern and western lands in an incredibly short time; they were thus ahead of all those who ever carried the message of Truth to their fellow-men (v. 4); and lastly, they regulated the affair of the spread of Truth in the world (v. 5), so that the farthest east (China) and farthest west (Morocco and Spain) were lit with the light of Islām within a hundred years. Compare 32:5 where the regulating of the Affair is also spoken of, and see 1959. Taking the words in a general sense, we may interpret them as indicating the various stages through which an affair is brought to a successful issue. The first stage is that of an ardent desire or yearning for it; the second is that of going forth cheerfully to accomplish it; the third is that of running swiftly for its accomplishment, or adopting the line of least resistance; the fourth is that of going ahead of others; and the fifth that of regulating it in the best possible way.

2654 *Rajafa* signifies it was in a *state of commotion, agitation,* or *convulsion* (LL).

The quaking of the earth is often spoken of as an indication of a great revolution. The word *rajafa* in relation to a people — *rajafa al-qaumu* — signifies that *the people prepared themselves for war.*

What is meant is therefore that the efforts of the faithful spoken of in the first five verses will bring about a great commotion or a great revolution in the world, indicating the transformation which was to be brought about through them.

2655 *Al-rādifah* means literally *what must happen afterwards,* from *radifa,* meaning *he* or *it followed* or *came after it* or *him* (LL). Thus *rādifah* is really *the consequence of an affair,* a significance given under the word *ridf* by the lexicologists (LL). The consequence of great commotions is the ultimate triumph of Truth. But the triumph of Truth is also the destruction of the opponents of Truth; hence the mention of *palpitating hearts* and *downcast eyes* in the next two verses.

2656 It is the opponents who are referred to in *they say.*

14 When lo! they will be awakened.[2656a]

فَإِذَا هُمْ بِالسَّاهِرَةِ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Has not there come to thee the story of Moses,

هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ مُوسَىٰ ﴿١٥﴾

16 When his Lord called him in the holy valley, Ṭuwā?

إِذْ نَادَاهُ رَبُّهُ بِالْوَادِ الْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى ﴿١٦﴾

17 Go to Pharoah, surely he has rebelled.

اذْهَبْ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَىٰ ﴿١٧﴾

18 And say: Wilt thou purify thyself?

فَقُلْ هَلْ لَكَ إِلَىٰ أَنْ تَزَكَّىٰ ﴿١٨﴾

19 And I will guide thee to thy Lord so that thou fear (Him).

وَأَهْدِيَكَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَتَخْشَىٰ ﴿١٩﴾

20 So he showed him the mighty sign;

فَأَرَاهُ الْآيَةَ الْكُبْرَىٰ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 But he denied and disobeyed,

فَكَذَّبَ وَعَصَىٰ ﴿٢١﴾

22 Then he went back hastily,

ثُمَّ أَدْبَرَ يَسْعَىٰ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 So he gathered and called out.

فَحَشَرَ فَنَادَىٰ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Then he said: I am your Lord, the most High.

فَقَالَ أَنَا رَبُّكُمُ الْأَعْلَىٰ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 So Allāh seized him with the punishment of the Hereafter and of this life.[2657]

فَأَخَذَهُ اللَّهُ نَكَالَ الْآخِرَةِ وَالْأُولَىٰ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 Surely there is in this a lesson for him who fears.

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِمَنْ يَخْشَىٰ ﴿٢٦﴾

SECTION 2: **The Great Calamity**

27 Are you the stronger in creation or the heaven? He made it.

أَأَنْتُمْ أَشَدُّ خَلْقًا أَمِ السَّمَاءُ ۚ بَنَاهَا ﴿٢٧﴾

28 He raised high its height,[2658] and made it perfect,

رَفَعَ سَمْكَهَا فَسَوَّاهَا ﴿٢٨﴾

29 And He made dark its night and brought out its light.

وَأَغْطَشَ لَيْلَهَا وَأَخْرَجَ ضُحَاهَا ﴿٢٩﴾

2656a The spiritual awakening — the great transformation to be brought about by the Prophet — is spoken of here in clear words. This awakening was first to be brought about in Arabia and then in the whole world.

2657 The nature of the punishment in store for the opponents is made clear by citing the example of Pharaoh, whose punishment was the punishment of the Hereafter as well as of this life. Even such was to be the punishment of the Prophet's opponents, abasement in this life and chastisement in the next.

2658 The raising high of the height is, says Rz, an allusion to its extremely great height. There is a reference here to the great distances of the heavenly bodies, which stagger human imagination.

30 And the earth, He cast it after that.[2659]

وَالْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ دَحٰهَا ۝٣٠

31 He brought forth from it its water and its pasture.

أَخْرَجَ مِنْهَا مَاءَهَا وَمَرْعٰهَا ۝٣١

32 And the mountains, He made them firm,

وَالْجِبَالَ أَرْسٰهَا ۝٣٢

33 A provision for you and for your cattle.[2659a]

مَتَاعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِأَنْعَامِكُمْ ۝٣٣

34 So when the great Calamity[2660] comes;

فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الطَّآمَّةُ الْكُبْرٰى ۝٣٤

35 The day when man remembers all that he strove for,

يَوْمَ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا سَعٰى ۝٣٥

36 And hell is made manifest to him who sees.

وَبُرِّزَتِ الْجَحِيْمُ لِمَنْ يَّرٰى ۝٣٦

37 Then as for him who is inordinate,

فَأَمَّا مَنْ طَغٰى ۝٣٧

38 And prefers the life of this world,

وَاٰثَرَ الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا ۝٣٨

39 Hell is surely the abode.

فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيْمَ هِيَ الْمَأْوٰى ۝٣٩

40 And as for him who fears to stand before his Lord and restrains himself from low desires,[2661]

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهٖ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوٰى ۝٤٠

41 The Garden is surely the abode.

فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوٰى ۝٤١

42 They ask thee about the Hour, When will that take place,

يَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسٰهَا ۝٤٢

43 About which thou remindest?

فِيْمَ أَنْتَ مِنْ ذِكْرٰهَا ۝٤٣

2659 The word *daḥā* is ordinarily translated as *spread* or *expanded*, but it also means *he threw* or *cast* and *impelled, propelled* or *removed from its place* a stone with his hand (T, LL). Two things are made clear in this brief statement: (1) The earth was brought into existence after the heaven, or the starry creation; and (2) It was cast away, as a stone is cast away, from a bigger creation.

2659a How the earth was made fit for living on is next made clear. Its water, which is the source of all its life, was brought forth from it, and water made possible the growth of vegetation. The mountains, we are further told, were raised so that they might serve as a *provision for you* and *your cattle*. The mountains are the sources of rivers and through these all living things on earth are provided with sustenance.

2660 *Ṭāmmah* signifies *a calamity that predominates over others* or *a great* or *formidable thing* (LL). By the *ṭāmmah* is generally understood only the *Resurrection*, but the words of v. 25 make it clear that the reference is as much to the calamity of this life as to the Resurrection. The making of hell manifest to him *who sees* in v. 36 is a clear indication of the same; the hell of the next life is spoken of in v. 39.

2661 Refraining from low desires is the chief source from which grows a paradise. This further shows that the description given in the first five verses is really a description of the spiritual advancement of the faithful.

44 To thy Lord is the goal of it.[2661a]

إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ مُنتَهَاهَا ﴿٤٤﴾

45 Thou art only a warner to him who fears it.

إِنَّمَا أَنتَ مُنذِرُ مَن يَخْشَاهَا ﴿٤٥﴾

46 On the day when they see it, it will be as if they had but tarried for an evening or a morning.

كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبَثُوٓا۟ إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ ضُحَىٰهَا ﴿٤٦﴾

2661a The Hour is in itself a manifestation of Divine purpose. The destruction or punishment of the disbelievers is not an end in itself. The great goal of this punishment is the Lord — Rabb — Who brings everything to perfection, and the real goal of human life is thus the Lord or the meeting with the Lord.

CHAPTER 80

'Abasa: HE FROWNED

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 42 *verses*)

Opening with a touching incident as to how a blind man interrupted the Holy Prophet's conversation with some of the chiefs of the Quraish, and how the Prophet *frowned* at this interruption, this chapter, to which the incident gives its title, really states that the poor and the humble who accepted the Truth would be raised to eminence, and therefore the Prophet should not be anxious if eminent men did not listen to his message. The chapter thus speaks of the greatness to which the Qur'ān would raise its followers, and of its conquests in the far future. It is admittedly one of the very early revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 He frowned and turned away,

عَبَسَ وَ تَوَلّٰٓى ۝١

2 Because the blind man came to him.[2662]

اَنْ جَآءَهُ الْاَعْمٰى ۝٢

3 And what would make thee know that he might purify himself,

وَ مَا يُدْرِيْكَ لَعَلَّهٗ يَزَّكّٰٓى ۝٣

2662 The blind man was Ibn Umm Maktūm ('Abd Allāh, son of Shuraiḥ), who came to the Holy Prophet while he was explaining the doctrines of Islām to an assembly of the leaders of the Quraish and, interrupting, asked to be taught what Allāh had revealed to him. The Holy Prophet took this untimely interruption ill — *he frowned* and did not pay any attention to his question; on which he received this revelation (Tr. 44:80). This incident shows that the source of the Holy Prophet's revelation was other than his own mind. In the first place there was no ill-treatment for which the Holy Prophet should have repented, as Rodwell supposes him to have done. The Prophet's inattention to an intruder, while he had not yet finished his conversation, was quite natural. Again, he did not chide the intruder for his interruption, but only disliked it and gave him no answer, as the words of the Qur'ān plainly show. Secondly, even if he may be supposed to have repented for not having given an answer to the blind man, it would have

4 Or be mindful, so the Reminder should profit him?	أَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنْفَعَهُ الذِّكْرٰى ﴿٤﴾
5 As for him who considers himself free from need	أَمَّا مَنِ اسْتَغْنٰى ﴿٥﴾
6 To him thou dost attend.	فَأَنْتَ لَهُ تَصَدّٰى ﴿٦﴾
7 And no blame is on thee, if he purify himself not.[2663]	وَمَا عَلَيْكَ أَلَّا يَزَّكّٰى ﴿٧﴾
8 And as to him who comes to thee striving hard,	وَأَمَّا مَنْ جَآءَكَ يَسْعٰى ﴿٨﴾
9 And he fears —	وَهُوَ يَخْشٰى ﴿٩﴾
10 To him thou payest no regard.	فَأَنْتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهّٰى ﴿١٠﴾
11 Nay, surely it is a Reminder.	كَلَّآ إِنَّهَا تَذْكِرَةٌ ﴿١١﴾
12 So let him who will mind it.	فَمَنْ شَآءَ ذَكَرَهُ ﴿١٢﴾
13 In honoured books,	فِي صُحُفٍ مُّكَرَّمَةٍ ﴿١٣﴾
14 Exalted, purified,	مَّرْفُوعَةٍ مُّطَهَّرَةٍ ﴿١٤﴾
15 In the hands of scribes,	بِأَيْدِي سَفَرَةٍ ﴿١٥﴾
16 Noble, virtuous.[2664]	كِرَامٍ بَرَرَةٍ ﴿١٦﴾
17 Woe to man! How ungrateful is he!	قُتِلَ الْإِنْسَانُ مَآ أَكْفَرَهُ ﴿١٧﴾
18 Of what thing did He create him?	مِنْ أَيِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ ﴿١٨﴾

been sufficient to have recalled him and treated him more gently. At any rate, if it were left to the option of an individual, he himself would be the last person to give permanence to a reproval for his own act. Hence the source from which the Holy Prophet received his revelation was outside his own heart or his own inclinations.

It may be noted that the chief trait of the Holy Prophet's character was his great regard for the poor. There are numerous incidents on record showing how he would do an old woman's work for her, and how he, even when the head of a State at Madīnah, would carry the load for one too weak to bear it. His wife Khadījah thus describes this trait of his character: "Never, never will Allāh bring thee to disgrace, for thou art true to ties of relationship, and honourest thy guest and earnest for the indigent and helpest all in real distress" (B. 1:1). He not only loved the poor from his youth to his old age, from the time that he was an ordinary citizen to the time that he became the ruler of the whole of Arabia, but he himself chose to be classed among the poor in his life as well as in his death. Even when the wealth of Arabia lay at his feet, and his wives claimed a share in that wealth, he showed his readiness to sacrifice every comfort, but not the honour of remaining *a poor man*.

2663 If the Quraish leaders would not come out of the impurities of sin, the Prophet was not to blame for it, so that on their account he should neglect the poor who came to him earnestly desirous to be delivered from the bondage of sin.

2664 The six verses from 11 to 16 are really a comfort to the Holy Prophet for the hint contained in the first ten, that the leaders would not mind his warning or accept his message, and that therefore he must apply himself to the poor, who would be raised to eminence by the Qur'ān. These verses tell him that the Qur'ān

19 Of a small life-germ. He creates him, then proportions him,[2665]

مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ ۭ خَلَقَهٗ فَقَدَّرَهٗ ﴿۱۹﴾

20 Then makes the way easy for him,

ثُمَّ السَّبِيْلَ يَسَّرَهٗ ﴿۲۰﴾

21 Then He causes him to die, then asigns to him a grave,

ثُمَّ اَمَاتَهٗ فَاَقْبَرَهٗ ﴿۲۱﴾

22 Then, when He will, He raises him to life again.

ثُمَّ اِذَا شَآءَ اَنْشَرَهٗ ﴿۲۲﴾

23 Nay, but he does not what He commands him.

كَلَّا لَمَّا يَقْضِ مَآ اَمَرَهٗ ﴿۲۳﴾

24 Then let man look at his food—

فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْاِنْسَانُ اِلٰى طَعَامِهٖٓ ﴿۲۴﴾

25 How We pour down abundant water,

اَنَّا صَبَبْنَا الْمَآءَ صَبًّا ﴿۲۵﴾

26 Then cleave the earth, cleaving (it) asunder,

ثُمَّ شَقَقْنَا الْاَرْضَ شَقًّا ﴿۲۶﴾

27 Then cause the grain to grow therein,

فَاَنْۢبَتْنَا فِيْهَا حَبًّا ﴿۲۷﴾

28 And grapes and clover,

وَّعِنَبًا وَّقَضْبًا ﴿۲۸﴾

29 And the olive and the palm,

وَّزَيْتُوْنًا وَّنَخْلًا ﴿۲۹﴾

30 And thick gardens,

وَّحَدَآئِقَ غُلْبًا ﴿۳۰﴾

31 And fruits and herbage —

وَّفَاكِهَةً وَّاَبًّا ﴿۳۱﴾

32 A provision for you and your cattle.

مَّتَاعًا لَّكُمْ وَلِاَنْعَامِكُمْ ﴿۳۲﴾

33 But when the deafening cry comes,[2666]

فَاِذَا جَآءَتِ الصَّآخَّةُ ﴿۳۳﴾

34 The day when a man flees from his brother,

يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ اَخِيْهِ ﴿۳۴﴾

35 And his mother and his father,

وَاُمِّهٖ وَاَبِيْهِ ﴿۳۵﴾

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is a *tadhkirah, a reminder, a source of eminence* (855). Vv. 15 and 16 clearly state that the scribes of the Qur'ān will be virtuous men, who will be honoured in the world. Not only was this true of men like Abū Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī, who were among the first scribes of the Holy Qur'ān, but even in its later history great rulers of empires earned their livelihood by writing copies of the Holy Qur'ān. Hence the prophecy was given as a comfort to the Holy Prophet that he should not be grieved because the rich and the leaders did not accept him, for the poor who accepted him would be raised to eminence through the Holy Qur'ān.

2665 *Qaddara* (inf. *taqdīr*) ordinarily signifies *he made a thing according to a measure*, or *proportioned it*, the significance being that God has allotted to man a certain sphere in which he can make progress. But it sometimes carries the same significance as *aqdara*, viz., *he empowered* him, *enabled* him, *rendered* him *able* (LL), and the meaning in this case would be that Allāh has not only created man, but has also given him power and ability, so that he can make progress, if he likes.

2666 *Ṣākhkhah* literally signifies *a cry that deafens by its vehemence* (LL). Hence it is made to apply to the day of Resurrection; but it also means any calamity or misfortune, or *a severe calamity* (LL).

36 And his spouse and his sons.

37 Every man of them, that day, will have concern enough to make him indifferent to others.

38 Faces on that day will be bright,

39 Laughing, joyous.

40 And faces on that day will have dust on them,

41 Darkness covering them.[2667]

42 Those are the disbelievers, the wicked.

وَصَاحِبَتِهِ وَبَنِيهِ ﴿٣٦﴾

لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِّنْهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ شَأْنٌ يُغْنِيهِ ﴿٣٧﴾

وُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّسْفِرَةٌ ﴿٣٨﴾

ضَاحِكَةٌ مُّسْتَبْشِرَةٌ ﴿٣٩﴾

وَوُجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَلَيْهَا غَبَرَةٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

تَرْهَقُهَا قَتَرَةٌ ﴿٤١﴾

أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَفَرَةُ الْفَجَرَةُ ﴿٤٢﴾

2667 The brightness of the faces spoken of here indicates their *joy;* their being covered by darkness indicates *sorrow* or *gloom.*

CHAPTER 81

Al-Takwīr: THE FOLDING UP

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 29 *verses*)

This chapter is entitled *Al-Takwīr* or *The Folding up* from the mention of the folding up of the sun in the first verse. The significance of the folding up of the sun is that it will lose its light or that the entire solar system will be destroyed. It may thus indicate the end of things so far as this life is concerned and may thus stand for the new order, which is called the Resurrection. It may, however, be also a metaphorical expression for the distresses and misfortunes of a people, as if the sun of their fortune became dark.

That the chapter speaks of the final triumph of Truth is made clear in the latter part of this chapter: "It is the word of an honourable Messenger, possessor of strength, established in the presence of the Lord of the Throne of Power, one to be obeyed" (vv. 20 and 21); and again: "And of a truth he saw himself on the clear horizon" (v. 23). The opening verses of the chapter from the 3rd onwards speak prophetically of certain events relating to the distant future and of certain portents of the overthrow of opposition and prevalence of Truth, and thus throw further light on the fact that the ultimate triumph of Truth is really the subject-matter of this chapter. Its revelation belongs to the very early Makkan period.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 When the sun is folded up,[2668]

اِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ ①

2 And when the stars are dust-coloured,[2669]

وَاِذَا النُّجُوْمُ انْكَدَرَتْ ②

2668 For the significance of the *folding up* of the sun, see the introductory note. The first thirteen verses of this chapter speak of twelve signs, some of which undoubtedly relate to this life and the rest may therefore also be taken as referring metaphorically to this life. As I have so often shown, the Resurrection of the dead in another life may often contain a deeper reference to the spiritual resurrection which was to be brought about by the Prophet in this very life, and hence the combination of the real with the metaphorical, as here.

2669 The darkening of the stars indicates complete darkness, for when the sun is set the light of the stars helps man. We are told that not only would the light of the day disappear, but even the smaller lights, to which the traveller looks in the darkness of the night, would become dark, and so the opponents of Truth would be left in utter darkness.

3 And when the mountains are made to pass away,[2670]

وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ ۝٣

4 And when the camels are abandoned,[2671]

وَإِذَا الْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ ۝٤

5 And when the wild animals are gathered together,[2672]

وَإِذَا الْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ ۝٥

6 And when the cities are made to swell,[2673]

وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ ۝٦

7 And when men are united,[2674]

وَإِذَا النُّفُوسُ زُوِّجَتْ ۝٧

8 And when the one buried alive is asked

وَإِذَا الْمَوْءُودَةُ سُئِلَتْ ۝٨

9 For what sin she was killed,[2675]

بِأَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُتِلَتْ ۝٩

2670 The passing away of the mountains signifies the passing away of the greatest obstacles to the spread of Truth; see 1604.

2671 *'Ishār* is plural of *'usharā'* (from the root *'ashr* meaning *ten*), meaning a *she-camel that has been ten months pregnant,* and she is called *'usharā' until she has brought forth* and *also after she has brought forth* (LL). " Farazdaq applies this term to camels that are milked " (LL). Such camels are undoubtedly the most precious, and their being abandoned may stand for the abandonment of camels generally. Bearing on this subject is a ḥadīth of the Prophet: " The camels will be abandoned so that they will not be used for going swiftly (from one place to another) " (Msh, 26:5). The reference in this ḥadīth is clearly to a time when *swifter* modes of going from one place to another will come into existence, so that the camels will no more be needed.

2672 The gathering together of wild animals seems also to be a prophecy relating to the distant future, when the wild animals were to be gathered together from all corners of the world into big towns. The word *wuḥūsh* is the plural of *waḥsh,* which means a wild animal, such as *is not tame* or *beasts of the desert* (LL); and may be metaphorically applied to barbarous or uncivilized people — a shy girl is called *waḥsh* — so that the reference may be to the gathering together of barbarous or uncivilized people in the centres of civilization. Note also that the word *ḥashr* signifies not only *going forth from one place to another,* but also in particular *causing* people *to go down to cities* or *towns* (LL).

2673 I make a departure here from the ordinary translation. *Biḥār* is plural of *baḥr,* which means *sea* or *river,* and if that significance be adopted, the reference would be to the destruction of the opponents, for the *swollen sea* (52:6) is plainly spoken of as a means of the destruction of those who would extirpate Truth. But the word *biḥār* is the plural of *baḥrah* as well as of *baḥr* (T, LL), and *baḥrah* is synonymous with *baldah* or *a town* " and the plural *biḥār* they apply to *cities* as well as *towns* or *villages* " (T, LL). According to N, the Arabs call the cities and the towns *al-biḥār.* The words *baḥrah* (singular of *biḥār*) and *buḥairah* (diminutive of *baḥrah*) are also applied to Madīnah (N). This would leave no doubt that *cities* is as literal a significance of the word *biḥār* as *seas.* The swelling of cities is a clear indication that the advancing civilization of man will result in men gathering more and more in cities. The words of the next verse corroborate this significance, as it speaks in clear words of the *uniting of men.*

2674 The uniting of men is one of the greatest achievements of modern civilization. The time is not far distant indeed when the whole world will be united and may become as a single nation.

2675 The reference here is to the burying alive of daughters, a practice common among the pre-Islamic Arabs who, either for fear of hunger or disgrace, buried alive their female children. The questioning refers to the time when, with the predominance of Islām in Arabia, this barbarous practice was to be abolished.

10 And when the books are spread,[2676]	وَإِذَا الصُّحُفُ نُشِرَتْ ﴿١٠﴾
11 And when the heaven has its covering removed,[2677]	وَإِذَا السَّمَآءُ كُشِطَتْ ﴿١١﴾
12 And when hell is kindled,[2678]	وَإِذَا الْجَحِيمُ سُعِّرَتْ ﴿١٢﴾
13 And when the Garden is brought nigh —[2679]	وَإِذَا الْجَنَّةُ أُزْلِفَتْ ﴿١٣﴾
14 Every soul will know what it has prepared.[2680]	عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّآ أَحْضَرَتْ ﴿١٤﴾
15 Nay, I call to witness the stars,	فَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِالْخُنَّسِ ﴿١٥﴾
16 Running their course, (and) setting,[2681]	الْجَوَارِ الْكُنَّسِ ﴿١٦﴾

But the *one buried alive* may stand generally for the female sex, and the reference here may, therefore, be to the general tyranny of the male over the female, who has been kept in ignorance. See 1425, where it is shown that the keeping ignorant of one's children is equivalent to killing them.

2676 *Ṣuḥuf* is the plural of *ṣaḥīfah*, which means *a written piece of paper* or *of skin*. This may also be a prophetic reference to the distant future, with the circulation of books and papers to an almost incredible extent. The Muslim world did immense service to the cause of the circulation of literature in the days of its prosperity, and it is recognized on all hands that the revival of learning in Europe, which has brought about the great circulation of books and papers, was itself a direct result of the impetus which Islām gave to the study of letters.

2677 The removal of the covering of the heaven signifies the unveiling of the mysteries relating to the heavens, which is one of the great achievements of modern science. Compare 99:2 where the earth is spoken of as yielding her treasures.

2678 It should be noted that apart from the hell of the next life, the Holy Qur'ān very often speaks of a hell in this life. Compare 79:36, and see 2660. Just as the righteous are promised heaven in this very life the wicked are told that hell would be kindled for them even here, if they had only the eyes to see it. And indeed there has been a veritable hell raging in this life since the Second World War. The forces of materialism have already engulfed the world in a burning hell, and another World War would only make its flames appear the more hideous.

2679 While the previous verses give us a picture of the material civilization of the world, v. 12 drawing attention to its culmination in the form of bringing about a hell in this life owing to the utter neglect of all spiritual values, this verse gives the good news of the Garden being brought nigh. In the Hereafter, the Garden would be a sure reality and the righteous will find themselves in it, enjoying its bliss, but here it is only spoken of as being brought nigh. The evident conclusion is that God has not doomed this world to utter destruction, but that, when it has tasted somewhat of the evil consequences of its own doings, Divine mercy will take it by the hand and bring the Garden of bliss near to it by bringing about a spiritual awakening. Thus the solace of mind which man can attain to through realization of the Divine in him is here described as the bringing nigh of the Garden.

2680 Man will then become conscious that there is a higher life, which is his real goal, and he will know what to do to attain that goal.

2681 *Khunnas* is the plural of *khānis* (from *khanasa, he went back*), meaning *going backward*, and signifies *the stars* in general, because they retire or hide themselves at setting, or because they become concealed in the day-time, or the planets (Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus and Mercury), because of their retrogression (LL).

17 And the night when it departs,

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا عَسْعَسَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 And the morning when it brightens,[2682]

وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا تَنَفَّسَ ﴿١٨﴾

19 Surely it is the word of a bountiful Messenger,

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿١٩﴾

20 The possessor of strength, established in the presence of the Lord of the Throne,

ذِي قُوَّةٍ عِندَ ذِي الْعَرْشِ مَكِينٍ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 One (to be) obeyed, and faithful.[2683]

مُّطَاعٍ ثَمَّ أَمِينٍ ﴿٢١﴾

22 And your companion is not mad.

وَمَا صَاحِبُكُم بِمَجْنُونٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 And truly he saw himself on the clear horizon.[2684]

وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ بِالْأُفُقِ الْمُبِينِ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Nor is he niggardly of the unseen.[2685]

وَمَا هُوَ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ بِضَنِينٍ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 Nor is it the word of an accursed devil —[2686]

وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَيْطَانٍ رَّجِيمٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

Kunnas is the plural of *kānis* (from *kanasa, he,* an antelope, *entered his kinās,* i.e., *his hiding-place*), meaning *an antelope, entering his hiding-place,* and signifies *the stars that hide themselves in their places of setting,* or *the planets,* for a similar reason (LL). The calling to witness of *the stars that run their course and set* also draws attention to the disasters that awaited the opponents of the Truth ; see 2371.

2682 The departing of the night and the rise of the bright morning is clearly the disappearance of the darkness of ignorance, giving place to the bright light of the sun of Islām.

2683 The commentators generally suppose the angel Gabriel to be referred to in vv. 19-21, but the reference is to the Holy Prophet himself, who is undoubtedly *Rasūl karīm, the bountiful* Messenger, by which name he is generally known in the whole Muslim world. Again, he is clearly spoken of as *your companion* in v. 22, while Gabriel could not be called *your companion.* The negation of his being mad, spoken of in that verse and so often referred to in these *sūrahs,* also shows him to be the Prophet himself. Moreover, v. 21 speaks of him as being *faithful,* clearly referring to his past reputation in the whole of Arabia as *al-Amīn* or *the Faithful.* His being a *muṭā',* or *one to be obeyed,* is also spoken of elsewhere in the Holy Qur'ān: "And We sent not a messenger but that he should be obeyed by Allāh's permission" (4:64). His being *possessor* of *strength* prophetically refers to his future career and to his ultimate triumph over his enemies.

2684 *Ufuq* is the *horizon* or the *remote side,* and the Prophet's seeing himself on *ufuq* means that his light would shine in the remotest corners of the world. See also 53:7, and 2376.

2685 The Prophet (not Gabriel) is here declared to be not niggardly of *the unseen,* showing that there are some great prophecies relating to the future in what has gone before. And in fact, as I have shown, the chapter opens with prophecies of the triumphant career of Islām and certain portents relating to the distant future, while the latter part of the chapter speaks plainly of the ultimate triumph of Truth.

2686 It is not the word of the devil, i.e., these are not the conjectures of a soothsayer — the prophecies of the Qur'ān will be duly fulfilled. Sale's comment is worthy of note: "The verse is an answer to a calumny of the infidels, who said the Qur'ān was only a piece of divination or magic; for the Arabs suppose the soothsayer or magician receives his intelligence from those evil spirits who are continually listening to learn what they can from the inhabitants of heaven"

26 Whither then are you going?[2687]

27 It is naught but a Reminder for the nations,[2687a]

28 For him among you who will go straight.[2688]

29 And you will not, except Allāh please, the Lord of the worlds.

فَأَيْنَ تَذْهَبُونَ ﴿٢٦﴾

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِّلْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٢٧﴾

لِمَنْ شَآءَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَّسْتَقِيْمَ ﴿٢٨﴾

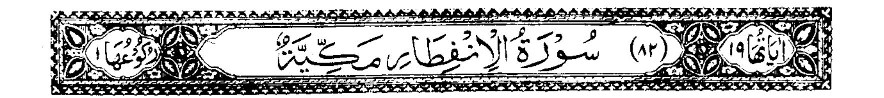
وَمَا تَشَآءُوْنَ إِلَّآ أَنْ يَّشَآءَ اللّٰهُ رَبُّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ﴿٢٩﴾

It should be borne in mind that where the Qur'ān speaks of the listening by stealth of the devils, it is in reference to this old Arab belief. It nowhere refers to this belief in words which would show that it upholds this old Arab belief; on the other hand, there are ample indications that it rejects this belief.

2687 Wonder is expressed that notwithstanding the clearest evidence of Truth, humanity has been so slow to accept it. They were invited to the Truth which gave them peace, but they were not coming to it. Even such is the case to-day.

2687a In the words — *a Reminder for the nations* — it is shown that it is not meant for the Arabs alone but for all nations. This being one of the earliest revelations, clearly shows that the foundations of the universality of the message of Islām were laid on the very first day.

2688 How beautifully clear are the words of the Qur'ān! It is a source of eminence for all the nations of the world, but only if people will follow its directions; hence it adds the words, *For him among you who will go straight.* See further 2633a for what is said in the verse that follows: "You will not, except Allāh please".



CHAPTER 82

Al-Infiṭār : THE CLEAVING

(Revealed at Makkah: 19 *verses*)

This chapter, which receives its title from a statement made in its opening verse as to heaven being *cleft asunder*, is, as it were, a counterpart of the one preceding it; for while that chapter, after mentioning certain signs, draws the conclusion of the final triumph of Islām, this refers to that triumph in its opening verses, and speaks also of the utter helplessness in which the opponents would find themselves as a result of that triumph. Its date of revelation is the same as that of the preceding chapter.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 When the heaven is cleft asunder,

إِذَا السَّمَآءُ انْفَطَرَتْ ۝١

2 And when the stars become dispersed,

وَإِذَا الْكَوَاكِبُ انْتَثَرَتْ ۝٢

3 And when the rivers are made to flow forth,

وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ فُجِّرَتْ ۝٣

4 And when the graves are laid open —[2689]

وَإِذَا الْقُبُوْرُ بُعْثِرَتْ ۝٤

2689 Taken metaphorically the first four verses tell us how a great spiritual rising would be brought about. The cleaving asunder of the heaven would mean that the doors of heaven will open and Divine help will come to the Prophet. The *dispersing of the stars* signifies the spreading abroad of the bearers of the message of Truth, who are likened to stars, as the Prophet said: "My companions are as stars" (Msh. 27:13). The indication is that a time would come when the teachers of Truth would disperse themselves in Arabia, and then throughout the world. The *flowing forth of the rivers* is in accordance with what is stated elsewhere in the Holy Qur'ān in a parable. "He sends down water from the clouds, then watercourses flow with water according to their measure. . . . Thus does Allāh set forth parables" (13:17). The rivers of Divine knowledge were made to reach the dry lands within and without Arabia. The laying open of the graves signifies the spiritual resurrection which was to be brought about by the Holy Prophet, for the reprobate are clearly spoken of as being in the graves (35:22). Thus all these four verses speak of the great change that was to be brought about in the world by the preaching of the Prophet. According to Farrā', the significance of the laying open of graves is *their throwing out gold and silver* (mineral wealth), *which lies buried in them, and the coming out of the dead will be after this, and it is one of the signs of the Hour that the earth should throw*

5 Every soul will know what it has sent before and what it has held back.[2690]

عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ وَأَخَّرَتْ ﴿٥﴾

6 O man, what beguiles thee from thy Lord, the Gracious?

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ ٱلْكَرِيمِ ﴿٦﴾

7 Who created thee, then made thee complete, then made thee in a right good state—

ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّىٰكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ﴿٧﴾

8 Into whatever form He pleases He casts thee.

فِىٓ أَىِّ صُورَةٍ مَّا شَآءَ رَكَّبَكَ ﴿٨﴾

9 Nay, but you give the lie to the Judgment,

كَلَّا بَلْ تُكَذِّبُونَ بِٱلدِّينِ ﴿٩﴾

10 And surely there are keepers over you,

وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَٰفِظِينَ ﴿١٠﴾

11 Honourable recorders,

كِرَامًا كَٰتِبِينَ ﴿١١﴾

12 They know what you do.[2691]

يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 Surely the righteous are in bliss,

إِنَّ ٱلْأَبْرَارَ لَفِى نَعِيمٍ ﴿١٣﴾

14 And the wicked are truly in burning Fire —

وَإِنَّ ٱلْفُجَّارَ لَفِى جَحِيمٍ ﴿١٤﴾

15 They will enter it on the day of Judgment,

يَصْلَوْنَهَا يَوْمَ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿١٥﴾

16 And will not be absent from it.

وَمَا هُمْ عَنْهَا بِغَآئِبِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

17 And what will make thee realize what the day of Judgment is?

وَمَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا يَوْمُ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Again, what will make thee realize what the day of Judgment is?

ثُمَّ مَآ أَدْرَىٰكَ مَا يَوْمُ ٱلدِّينِ ﴿١٨﴾

19 The day when no soul controls aught for another soul. And the command on that day is Allāh's.

يَوْمَ لَا تَمْلِكُ نَفْسٌ لِّنَفْسٍ شَيْـًٔا وَٱلْأَمْرُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِّلَّهِ ﴿١٩﴾

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out its mineral wealth (LA). Or, what is meant is that *the mysteries hidden from the human eye will be revealed* (R). Taken literally, the words speak of the Resurrection.

2690 This verse supports what is said in the previous note. Qaffāl holds that the knowledge spoken of here will accrue before the day of Resurrection (Rz). A greater manifestation of the same will, however, take place in the life after death.

2691 That every action of man is recorded and bears fruit is one of the principal doctrines of the religion of Islām. Of course, it is not meant that angels are sitting with pens in their hands and inkstands before them, at desks, like copyists, noting down that at such and such a time such a one did such a good or such a bad deed. That would be a distortion of the teaching of the Qur'ān. For what that record is, see the next chapter, where both the record of the righteous and the record of the wicked is spoken of. See also 17:13, 14.



CHAPTER 83

Al-Taṭfīf: DEFAULT IN DUTY

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 36 *verses*)

This chapter condemns those *who give short measure* or *short weight* and thus *cheat others* or *make a default in any of their duties*; hence the name. At the same time we are told that those who fulfil their duties are exalted. It continues the subject-matter of the preceding chapter and explains the nature of the two records, the record of the wicked and the record of the righteous. Why do the righteous prosper? Because they fulfil their duties and are true to their obligations. Why do the guilty suffer and perish? Because they defraud and cheat others and are not true to their responsibilities. It teaches the utmost rectitude in one's dealings. Its revelation belongs to the early Makkan period.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

1 Woe to the cheaters![2692]

2 Who, when they take the measure (of their dues) from men, take it fully,

3 And when they measure out to others or weigh out for them, they give less than is due.

4 Do they not think that they will be raised again,

5 To a mighty day? —

6 The day when men will stand before the Lord of the worlds.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِيْنَ ①

الَّذِيْنَ إِذَا اكْتَالُوْا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُوْنَ ②

وَإِذَا كَالُوْهُمْ أَوْ وَّزَنُوْهُمْ يُخْسِرُوْنَ ③

أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولٰٓئِكَ أَنَّهُمْ مَّبْعُوْثُوْنَ ④

لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيْمٍ ⑤

يَّوْمَ يَقُوْمُ النَّاسُ لِرَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ⑥

2692 *Muṭaffif* is *one who gives short measure and short weight, thus cheating his companion* (LL). *Ṭaffafa* (inf. n. *taṭfīf*, which is the title of this chapter) means *he made defective* or *deficient* in a general sense, and you say *ṭaffafa al-mikyāl* or *al-mīzān* to indicate that *he gave short measure or short weight* (LL). But the word is used in a wider sense. A man did not attend the prayer in time, and being questioned by 'Umar, offered some excuse, to which 'Umar replied, *ṭaffafta*, which is explained as meaning *naqaṣta*, i.e., *thou hast made a default* (N). Hence the *muṭaffifīn* are not only *those who cheat others by giving them less than what is their due*, but also *those who make a default in any of their duties*. The taking of the measure and the measuring out, in the next two verses, must also be read in a general sense.

7 Nay, surely the record of the wicked is in the prison.[2693]

كَلَّآ إِنَّ كِتٰبَ الْفُجَّارِ لَفِيْ سِجِّيْنٍ ۝٧

8 And what will make thee know what the prison is?

وَمَآ أَدْرٰىكَ مَا سِجِّيْنٌ ۝٨

9 It is a written book.

كِتٰبٌ مَّرْقُوْمٌ ۝٩

10 Woe on that day to the rejectors!

وَيْلٌ يَّوْمَئِذٍ لِّلْمُكَذِّبِيْنَ ۝١٠

11 Who give the lie to the day of Judgment.

الَّذِيْنَ يُكَذِّبُوْنَ بِيَوْمِ الدِّيْنِ ۝١١

12 And none gives the lie to it but every exceeder of limits, every sinful one;

وَمَا يُكَذِّبُ بِهٖٓ إِلَّا كُلُّ مُعْتَدٍ أَثِيْمٍ ۝١٢

13 When Our messages are recited to him, he says: Stories of those of yore!

إِذَا تُتْلٰى عَلَيْهِ اٰيٰتُنَا قَالَ أَسَاطِيْرُ الْأَوَّلِيْنَ ۝١٣

14 Nay, rather, what they earned is rust upon their hearts.

كَلَّا بَلْ ۜ رَانَ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ مَّا كَانُوْا يَكْسِبُوْنَ ۝١٤

15 Nay, surely they are that day debarred from their Lord.[2694]

كَلَّآ إِنَّهُمْ عَنْ رَّبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَّمَحْجُوْبُوْنَ ۝١٥

16 Then they will surely enter the burning Fire.

ثُمَّ إِنَّهُمْ لَصَالُوا الْجَحِيْمِ ۝١٦

17 Then it will be said: This is what you gave the lie to.

ثُمَّ يُقَالُ هٰذَا الَّذِيْ كُنْتُمْ بِهٖ تُكَذِّبُوْنَ ۝١٧

18 Nay, surely the record of the righteous is in the highest places.[2695]

كَلَّآ إِنَّ كِتٰبَ الْأَبْرَارِ لَفِيْ عِلِّيِّيْنَ ۝١٨

2693 *Sijjīn* is supposed by some to be the name of a place of a most degraded nature, but LA gives *sijjīn* as the equivalent of *sijn,* meaning a ***prison;*** this is also the interpretation preferred by Zj, A'Ub and Mubarrad (Rz). But this ***prison*** should not be taken as signifying a *gaol,* for in the verses that follow the Qur'ān itself explains what this prison is. In v. 9, it is spoken of as *a written book.* This *written book* or *record,* which preserves the deeds of the evildoers, is called *a prison* because it keeps their faculties for the doing of good shut up as within a prison, and the very consequences of their evil deeds hamper their progress. See vv. 14 and 15, where the actions of the evildoers are spoken of as being a *rust* on their hearts, and they are further referred to as being *debarred* from their Lord.

2694 The punishment of the wicked is here described as their being *debarred from their Lord.* They have no consciousness of the Higher Presence and, being thus debarred from their Lord in this life, enter the burning Fire in the next, as plainly stated in the verse that follows.

2695 *'Illiyyūn* is said by some to be the plural of *'illī* and by others to be that of *'illiyyah,* while still others hold that it has no singular (LL). Like *sijjīn,* some would make it a proper name, but others rightly consider it to mean (from *'alā,* meaning *it was high*) the highest of places and the most exalted of grades and the one (bringing a man) nearest to Allāh in the latter abode (N). But note that, like *sijjīn,* it is not the name of a place but that of a record (v. 20); Q and Az give similar explanations. The *highest places* are thus the records of the best

19 And what will make thee know what the highest places are ?

وَمَآ أَدْرٰىكَ مَا عِلِّيُّوْنَ ﴿١٩﴾

20 It is a written book.

كِتٰبٌ مَّرْقُوْمٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Those drawn near (to Allāh) witness it.

يَّشْهَدُهُ الْمُقَرَّبُوْنَ ﴿٢١﴾

22 Surely the righteous are in bliss,

اِنَّ الْاَبْرَارَ لَفِيْ نَعِيْمٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

23 On raised couches, gazing —

عَلَى الْاَرَآئِكِ يَنْظُرُوْنَ ﴿٢٣﴾

24 Thou recognizest in their faces the brightness of bliss.

تَعْرِفُ فِيْ وُجُوْهِهِمْ نَضْرَةَ النَّعِيْمِ ﴿٢٤﴾

25 They are given to drink of a pure drink, sealed.

يُسْقَوْنَ مِنْ رَّحِيْقٍ مَّخْتُوْمٍ ﴿٢٥﴾

26 The sealing of it is (with) musk. And for that let the aspirers aspire.

خِتٰمُهٗ مِسْكٌ ؕ وَفِيْ ذٰلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُوْنَ ﴿٢٦﴾

27 And it is tempered with water coming from above —[2696]

وَمِزَاجُهٗ مِنْ تَسْنِيْمٍ ﴿٢٧﴾

28 A fountain from which drink those drawn near (to Allāh).

عَيْنًا يَّشْرَبُ بِهَا الْمُقَرَّبُوْنَ ﴿٢٨﴾

29 Surely they who are guilty used to laugh at those who believe.

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اَجْرَمُوْا كَانُوْا مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا يَضْحَكُوْنَ ﴿٢٩﴾

30 And when they passed by them, they winked at one another,

وَاِذَا مَرُّوْا بِهِمْ يَتَغَامَزُوْنَ ﴿٣٠﴾

31 And when they returned to their people, they returned exulting.

وَاِذَا انْقَلَبُوْٓا اِلٰٓى اَهْلِهِمُ انْقَلَبُوْا فَكِهِيْنَ ﴿٣١﴾

32 And when they saw them, they said : Surely these are in error —

وَاِذَا رَاَوْهُمْ قَالُوْٓا اِنَّ هٰٓؤُلَآءِ لَضَآلُّوْنَ ﴿٣٢﴾

33 And they were not sent as keepers over them.

وَمَآ اُرْسِلُوْا عَلَيْهِمْ حٰفِظِيْنَ ﴿٣٣﴾

34 So this day those who believe laugh at the disbelievers —[2697]

فَالْيَوْمَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ يَضْحَكُوْنَ ﴿٣٤﴾

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deeds, which enable a man to soar high and cut off the chains which bind him to low desires.

2696 *Tasnīm* is generally taken to be a proper name, but bearing in mind what has been said regarding *sijjīn* and *'illiyyūn*, Zj's interpretation, ***a water coming upon them from above*** (LL), is preferable. The water coming from above signifies spiritually ***the knowledge of Allāh*** (Rz), because it is from this source that those who are drawn nigh to Allāh (v. 28) are made to drink.

2697 The laughing of the believers is not to be taken literally. The word *ḍāḥikah*, which literally means *laughing*, also occurs elsewhere regarding the faces of the righteous **(80:39)**, and signifies only ***the brightness of hope in their faces.***

35 On raised couches, gazing.

عَلَى الْأَرَآئِكِ يَنْظُرُوْنَ ﴿٣٥﴾

36 Surely the disbelievers are rewarded as they did.

هَلْ ثُوِّبَ الْكُفَّارُ مَا كَانُوْا يَفْعَلُوْنَ ﴿٣٦﴾

The laughing in this case simply expresses a condition of joy which should make one laugh. The reversal of the condition of the believers and the disbelievers is all that is meant.



CHAPTER 84

Al-Inshiqāq : THE BURSTING ASUNDER

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 25 *verses*)

The chapter receives its title from the statement made in the opening verse as to the *bursting asunder* of the cloud. The subject-matter is similar to that of the previous chapter. It is one of the earliest revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسۡمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ ۝

1 When the heaven bursts asunder,[2698]

اِذَا السَّمَآءُ انۡشَقَّتۡ ۝

2 And listens to its Lord and is made fit;[2699]

وَ اَذِنَتۡ لِرَبِّهَا وَ حُقَّتۡ ۝

3 And when the earth is stretched,[2700]

وَ اِذَا الۡاَرۡضُ مُدَّتۡ ۝

2698 The first five verses of this chapter speak of an ordinary phenomenon of nature, viz., the coming down of rain and the growth of vegetation, as a reference to the transformation which was to be brought about by the Divine revelation. The bursting asunder of heaven here stands for the coming down of rain; compare 25:25, "And on the day when the heaven bursts asunder with the clouds".

2699 *Adhina la-hū* signifies *he listened to him* (LL). By the cloud or heaven listening to its Lord here, and the earth listening to its Lord in v. 5, is meant their obedience to His commandment. To both phrases is added the word *ḥuqqat*, signifying that they are made suitable or fit for listening to and obeying the Divine commandments, i.e., it is their very nature to be entirely submissive to the Divine commandments.

2700 *Madda-hū* signifies *he pulled it, strained it, extended it by drawing or pulling, stretched it, extended it* (LL). The *stretching* of the earth signifies the same as its *stirring* and *swelling* in 22:5 and 41:39. "And among His signs is that thou seest the earth still, but when We send down on it water, it stirs and swells" (41:39); see 2210, where the meaning is explained to be the *producing of herbage*, the expression here, as there, signifying metaphorically that Divine revelation gives spiritual life to man. The meaning of the earth being stretched is explained in the next verse: *it casts forth what is in it and becomes empty*, i.e., the treasures of life latent within it are brought to light by the coming down of rain.

4 And casts forth what is in it and becomes empty,

وَأَلْقَتْ مَا فِيهَا وَتَخَلَّتْ ۝٤

5 And listens to its Lord and is made fit.

وَأَذِنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ ۝٥

6 O man, thou must strive a hard striving (to attain) to thy Lord, until thou meet Him.[2701]

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَدْحًا فَمُلَٰقِيهِ ۝٦

7 Then as to him who is given his book in his right hand,

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَٰبَهُۥ بِيَمِينِهِۦ ۝٧

8 His account will be taken by an easy reckoning,

فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا ۝٨

9 And he will go back to his people rejoicing.

وَيَنقَلِبُ إِلَىٰٓ أَهْلِهِۦ مَسْرُورًا ۝٩

10 And as to him who is given his book behind his back,

وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَٰبَهُۥ وَرَآءَ ظَهْرِهِۦ ۝١٠

11 He will call for perdition,

فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُوا۟ ثُبُورًا ۝١١

12 And enter into burning Fire.

وَيَصْلَىٰ سَعِيرًا ۝١٢

13 Surely he was (erstwhile) joyful among his people.

إِنَّهُۥ كَانَ فِىٓ أَهْلِهِۦ مَسْرُورًا ۝١٣

14 Surely he thought that he would never return (to Allāh) —

إِنَّهُۥ ظَنَّ أَن لَّن يَحُورَ ۝١٤

15 Yea, surely his Lord is ever Seer of him.

بَلَىٰٓ إِنَّ رَبَّهُۥ كَانَ بِهِۦ بَصِيرًا ۝١٥

16 But nay, I call to witness the sunset redness,

فَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِٱلشَّفَقِ ۝١٦

17 And the night and that which it drives on,

وَٱلَّيْلِ وَمَا وَسَقَ ۝١٧

18 And the moon when it grows full,[2702]

وَٱلْقَمَرِ إِذَا ٱتَّسَقَ ۝١٨

19 That you shall certainly ascend to one state after another.[2703]

لَتَرْكَبُنَّ طَبَقًا عَن طَبَقٍ ۝١٩

2701 This is the conclusion to which a consideration of the first five verses leads. Man must strive hard to attain to his Lord. Those who do this are ultimately joyful (v. 9), but those who give themselves up to the pleasures of this life (v. 13) shall afterwards be in a sad plight (v. 11).

2702 Verses 16-18 draw attention to another phenomenon of nature, thereby indicating the departure of the power of the opponents of Truth. The *shafaq*, or the *sunset redness*, stands here for the disappearing sun of the power of the opponents, the night of adversity, which was now to overtake them, driving before it what vestige of light had remained. But they were not to remain submerged in darkness for ever, for the moon (the Holy Prophet) had already made its appearance and would soon grow full, when the Arab nation was to march forth to conquer the world, the moon being a symbol of the power of the Arabs. For an alternative significance, see next note.

2703 According to I'Ab, this verse speaks of the advancement of the cause of the Prophet (B. 65: lxxxiv, 2). The people addressed here are thus the Muslims, who are told that they will go on making progress in the world, but it will be a gradual progress, and there may be set-backs. But the ultimate state would be

20 But what is the matter with them that they believe not?

فَمَا لَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ۝

21 And, when the Qur'ān is recited to them, they adore (Him) not?[2703a]

Prostration

وَ إِذَا قُرِئَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقُرْاٰنُ لَا يَسْجُدُوْنَ ۝

22 Nay, those who disbelieve give the lie —

بَلِ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا يُكَذِّبُوْنَ ۝

23 And Allāh knows best what they hide.

وَ اللّٰهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُوْعُوْنَ ۝

24 So announce to them a painful chastisement,

فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيْمٍ ۝

25 Except those who believe and do good — for them is a reward that shall never be cut off.

إِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَ عَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُوْنٍ ۝

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one of triumph. In this case the night spoken of in the previous verse would mean the adversities which Islām itself will have to face, and the full moon would indicate its final triumph. The commentators also explain this verse as being a prophecy of the ultimate triumph of Islām (Rz).

2703a An actual prostration follows the recital of this verse; see 978.

(٨٥) سُوْرَةُ الْبُرُوْجِ مَكِّيَّةٌ — اٰيَاتُهَا ٢٢ — رُكُوْعُهَا ١

CHAPTER 85

Al-Burūj : THE STARS

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 22 *verses*)

This chapter takes its title from the mention in the first verse of the heaven full of *stars,* as referring to the prosperity of the Arab nation after it accepted the Prophet's message. The Prophet himself spoke of his companions as stars (Msh. 27:13). A reference to past history is introduced to show that, if they rejected the Prophet's message and opposed it, their end would be the same as the end of the previous opponents of Truth. The chapter is one of the very early revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

1 By the heaven full of stars !

2 And the Promised day !

3 And the bearer of witness and that to which witness is borne ![2704]

4 Destruction overtake the companions of the trench ! —[2705]

5 The fire fed with fuel —

6 When they sit by it,

7 And they are witnesses of what they do with the believers.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

وَالسَّمَآءِ ذَاتِ الْبُرُوْجِ ①

وَالْيَوْمِ الْمَوْعُوْدِ ②

وَشَاهِدٍ وَّمَشْهُوْدٍ ③

قُتِلَ اَصْحٰبُ الْاُخْدُوْدِ ④

النَّارِ ذَاتِ الْوَقُوْدِ ⑤

اِذْ هُمْ عَلَيْهَا قُعُوْدٌ ⑥

وَّهُمْ عَلٰى مَا يَفْعَلُوْنَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ شُهُوْدٌ ⑦

2704 *Burūj* is the plural of *burj* which means a *tower* or *fortress* or a *sign of the Zodiac* or *a star* or *constellation* or *asterism* (LL). It is derived from *baraja* meaning *it became manifest* or *high,* and hence the various significations. As in 82:2 (see 2689), the stars stand for the lesser lights, in comparison with the sun to which the Prophet himself is likened (33:46), for companions of the Prophet or for the bearers of the message of Truth to people. In the heaven full of stars there is thus a reference to the preachers of Truth, who will scatter far and wide. Hence the mention of the promised day in the next verse, the day of the triumph of Truth. *Shāhid* and *shahīd* both signify the Prophet (see 4:41, etc.), and by that to which witness is borne is meant the message of Truth. Or, the *mashhūd* are those against whom the Prophet bears witness, i.e., the opponents of Truth.

2705 The commentators give three different versions of the story supposed to be referred to in this verse, the best-known being that the reference is to the

8 And they punished them for naught but that they believed in Allāh, the Mighty, the Praised,

وَمَا نَقَمُوا مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِاللّٰهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ ﴿٨﴾

9 Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. And Allāh is Witness of all things.

الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٩﴾

10 Those who persecute believing men and believing women, then repent not, theirs is the chastisement of hell, and theirs the chastisement of burning.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ فَتَنُوا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتِ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَتُوبُوا فَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابُ الْحَرِيقِ ﴿١٠﴾

11 Those who believe and do good, theirs are Gardens wherein flow rivers. That is the great achievement.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ لَهُمْ جَنّٰتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهٰرُ ۚ ذٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْكَبِيرُ ﴿١١﴾

12 Surely the grip of thy Lord is severe.

إِنَّ بَطْشَ رَبِّكَ لَشَدِيدٌ ﴿١٢﴾

13 Surely He it is Who creates first and reproduces ;

إِنَّهُ هُوَ يُبْدِئُ وَيُعِيدُ ﴿١٣﴾

14 And He is the Forgiving, the Loving,

وَهُوَ الْغَفُورُ الْوَدُودُ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Lord of the Throne of Power, the Glorious,

ذُو الْعَرْشِ الْمَجِيدُ ﴿١٥﴾

16 Doer of what He intends.

فَعَّالٌ لِمَا يُرِيدُ ﴿١٦﴾

17 Has not there come to thee the story of the hosts,

هَلْ أَتٰىكَ حَدِيثُ الْجُنُودِ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Of Pharaoh and Thamūd ?

فِرْعَوْنَ وَثَمُودَ ﴿١٨﴾

19 Nay, those who disbelieve give the lie —

بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فِي تَكْذِيبٍ ﴿١٩﴾

20 And Allāh encompasses them on all sides.

وَاللّٰهُ مِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ مُحِيطٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

21 Nay, it is a glorious Qur'ān,

بَلْ هُوَ قُرْاٰنٌ مَجِيدٌ ﴿٢١﴾

22 In a guarded tablet.[2706]

فِي لَوْحٍ مَحْفُوظٍ ﴿٢٢﴾

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persecution of some Christians by Dhū Nawās, a king of Yaman, who was of the Jewish religion (Rz). But Baghwī thinks that the reference is to Nebuchadnezzar's casting Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego into the fiery furnace (Dan. 3:19-21). I think there may, as well, be a prophetical reference here to the great Arab army against which the Muslims were compelled to defend themselves by means of a trench, in what is called the battle of the Allies or the battle of the Ditch ; see 1971. The words of v. 7, and particularly of v. 10, clearly show that the reference here is to the enemies of the Holy Prophet, who persecuted the believing men and the believing women. Or, it is a prophetical reference to the still more distant future, the trench being a feature of modern warfare. The *fire* kept burning with the fuel need not be taken literally, for *fire* stands for war.

2706 The *lauḥ*, or *tablet*, occurring here, is the same as the *alwāḥ* (singular,

lauḥ), or *tablets*, occurring regarding the book given to Moses (7 : 145, 150, 154). The Qur'ān is here spoken of as being in *a guarded tablet.* The significance of these words is simply this, that the Holy Qur'ān is guarded against corruption and against the attacks of its opponents ; compare 15 : 9 : " Surely We revealed the Reminder and surely We shall guard it ". There is no mention here or anywhere else in the Qur'ān of the *lauḥ maḥfūẓ* on which the decrees of God are written ; but even if the reference here be to it, the significance is still the same, viz., that the Qur'ān shall be fully guarded — *This is a glorious Qur'ān, protected against change and alteration* (Rz).

CHAPTER 86

Al-Tāriq: THE COMER BY NIGHT

(Revealed at Makkah: 17 *verses*)

This chapter states how great were the difficulties which the Prophet had before him in bringing light to a benighted world, and it is for this reason that he is called *The Comer by Night* in the first verse, this description giving the chapter its name. He appeared at a time of total darkness and is compared to one who stood in need of knocking at the doors which were shut against him. But he is given the comfort that a spiritual resurrection will be brought about. Before his advent the whole world was submerged in a gulf of ignorance, and the night had lasted for fully six hundred years, and it was no easy task to awaken the world from such a long and deep sleep. That the Holy Prophet was acquainted with the difficulties of his task is borne out by this chapter, which is classed among the earliest revelations. The reference to plans in vv. 15, 16 does not show that that part was revealed later, for while it is true that plans against the Prophet's life were formed very early, the reference in these verses may be prophetical.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 By the heaven and the Comer by night!

وَالسَّمَآءِ وَالطَّارِقِ ۙ

2 And what will make thee know what the Comer by night is?

وَمَآ اَدْرٰىكَ مَا الطَّارِقُ ۙ

3 The star of piercing brightness —[2707]

النَّجْمُ الثَّاقِبُ ۙ

2707 *Ṭāriq* (from *ṭarq, striking a thing*) originally signifies *a comer by night*, because one who comes by night finds the doors shut, and knocking at the doors becomes necessary (N). The Comer by night is here the Holy Prophet; the revelation of the Qur'ān is also spoken of as taking place on a blessed night (44:3; 97:1). The reason is that the Holy Prophet appeared when total darkness spread on the earth, and no one ever stood more in need of knocking at the doors which were shut against him and fastened with strong bolts. It is noteworthy that Jesus compares his advent to that of a *thief*: "If the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched.... Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the son of man cometh" (Matt. 24:43, 44). It may be added that *Ṭāriq* is also the name given to the *morning star* (LL), because it comes at the end of the night. But in that sense too the word is applicable to *a great man* or *a chief*, as in the saying of Hind on the day of Uḥud: "We are the daughters of the morning-star"

*4 There is not a soul but over it is a keeper.[2708]

إِن كُلُّ نَفْسٍ لَّمَّا عَلَيْهَا حَافِظٌ ۝٤

5 So let man consider of what he is created.

فَلْيَنظُرِ الْإِنسَانُ مِمَّ خُلِقَ ۝٥

6 He is created of water pouring forth,

خُلِقَ مِن مَّاءٍ دَافِقٍ ۝٦

7 Coming from between the back and the ribs.[2709]

يَخْرُجُ مِن بَيْنِ الصُّلْبِ وَالتَّرَائِبِ ۝٧

8 Surely He is able to return him (to life).

إِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ رَجْعِهِ لَقَادِرٌ ۝٨

9 On the day when hidden things are manifested,[2710]

يَوْمَ تُبْلَى السَّرَائِرُ ۝٩

10 Then he will have no strength nor helper.

فَمَا لَهُ مِن قُوَّةٍ وَلَا نَاصِرٍ ۝١٠

11 By the cloud giving rain,[2711]

وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الرَّجْعِ ۝١١

12 And the earth opening (with herbage) !

وَالْأَرْضِ ذَاتِ الصَّدْعِ ۝١٢

13 Surely it is a decisive word,[2712]

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلٌ فَصْلٌ ۝١٣

14 And it is not a joke.

وَمَا هُوَ بِالْهَزْلِ ۝١٤

15 Surely they plan a plan,

إِنَّهُمْ يَكِيدُونَ كَيْدًا ۝١٥

(Ar., *al-ṭāriq*) where the meaning is that we are the daughters of *a chief,* " likening him to the star in elevation " (LL).

In the third verse *the Comer by night* is called *the star of piercing brightness,* indicating that the Comer by night is a star of such resplendent brightness that all darkness will be dispelled before him.

2708 Though the words are general, and signify that the deeds done by man are guarded so that he cannot escape their consequences, there is also a comfort for the Holy Prophet here that his opponents will not be able to harm him and that in time they will meet their doom. This is made clear at the end of the chapter.

2709 *Water pouring forth* means the *sperma genitale.* The expression *between the back and the ribs* is a euphemism. A similar expression occurs in a saying of the Holy Prophet: " Whoever gives me a guarantee as to that which is between his two jaws and that which is between his two feet, I guarantee for him paradise " (Msh. 24: 10), the significance being the control of the tongue and the control of lust.

2710 Note this description of the day of Resurrection. The hidden things are the consequences of one's good or evil deeds, which will be made palpably manifest in the shape of Gardens and fruits or chains and Fire.

2711 *Raj'* (the inf. noun of *raja'a, he returned*) means *rain,* because God returns it time after time, or because the water is raised from the sea and then returned to the earth, by the *samā'* here being meant the *cloud* (LL).

2712 The *decisive word* is the Holy Qur'ān. Just as when rain comes down, the earth produces vegetation, so the coming of the Divine revelation is bound to raise a dead nation to life, and no efforts against it would hamper its progress. There is also a reference to the doom of the disbelievers in v. 10, in the words *he will have no strength nor helper.*

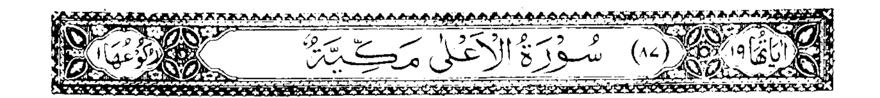
16 And I plan a plan.

وَّاَكِيۡدُ كَيۡدًا ۚ‏ ﴿١٦﴾

17 So grant the disbelievers a respite — let them alone for a while.[2713]

فَمَهِّلِ الۡكٰفِرِيۡنَ اَمۡهِلۡهُمۡ رُوَيۡدًا ﴿١٧﴾

2713 Whatever doubt there may be as to the significance of this chapter, it is dispelled by the last three verses, which speak of the plans of the opponents to exterminate Truth. The plan of God could not be frustrated, and the earth will receive life, but the Prophet is told to wait for a while. The same is true to-day.



CHAPTER 87

Al-A'lā: THE MOST HIGH

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 19 *verses*)

The title of this chapter is taken from the injunction to the Prophet to glorify his Rabb, his nourisher to perfection, *The Most High,* the indication clearly being that the Prophet himself would be raised to the highest position. See further 2714. The reference to the scriptures of Abraham and Moses in the concluding verse is to show not only that the Holy Qur'ān agrees with previous scriptures in essential principles, but also that those scriptures contain prophecies of the Holy Prophet's advent. The chapter is one of the earliest revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

1 Glorify the name of thy Lord, the Most High ![2714]

سَبِّحِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْاَعْلَى ۙ﴿١﴾

2 Who creates, then makes complete,

الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ فَسَوّٰى ۙ﴿٢﴾

3 And Who measures, then guides,[2715]

وَالَّذِيْ قَدَّرَ فَهَدٰى ۙ﴿٣﴾

4 And Who brings forth herbage,

وَالَّذِيْٓ اَخْرَجَ الْمَرْعٰى ۙ﴿٤﴾

2714 There is here in fact a message of great importance, not only for the Prophet, that he would be raised to the highest place to which man can rise, but for every man that, through the glorification of God, he can rise to the highest place to which he is capable of rising. Hence the order to glorify *The Most High* is immediately followed by the words that He not only creates and makes complete but has also ordained a measure for everyone and He guides everyone to this goal. The glorification of God is thus here stated to be the means of raising man to the highest place to which he is capable of rising. It should be noted that the most important dhikr in prayer is *subḥāna rabbiya-l-A'lā,* which is repeated again and again when man is in a state of prostration and assumes the humblest position of which he is capable, thus showing that it is by humbling himself to his utmost before God that he can rise to the highest place.

2715 Vv. 2 and 3 speak of four Divine acts, *khalq* or *creation, taswiyah* or *completion, taqdīr* or *measuring,* and *hidāyah* or *guiding.* Everything in this universe is subject to these four laws, and so is man. He is created from a very humble and low beginning, his first condition being that of a life-germ which cannot be seen. Then it develops gradually to complete human form. This is the subject-matter of v. 2. The third verse then lays down that everything in creation is held under control; it is made according to a measure and its progress

5 Then makes it dried up, dust-coloured.[2715a]

فَجَعَلَهُ غُثَاءً أَحْوَىٰ ۝٥

6 We shall make thee recite so thou shalt not forget —

سَنُقْرِئُكَ فَلَا تَنسَىٰ ۝٦

7 Except what Allāh please.[2716] Surely He knows the manifest, and what is hidden.

إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْجَهْرَ وَمَا يَخْفَىٰ ۝٧

8 And We shall make thy way smooth to a state of ease.[2717]

وَنُيَسِّرُكَ لِلْيُسْرَىٰ ۝٨

9 So remind, reminding indeed profits.[2718]

فَذَكِّرْ إِن نَّفَعَتِ الذِّكْرَىٰ ۝٩

10 He who fears will mind,

سَيَذَّكَّرُ مَن يَخْشَىٰ ۝١٠

11 And the most unfortunate one will avoid it,

وَيَتَجَنَّبُهَا الْأَشْقَى ۝١١

12 Who will burn in the great Fire.

الَّذِي يَصْلَى النَّارَ الْكُبْرَىٰ ۝١٢

13 Then therein he will neither live nor die.[2719]

ثُمَّ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَىٰ ۝١٣

14 He indeed is successful who purifies himself,

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن تَزَكَّىٰ ۝١٤

15 And remembers the name of his Lord, then prays.

وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهِ فَصَلَّىٰ ۝١٥

16 But, you prefer the life of this world,

بَلْ تُؤْثِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ۝١٦

17 While the Hereafter is better and more lasting.

وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ ۝١٧

---

lies along a certain line; and that it is God Who guides it or makes it walk along that line. The whole is in special reference to the spiritual advancement of man through Divine glorification.

2715a This is to show that herbage, too, receives life but there is no higher purpose in its creation beyond the fact that it serves to sustain man; so it dries up. But there is a higher purpose in the creation of man; and it is to fulfil that purpose that God sends His revelation, which is spoken of in the next verse.

2716 Man is apt to forget, and the Prophet was a human being and he too was apt to forget. But he never forgot a word of the Divine revelation which came to him. He sometimes received long chapters, such as the sixth, which runs into twenty sections, on a single occasion, but the whole was so deeply impressed on his mind that once it was read out to him by the Holy Spirit, he repeated it without forgetting a word of it. Still more difficult was his task when chapters were received piecemeal. The reference in what Allāh please is not to Divine revelation which the Prophet never forgot, but to other things which he forgot as a human being.

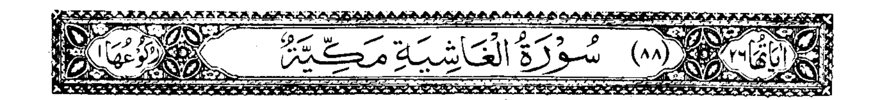
2717 The words predict the Prophet's triumph and the removal of the distress in which Islām was.

2718 For *in,* meaning *qad,* or *indeed,* see LL, which quotes numerous instances from the Qur'ān as well as from Arabic prose and poetry.

2719 There is no *life* in hell, for life is only for the righteous; neither is there *death,* because death signifies a state of complete rest.

18 Surely this is in the earlier scriptures	إِنَّ هٰذَا لَفِي الصُّحُفِ الْأُولَىٰ ⑱
19 The scriptures of Abraham and Moses.[2720]	صُحُفِ إِبْرٰهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ ⑲

2720 The preference of the good of the Hereafter to the transitory advantage of this life is the one great truth preached by all prophets. There is also a reference here to the prophecies concerning the Holy Prophet which are to be found in the revelations granted respectively to Abraham and to Moses; see 168 and 70. Or, the essential principles of religion are meant, which are common to all the great religions.



CHAPTER 88

Al-Ghāshiyah: THE OVERWHELMING EVENT

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 26 *verses*)

The Overwhelming Event, whose mention in the first verse supplies a name to this chapter, is the doom of the opponents in this life and their punishment in the Hereafter. The date of revelation is placed about the fourth year of the Prophet's call.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 Has there come to thee the news of the Overwhelming Event?[2721]

هَلْ اَتٰىكَ حَدِيْثُ الْغَاشِيَةِ ۝١

2 Faces on that day will be downcast,

وُجُوْهٌ يَّوْمَئِذٍ خَاشِعَةٌ ۝٢

3 Labouring, toiling,

عَامِلَةٌ نَّاصِبَةٌ ۝٣

4 Entering burning Fire,

تَصْلٰى نَارًا حَامِيَةً ۝٤

5 Made to drink from a boiling spring.

تُسْقٰى مِنْ عَيْنٍ اٰنِيَةٍ ۝٥

6 They will have no food but of thorns,

لَيْسَ لَهُمْ طَعَامٌ اِلَّا مِنْ ضَرِيْعٍ ۝٦

7 Neither nourishing nor satisfying hunger.

لَّا يُسْمِنُ وَلَا يُغْنِيْ مِنْ جُوْعٍ ۝٧

8 Faces on that day will be happy,

وُجُوْهٌ يَّوْمَئِذٍ نَّاعِمَةٌ ۝٨

9 Glad for their striving,

لِّسَعْيِهَا رَاضِيَةٌ ۝٩

10 In a lofty Garden,

فِيْ جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ ۝١٠

11 Wherein thou wilt hear no vain talk.

لَّا تَسْمَعُ فِيْهَا لَاغِيَةً ۝١١

12 Therein is a fountain flowing.

فِيْهَا عَيْنٌ جَارِيَةٌ ۝١٢

2721 The Overwhelming Event is no doubt the Resurrection, but the overwhelming event of this life is the doom of the opponents of Truth. The description of the two parties that follow applies to an utterly discomfited and disappointed enemy and to the faithful in the hour of their triumph.

13 Therein are thrones raised high,	فِيهَا سُرُرٌ مَّرْفُوعَةٌ ﴿١٣﴾
14 And drinking-cups ready placed,	وَّأَكْوَابٌ مَّوْضُوعَةٌ ﴿١٤﴾
15 And cushions set in rows,	وَّنَمَارِقُ مَصْفُوفَةٌ ﴿١٥﴾
16 And carpets spread out.	وَّزَرَابِيُّ مَبْثُوثَةٌ ﴿١٦﴾
17 See they not the clouds,[2722] how they are created?	أَفَلَا يَنظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ ﴿١٧﴾
18 And the heaven, how it is raised high?	وَإِلَى السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ ﴿١٨﴾
19 And the mountains, how they are fixed?	وَإِلَى الْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ ﴿١٩﴾
20 And the earth, how it is spread out?	وَإِلَى الْأَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ ﴿٢٠﴾
21 So remind. Thou art only one to remind.	فَذَكِّرْ إِنَّمَا أَنتَ مُذَكِّرٌ ﴿٢١﴾
22 Thou art not a warder over them —	لَّسْتَ عَلَيْهِم بِمُصَيْطِرٍ ﴿٢٢﴾
23 But whoever turns back and disbelieves,	إِلَّا مَن تَوَلَّىٰ وَكَفَرَ ﴿٢٣﴾
24 Allāh will chastise him with the greatest chastisement.	فَيُعَذِّبُهُ اللَّهُ الْعَذَابَ الْأَكْبَرَ ﴿٢٤﴾
25 Surely to Us is their return,	إِنَّ إِلَيْنَا إِيَابَهُمْ ﴿٢٥﴾
26 Then it is for Us to call them to account.	ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا حِسَابَهُم ﴿٢٦﴾

2722 *Ibil* means, *clouds that bear the water for rain* (T, LL). As this significance suits the context better, I adopt this instead of the usual rendering, the *camels*, the mention of the clouds along with the heaven, where they exist, and with mountains, which cool the vapours so that they pour down water, and the earth, which benefits by that water, being in accordance with what is said in many other places.



CHAPTER 89

Al-Fajr : THE DAYBREAK

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 30 *verses*)

The important *Daybreak* which gives its name to this chapter is the first morning of the month of *Dhu-l-Ḥijjah,* or the month of pilgrimage, because pilgrimage gave Makkah great importance as a trade centre and made its residents enjoy a life of ease, the trade of the whole country being brought to their very doors. A warning is given here of the punishment that must overtake the city, as punishment overtook 'Ād, Thamūd and others. It is one of the earliest revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

1 By the daybreak!

وَالْفَجْرِ ﴿١﴾

2 And the ten nights!

وَلَيَالٍ عَشْرٍ ﴿٢﴾

3 And the even and the odd!

وَّالشَّفْعِ وَالْوَتْرِ ﴿٣﴾

4 And the night when it departs![2723]

وَالَّيْلِ اِذَا يَسْرِ ﴿٤﴾

5 Truly in this is an oath for men of understanding.

هَلْ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِّذِيْ حِجْرٍ ﴿٥﴾

2723 There is a great variety of opinion as to what is meant by *the daybreak, the ten nights,* and *the even and the odd.* I think the reference is to the importance attached to Makkah (which is mentioned as *The City* in the commencement of the next chapter), because it was not only the spiritual centre of Arabia, but had also become its trade centre, on account of pilgrims resorting to it from all parts of Arabia. *The daybreak* would thus signify the daybreak of the first of the month of *Dhu-l-Ḥijjah; the ten nights* would stand for the first ten nights of that month, the tenth day being the day of sacrifices. According to another interpretation, the ten nights are the last ten nights of the month of Ramaḍān, in which occurs the *lailat al-qadr.* By the *even* and the *odd,* according to a ḥadīth, is meant the prayer which consists of even and odd rak'ahs (Tr. 44:89). Others however say that by *shaf'* is meant the creation, which consists all of pairs (51:49) and by *watr* (odd) is meant the Creator (RM). The whole is a warning to the people of Makkah that, if they do not heed the warning, their end will be the same as the end of previous rejectors of truth.

6 Hast thou not considered how thy Lord dealt with 'Ād,

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ ﴿٦﴾

7 (Of) Iram,[2724] having lofty buildings,

إِرَمَ ذَاتِ الْعِمَادِ ﴿٧﴾

8 The like of which were not created in the land ;

الَّتِي لَمْ يُخْلَقْ مِثْلُهَا فِي الْبِلَادِ ﴿٨﴾

9 And (with) Thamūd, who hewed out rocks in the valley ;

وَثَمُودَ الَّذِينَ جَابُوا الصَّخْرَ بِالْوَادِ ﴿٩﴾

10 And (with) Pharaoh, the lord of hosts,

وَفِرْعَوْنَ ذِي الْأَوْتَادِ ﴿١٠﴾

11 Who exceeded limits in the cities,

الَّذِينَ طَغَوْا فِي الْبِلَادِ ﴿١١﴾

12 And made great mischief therein ?

فَأَكْثَرُوا فِيهَا الْفَسَادَ ﴿١٢﴾

13 So thy Lord poured on them a portion of chastisement.[2725]

فَصَبَّ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّكَ سَوْطَ عَذَابٍ ﴿١٣﴾

14 Surely thy Lord is Watchful ;

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبِالْمِرْصَادِ ﴿١٤﴾

15 As for man, when his Lord tries him, then gives him honour and favours him, he says: My Lord honours me.

فَأَمَّا الْإِنْسَانُ إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَأَكْرَمَهُ وَنَعَّمَهُ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَكْرَمَنِ ﴿١٥﴾

16 But when He tries him, then straitens to him his subsistence, he says : My Lord has disgraced me.[2726a]

وَأَمَّا إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ فَقَدَرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقَهُ فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَهَانَنِ ﴿١٦﴾

17 Nay, but you honour not the orphan,

كَلَّا بَلْ لَا تُكْرِمُونَ الْيَتِيمَ ﴿١٧﴾

18 Nor do you urge one another to feed the poor,[2727]

وَلَا تَحَاضُّونَ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ ﴿١٨﴾

2724 *Iram* or *Aram* was, according to one account, the name of the grandfather of 'Ād, from whom the tribe took its name, and according to another, the name of a city in which it lived. The 'Ād are called *dhāt al-'imād,* the word *'imād* meaning *lofty buildings, supported by columns.* But *dhat al-'imād* may also mean *possessing tallness* (LL).

2725 *Sauṭ* signifies primarily *the mixing of one thing with another* (R). It then comes to signify *a whip,* but here it means *a portion* or *a share* (LL), the significance being that they received a portion of the punishment here, greater punishment overtaking them after death.

2726a As a general statement, it means that God tries man both by granting him affluence, in which case he is puffed up with pride and says that his wealth is an indication that God honours him, and by poverty, in which case he thinks that God has disgraced him. But wealth is no indication of a man's honour.

2727 Vv. 17 and 18, as also the 19th, show how the Prophet felt for the orphans, the poor and the weak, so much so that he warns his powerful and wealthy opponents that their indifference to the orphans and the poor and their injustice to the weak will bring down upon them the Divine judgment, which will shatter their power. As he was in the beginning so he remained to the end, a true well-wisher of the weak and the oppressed. And when he became the head of a State, he provided for the orphans and the poor out of the public

19 And you devour heritage, devouring all,[2728]

وَ تَاْكُلُوْنَ التُّرَاثَ اَكْلًا لَّمًّا ۙ﴿۱۹﴾

20 And you love wealth with exceeding love.

وَّ تُحِبُّوْنَ الْمَالَ حُبًّا جَمًّا ؕ﴿۲۰﴾

21 Nay, when the earth is made to crumble to pieces,

كَلَّاۤ اِذَا دُكَّتِ الْاَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا ۙ﴿۲۱﴾

22 And thy Lord comes with the angels, ranks on ranks;

وَّ جَآءَ رَبُّكَ وَ الْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا ۚ﴿۲۲﴾

23 And hell is made to appear that day.[2729] On that day man will be mindful, and of what use will being mindful be then?[2730]

وَ جِایْٓءَ یَوْمَئِذٍۭ بِجَهَنَّمَ ۬ۙ یَوْمَئِذٍ یَّتَذَكَّرُ الْاِنْسَانُ وَ اَنّٰی لَهُ الذِّكْرٰی ؕ﴿۲۳﴾

24 He will say: O would that I had sent before for (this) my life!

یَقُوْلُ یٰلَیْتَنِیْ قَدَّمْتُ لِحَیَاتِیْ ۚ﴿۲۴﴾

25 But none can punish as He will punish on that day.

فَیَوْمَئِذٍ لَّا یُعَذِّبُ عَذَابَهٗۤ اَحَدٌ ۙ﴿۲۵﴾

26 And none can bind as He will bind on that day.[2731]

وَّ لَا یُوْثِقُ وَثَاقَهٗۤ اَحَدٌ ؕ﴿۲۶﴾

27 O soul that art at rest,

یٰۤاَیَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ۗۖ﴿۲۷﴾

28 Return to thy Lord, well-pleased, well-pleasing,

ارْجِعِیْۤ اِلٰی رَبِّكِ رَاضِیَةً مَّرْضِیَّةً ۚ﴿۲۸﴾

29 So enter among My servants,

فَادْخُلِیْ فِیْ عِبٰدِیْ ۙ﴿۲۹﴾

30 And enter My Garden![2732]

وَ ادْخُلِیْ جَنَّتِیْ ۠﴿۳۰﴾

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funds, thus forestalling the Poor Laws and Old Age Pensions by thirteen centuries; see 9:60.

2728 Among the Arabs women and young children were not allowed to have any share in the inheritance, because they could not fight the enemy.

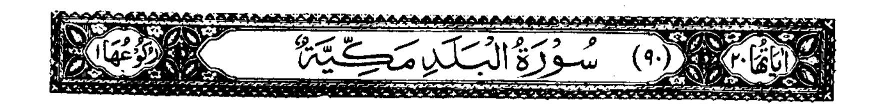
2729 The crumbling to pieces of the earth, the coming of the Lord with angels, and the appearance of hell, refer equally to the punishment in this life as to that in the next.

2730 Being "mindful" is of no use to a man when punishment overtakes him.

2731 These words indicate the severity of the punishment.

2732 The concluding verses of this chapter refer to the highest stage of the spiritual development of man, the stage in which he *rests contented* with his Lord, and finds his quietude, his happiness, and his delight in Him. This is the heavenly life. It has already been noted — see 1239 and introductory note to ch. 75 — that the Holy Qur'ān recognizes three stages in spiritual development, the *ammārah* or the animal stage (12:53), the *lawwāmah* or the human stage (75:2), and the *muṭma'innah* or the heavenly or spiritual stage, mentioned here. At this last stage, the pure and perfect sincerity, truth and righteousness of a person are rewarded by Almighty God by granting him a heaven on this earth. All others look to a prospective paradise, but he enters paradise in this very life. It is at this stage, too, that a person realizes that the prayers and worship

which at first appeared to him as a burden are really a nourishment on which the growth of his soul depends, and that this is the basis of his spiritual development. The spirit — which in the second stage, although blaming a man for the impurities of life, is yet powerless to resist the evil tendencies, or to blot them out wholly, and too infirm to establish a man upon the principle of virtue with firmness — now reaches a stage of development in which its efforts are crowned with success. The state of struggle with sinful propensities passes away, an entire change comes over the nature of man, and the former habits undergo a complete transformation.



CHAPTER 90

Al-Balad : THE CITY

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 20 *verses*)

The City spoken of in the first verse, from which this chapter receives its name, is Makkah — the City which in the last chapter has been warned of punishment overtaking it as it had overtaken former nations. But it was to be the spiritual centre of the whole world, and there is a clear prophecy in the second verse that a time would come when, not only would the Muslims not be persecuted in that city, but they would even enjoy freedom from all obligations in it — the reference being to the establishment of their rule therein. By general consent the chapter is regarded as one of the very earliest revelations; it is assigned to the first year of the Call.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ ○

1 Nay, I call to witness this City ![2733]

لَاۤ اُقۡسِمُ بِہٰذَا الۡبَلَدِ ①

2 And thou wilt be made free from obligation in this City —[2734]

وَ اَنۡتَ حِلٌّۢ بِہٰذَا الۡبَلَدِ ②

2733 By *this City* is meant Makkah (B. 65 : xc). Thousands of years before, Abraham had prayed for a city to be raised in that wilderness where he had left one branch of his descendants (14 : 37), and for a Prophet to be raised among them (2 : 129); see 168.

2734 The words are parenthetical. *Ḥill* is an infinitive noun, and signifies the same as *ḥalāl,* meaning *in a state which is the opposite of ḥarām,* and hence it signifies *free from obligation or responsibility with respect to a thing.* English translators have generally adopted a different translation: *And thou a dweller in this land* (Palmer); and *thou residest in this territory* (Sale); *the soil on which thou dost dwell* (Rodwell); which is wrong, because *ḥalla,* as meaning *nazala,* i.e., *he alighted,* or *abode,* or *lodged in a place,* has its infinitive *ḥulūl* or *ḥull* (LL) and not *ḥill,* which is the word occurring here. Some commentators have also been led into this error. The significance which I adopt is in accordance with the true significance of the word *ḥill,* for you say *anta fī ḥill-in min kadhā,* meaning *thou art free from obligation or responsibility with respect to such a thing.* The statement in this case is prophetical, indicating that the Prophet would be made free from obligation in respect to the sacredness of the territory of Makkah, being allowed to enter it by force (Bd), as he did at the conquest of Makkah, to which, in fact, the words refer. There is also a saying of the Holy Prophet in support of this: "And even I was made free from obligation with respect to it only for an hour of the day" (B. 64 : 55).

3 And the begetter and he whom he begot![2735]

وَوَالِدٍ وَّمَا وَلَدَ ﴿٣﴾

4 We have certainly created man to face difficulties.[2736]

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِيْ كَبَدٍ ﴿٤﴾

5 Does he think that no one has power over him?[2736a]

أَيَحْسَبُ أَنْ لَّنْ يَّقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ أَحَدٌ ﴿٥﴾

6 He will say: I have wasted much wealth.[2737]

يَقُوْلُ أَهْلَكْتُ مَالًا لُّبَدًا ﴿٦﴾

7 Does he think that no one sees him?

أَيَحْسَبُ أَنْ لَّمْ يَرَهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿٧﴾

8 Have We not given him two eyes,

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَّهُ عَيْنَيْنِ ﴿٨﴾

9 And a tongue and two lips,

وَلِسَانًا وَّشَفَتَيْنِ ﴿٩﴾

10 And pointed out to him the two conspicuous ways?[2738]

وَهَدَيْنٰهُ النَّجْدَيْنِ ﴿١٠﴾

11 But he attempts not the uphill road;[2738a]

فَلَا اقْتَحَمَ الْعَقَبَةَ ﴿١١﴾

12 And what will make thee comprehend what the uphill road is?

وَمَا أَدْرٰىكَ مَا الْعَقَبَةُ ﴿١٢﴾

13 (It is) to free a slave,

فَكُّ رَقَبَةٍ ﴿١٣﴾

14 Or to feed in a day of hunger

أَوْ إِطْعٰمٌ فِيْ يَوْمٍ ذِيْ مَسْغَبَةٍ ﴿١٤﴾

2735 The great *begetter* is none other than Abraham, the progenitor of the Arabs, and by *he whom he begot* is meant either Ishmael, who assisted Abraham in raising the foundations of the Sacred House at Makkah, or the Holy Prophet himself, who was the object of Abraham's prayer.

2736 *Kabad* means *distress* or *difficulty*. We are here told that the advancement of man, ***even physically***, lies along a path of hard struggle. Every conquest that man has made has been the result of suffering on his part. The same is the case in the sphere of the spiritual advancement of man. Abraham suffered great hardships in the cause of Truth; and so must the Prophet now, in order to bring about a spiritual awakening in the world. It is only a long and hard struggle on the part of certain benefactors of humanity that makes man's advancement possible, physically as well as spiritually.

2736a The opponents of Truth, having great power in their hands, never think of the mighty power of God. It is to this that attention is drawn here.

2737 The reference is apparently to the ultimate state of the opponents when, after spending all their wealth for the extermination of Truth, they would find that the cause of Truth was triumphant, and would then say that they really wasted their wealth in a wrong cause. Elsewhere we have: "Surely those who disbelieve spend their wealth to hinder (people) from the way of Allāh; so they will spend it, then it shall be to them an intense regret, then they shall be overcome" (8:36).

2738 *Najd* (from *najada*, he *overcame* or *conquered*) means *high* or *elevated land*, or also *an elevated* or *conspicuous road* or *way* (LL). *Najdain* or the *two conspicuous ways* are here spoken of as indicating *the ways of truth and falsehood, of truth and falsehood in word or good and evil in deed* (R). The *two eyes* (v. 8) enable him to distinguish good from evil, while with *the tongue and the lips* (v. 9) he can ask, if he cannot see for himself.

2738a *'Aqabah* means *a mountain road* or *a road in the upper part of a mountain* or *a long mountain that lies across the way* — metaphorically *a difficult affair* (LL).

15 An orphan nearly related,

يَتِيمًا ذَا مَقْرَبَةٍ ﴿١٥﴾

16 Or the poor man lying in the dust.[2739]

أَوْ مِسْكِينًا ذَا مَتْرَبَةٍ ﴿١٦﴾

17 Then he is of those who believe and exhort one another to patience, and exhort one another to mercy.

ثُمَّ كَانَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْمَرْحَمَةِ ﴿١٧﴾

18 These are the people of the right hand.

أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ ﴿١٨﴾

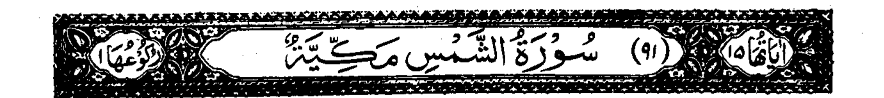
19 And those who disbelieve in Our messages, they are the people of the left hand.

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا هُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ ﴿١٩﴾

20 On them is Fire closed over.

عَلَيْهِمْ نَارٌ مُؤْصَدَةٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

2739 Note the tone of these earliest revelations. The service of humanity (along with the service of God) is the one topic. The doing of good to the oppressed, the poor, and the orphans is called an uphill road or a high mountain because of the difficulty of doing it. The constant reference to the helping of the poor and the orphans and the setting free of slaves brings to light the real character of the Prophet, who is described by one knowing him most intimately as *one who earned for those who had no means themselves* (B. 1 : 1). No religion has laid so much stress on the uplift of the poor and the distressed as Islām, and it is the only religion which enjoins the duty of granting freedom to slaves, and the Holy Prophet Muḥammad is the only founder of a religion who showed the noble example of freeing all slaves that he ever had and helping in the freedom of others. Yet prejudiced writers blame Islām for not taking any steps to uproot slavery. There is even a suggestion that such precepts regarding the nobility of liberating slaves as exist in the Makkan chapters were abrogated by later revelation (see Wherry), a preposterous statement in view of the plain directions given in 9 : 60 (the latest revelation) to the State itself to spend a part of the public funds in purchasing freedom for slaves.



CHAPTER 91

Al-Shams : THE SUN

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 15 *verses*)

The Prophet is the *Sun* of righteousness (the word giving its title to this chapter), with whose rising the way to perfection is pointed out to man, but only those who purify themselves are really successful, while those who give themselves over to corruption fail to attain the object. The case of Thamūd is given as an illustration. Like the last chapter, it is one of the earliest revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 By the sun and his brightness![2740]

وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحٰهَا ①

2 And the moon when she borrows light from him![2741]

وَالْقَمَرِ اِذَا تَلٰهَا ②

3 And the day when it exposes it to view![2742]

وَالنَّهَارِ اِذَا جَلّٰهَا ③

4 And the night when it draws a veil over it![2743]

وَالَّيْلِ اِذَا يَغْشٰهَا ④

2740 *Al-shams,* or *the sun,* is feminine, and *al-qamar,* or *the moon,* masculine, in the Arabic language, as opposed to English. *Ḍuḥā* is the *early part of the forenoon after sunrise,* or the *advanced state of the day,* or *when the sun shines brightly* (LL). This is to show that the spiritual light of the Prophet will brighten as time passes on.

2741 *Talā-hā* literally signifies *it followed him,* but this is sometimes in *one thing following another in body,* and sometimes in *imitating in respect of predicament* (R); here it is explained as meaning *following it in the way of imitation and in respect of rank, because it borrows light from the sun* (R). Farrā' takes this to be the real meaning, for he says, such a one follows such a one in respect of such a thing, meaning he takes from him (Rz).

2742 The commentators take the personal pronoun in *jallā-hā* as referring to *the world,* though it is not mentioned here, because, as Kf says, in such cases the meaning is clear, as they say, *it was cold,* meaning *the morning,* though they do not mention it in words (Rz).

2743 The personal pronoun in *yaghshā-hā* also refers to *the world.*

5 And the heaven and its make !

وَالسَّمَآءِ وَمَا بَنٰىهَا ﴿٥﴾

6 And the earth and its extension !

وَالْاَرْضِ وَمَا طَحٰىهَا ﴿٦﴾

7 And the soul and its perfection ! —[2744]

وَنَفْسٍ وَّمَا سَوّٰىهَا ﴿٧﴾

8 So He reveals to it its way of evil and its way of good ;[2745]

فَاَلْهَمَهَا فُجُوْرَهَا وَتَقْوٰىهَا ﴿٨﴾

9 He is indeed successful who causes it to grow,

قَدْ اَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكّٰىهَا ﴿٩﴾

10 And he indeed fails who buries it.[2746]

وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسّٰىهَا ﴿١٠﴾

2744 The *mā* in vv. 5-7 is either *maṣdariyyah,* as in the translation, or *mauṣūlah,* as referring to the Divine Being, for *mā* is often used to indicate the majesty of the person spoken of ; the meaning in this case would be : And the heaven and Him Who built it, and the earth and Him Who spread it. The mention of the perfection of the soul of man in this verse is a sequel to what is stated in the first six verses. Man is here spoken of as possessing the highest of qualities which are met with in nature. The sun is a source of light, even so is the perfect man a source of spiritual light. The moon borrows the light of the sun, even so is the perfect man, whose light is really borrowed from the Divine source, which is the real source of all light. The day makes things manifest and thus enables man to carry on his struggle, while the night casts a veil over light and brings rest ; the perfect man possesses both these qualities, as he carries on a very hard struggle for the attainment of great ends, and at the same time his mind is at rest and he possesses the quality of contentment. The heaven is raised high, and the earth is spread out for men to walk over, being thus a manifestation of humility ; the perfect man possesses both these qualities, having the highest of aspirations and being at the same time humble and lowly. The perfect man thus possesses the opposite qualities of giving light and receiving light, severe exertion and complete rest, greatness and humility. These qualities were possessed by the Prophet, who invited others to make the same the goal of their lives.

2745 The verse is a fitting sequel to the statement made in the previous verse as regards the perfection of the soul, as it points out the way to perfection. It is through *ilhām,* Divine inspiration, or revelation, that the soul is made perfect, because Divine revelation makes clear the two ways, *fujūr,* or *the way of deviation from the Truth,* i.e., *the way of evil,* and *taqwā,* or *the way of observance of duty,* or *the way of good.* It is by avoiding the former and walking in the latter that perfection can be attained. Both Rodwell and Palmer are wrong here in translating the verse as meaning, " And breathed into it its wickedness and its piety " (Rodwell), " taught it its sin and its piety " (Palmer), for the statement in this form is not only contradicted by the whole of the Qur'ān, but is also self-contradictory and meaningless. *Ilhām* always signifies *an intimation by inspiration from the Divine Being,* or *Divine revelation. " And this is peculiar to that which is intimated by Allāh "* (R). Rz says *the intimation by inspiration of good and evil* means the *making a man to understand and know them both,* and he adds that this explanation is accepted by I'Ab and all trustworthy commentators.

2746 *Zakkā* is from *zakā,* meaning *it increased,* and therefore primarily the word signifies *he made it to increase* or *thrive,* and *dassā-hā* means *he hid it* or *concealed it,* or *buried it* (LL). The secondary meaning of the former is *he purified it,* and that of the latter *he corrupted it.* The adoption of these two words really indicates that the faculties necessary for perfection are given to every man, but there are some who make them thrive by their development and others who corrupt them by allowing them to remain concealed, not displaying them to their advantage.

11 Thamūd rejected (the truth) in their inordinacy,[2747]

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِطَغْوٰىهَآ ﴿١١﴾

12 When the basest of them broke forth with mischief—

إِذِ انْبَعَثَ أَشْقٰىهَا ﴿١٢﴾

13 So Allāh's messenger said to them : (Leave alone) Allāh's she-camel, and (give) her (to) drink.

فَقَالَ لَهُمْ رَسُولُ اللّٰهِ نَاقَةَ اللّٰهِ وَسُقْيٰهَا ﴿١٣﴾

14 But they called him a liar and slaughtered her. So their Lord destroyed them for their sin and levelled them (with the ground) ;

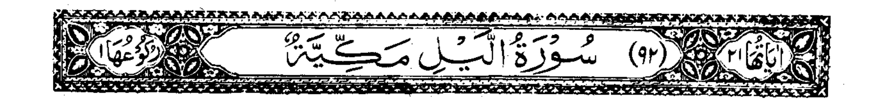
فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَعَقَرُوهَا فَدَمْدَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ بِذَنْبِهِمْ فَسَوّٰىهَا ﴿١٤﴾

15 And He fears not its consequence.[2748]

وَلَا يَخَافُ عُقْبٰهَا ﴿١٥﴾

2747 The verse gives an instance of those whose end is failure on account of the corrupt manner of their lives, giving at the same time a warning to men that, if they continued in their evil course and did not turn to righteousness, following the call of the Prophet, their end would be the same. If they followed the Prophet, they would attain to perfection, but, if they went against him, they would be given over to destruction as were the former people.

2748 Allāh does not care for the consequences of the punishment to a people when they are found deserving of such punishment, for through their destruction comes life to humanity.



CHAPTER 92

Al-Lail: THE NIGHT

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 21 *verses*)

The object of this chapter is to show that *The Night* of disbelief and ignorance — hence the title — will give place to the light of the day, for inasmuch as men strive after different objects, those who strive to establish good will have facility, while those who go after evil shall find themselves in difficulties. It is one of the earliest revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 By the night when it draws a veil!

وَ الَّيْلِ اِذَا يَغْشٰى ۙ﴿۱﴾

2 And the day when it shines!

وَ النَّهَارِ اِذَا تَجَلّٰى ۙ﴿۲﴾

3 And the creating of the male and the female! —

وَ مَا خَلَقَ الذَّكَرَ وَ الْاُنْثٰۤى ۙ﴿۳﴾

4 Your striving is surely (for) diverse (ends).[2749]

اِنَّ سَعْيَكُمْ لَشَتّٰى ؕ﴿۴﴾

5 Then as for him who gives and keeps his duty,

فَاَمَّا مَنْ اَعْطٰى وَ اتَّقٰى ۙ﴿۵﴾

6 And accepts what is good —

وَ صَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنٰى ۙ﴿۶﴾

7 We facilitate for him (the way to) ease.

فَسَنُيَسِّرُهٗ لِلْيُسْرٰى ؕ﴿۷﴾

8 And as for him who is niggardly and considers himself self-sufficient,

وَ اَمَّا مَنْۢ بَخِلَ وَ اسْتَغْنٰى ۙ﴿۸﴾

9 And rejects what is good —

وَ كَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنٰى ۙ﴿۹﴾

10 We facilitate for him (the way to) distress.

فَسَنُيَسِّرُهٗ لِلْعُسْرٰى ؕ﴿۱۰﴾

2749 Evil is here compared with the darkness of the night and good with the light of day. The creation of the male and the female, which stands for the creation of the whole of animate nature, because all living beings are created either male or female, is also a witness to the same truth, for there we find everyone striving for an end, and everyone reaping according to the manner of his striving.

11 And his wealth will not avail him when he perishes.[2750]

وَمَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُ مَالُهُ إِذَا تَرَدَّى ﴿١١﴾

12 Surely Ours is it to show the way,

إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا لَلْهُدَى ﴿١٢﴾

13 And surely Ours is the Hereafter and the former.[2751]

وَإِنَّ لَنَا لَلْآخِرَةَ وَالْأُولَى ﴿١٣﴾

14 So I warn you of the Fire that flames.

فَأَنْذَرْتُكُمْ نَارًا تَلَظَّى ﴿١٤﴾

15 None will enter it but the most unfortunate,

لَا يَصْلَاهَا إِلَّا الْأَشْقَى ﴿١٥﴾

16 Who rejects (the truth) and turns (his) back.

الَّذِي كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّى ﴿١٦﴾

17 And away from it shall be kept the most faithful to duty,

وَسَيُجَنَّبُهَا الْأَتْقَى ﴿١٧﴾

18 Who gives his wealth, purifying himself,

الَّذِي يُؤْتِي مَالَهُ يَتَزَكَّى ﴿١٨﴾

19 And none has with him any boon for a reward,

وَمَا لِأَحَدٍ عِنْدَهُ مِنْ نِعْمَةٍ تُجْزَى ﴿١٩﴾

20 Except the seeking of the pleasure of his Lord,[2752] the Most High.

إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِ الْأَعْلَى ﴿٢٠﴾

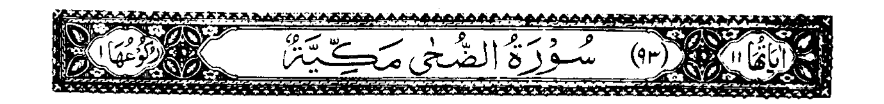
21 And he will soon be well-pleased.

وَلَسَوْفَ يَرْضَى ﴿٢١﴾

2750 The two examples given in these verses represent those who accept and those who reject the Truth respectively; the one goes on doing good deeds, finding his way quite easy, until he finds himself in ease, and the other goes on doing evil, the doing of which seems easy to him, until he finds himself in distress.

2751 The wicked one is here told that he will find himself in distress not only in the Hereafter but also in this life, as God has control of both. Or the *ākhirah* here is what is coming later — what is promised — and the *ūlā* the present state.

2752 The pleasure of the Lord is the only boon for which a man should hope, and hence this is the goal of a Muslim's life — his paradise in this as well as the next life. This is in accordance with what is said in 9:72, one of the latest revelations: "And Allāh's goodly pleasure is the greatest (bliss): that is the mighty achievement".



CHAPTER 93

Al-Ḍuḥā : THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE DAY

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 11 *verses*)

This chapter draws attention to the gradual spreading of the light of the sun of Islām, and is therefore given the title of *Al-Ḍuḥā* or *The Brightness of the Day*. The last two chapters metaphorically speak of the advent of the Holy Prophet as the rising of the sun, and the metaphor is continued here. As the sunshine is not fully resplendent immediately after the rising of the sun, so Truth would shine in its full brightness gradually. It is one of the earliest revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 By the brightness of the day!

وَالضُّحٰى ①

2 And the night when it is still! —

وَالَّيْلِ اِذَا سَجٰى ②

3 Thy Lord has not forsaken thee, nor is He displeased.[2753]

مَا وَدَّعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلٰى ③

4 And surely the latter state is better for thee than the former.

وَلَلْاٰخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنَ الْاُوْلٰى ④

5 And soon will thy Lord give thee so that thou wilt be well pleased.[2754]

وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيْكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضٰى ⑤

2753 The commentators narrate varying reports to the effect that the verse was revealed on the occasion of a long pause in the coming of revelation to the Holy Prophet. According to *Bukhārī*, it was only a pause of two or three days (B. 65 : xciii, 2). That revelation was sent down to the Holy Prophet at intervals is a fact, and a pause of two or three days could not have given rise to such allegations. The words may be taken as words of solace in a general sense, the significance being that God would never forsake him. But in the light of what follows, the words are prophetical, the indication being that in its later history Islām would have to face set-backs which might give rise to such doubts. The Prophet and his followers are therefore given an assurance that God will never forsake the cause of Islām. Force is lent to this interpretation by the fact that here it is not the night that is followed by the brightness of the day, which was the case at the appearance of the Prophet, but the brightness of the day is followed by the stillness of the night, which seems to be a reference to the inactivity of the Muslim people after the sun had shone, i.e., after the Prophet had made his appearance. The next verse makes it clearer.

2754 Ibn 'Atiyyah and others commenting on v. 4 say that L *ākhirah* is here

6 Did He not find thee an orphan[2755] and give (thee) shelter?	اَلَمْ يَجِدْكَ يَتِيْمًا فَاٰوٰى ۝
7 And find thee groping, so He showed the way?[2756]	وَوَجَدَكَ ضَآلًّا فَهَدٰى ۝
8 And find thee in want, so He enriched thee? [2757]	وَوَجَدَكَ عَآئِلًا فَاَغْنٰى ۝

meant *the latter state of the Prophet's cause* and by the *ūlā, the beginning of it* (RM). The lexicologists also explain the word *ākhir* as the *last, hindmost,* or *what is after the first or former.* And *ākhira marratain* is explained as meaning *the latter of the two times* (LL). The words may therefore mean that as time passes, the Prophet's cause would go on gaining strength, and the latter state would always be better for him than the former. Such indeed is Truth that, although it may gain ground inch by inch after severe struggle with falsehood, it does continue to advance. Or, the reference here is to the second rising of Islām, *nash'at thāniyah,* after what is called the stillness of the night in the **2nd verse, a** long pause of inactivity of the Muslims. References to a set-back to the cause of Islām for a long period are very frequent in the Holy Qur'ān; see 1959. As a matter of fact, it is true that notwithstanding various set-backs at different periods of its history, the cause of Islām has gone on gaining ground. When the existing Muslim civilization was destroyed by the Mongols, a greater Muslim nation rose up by their joining the ranks of Islām; and when Islām was extirpated in Spain in the West, it gained ground in the Far East in Indonesia, winning over fifty million people. There is clear and repeated mention of its final triumph in the whole world, 9:33; 48:28; and 61:9; **see 1054.** Perhaps it is to this that v. 5 refers — thy Lord will give thee so that thou wilt be well pleased.

2755 'Abd Allāh, the Holy Prophet's father, died about three months before the Prophet was born; his mother, Āminah, died when he was six years old. His grandfather, 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, who took care of him after his mother, died two years later, and from that time he remained in charge of Abū Ṭālib, his uncle, who was alive when the Holy Prophet received the Divine message for the regeneration of mankind.

2756 That *erring* is not the significance of *ḍāll* here is shown conclusively by 53:2, which says: "Your companion *does not err*". Vv. 6, 7, 8 stand in close relation respectively to vv. 9, 10 and 11; v. 6 tells the Prophet that he was himself an orphan, and the conclusion that he should therefore not oppress the orphan is drawn in v. 9; similarly, v. 8 speaks of the Divine favour to him in making him free from want, and the conclusion is drawn in v. 11 that he should therefore proclaim the Divine favour to him. Thus it is clear that v. 6 stands in close relation to v. 9, and v. 8 to v. 11, and the conclusion is evident that v. 7 stands in close relation to v. 10. Now, v. 10 plainly speaks of one who asks to be guided to the Truth, or a petitioner generally who needs the help of another, being unable himself to do a thing or undertake a task; **see 2759.** The Holy Prophet was no doubt a *sā'il* in this sense. He did not worship idols, but neither could he, without the help of Allāh, find out the way for the regeneration of his people, for which his soul yearned so eagerly. Hence *he was unable to see the way by himself,* and the word *ḍāll* signifies one who is *perplexed and unable to see the way for himself,* from *ḍalla, he was perplexed and unable to see his right course* (LL). The true significance of the word is thus that Allāh found the Prophet in quest of the way, but unable to find the way himself. Therefore He *guided* him by Divine light. In this manner was the Prophet told not to chide any petitioner, but to render help to him as Allāh had helped him. Or *ḍāll* signifies *one who becomes lost* (T, LL) in the pursuit of some object, as Jacob's sons speak of their father as being in *ḍalāl* (R), i.e., lost in the love of Joseph, and thus the meaning may be that the Holy Prophet had so devoted himself to the quest of the right way for the world that he had lost himself in that quest; see introductory note, chapter 94.

2757 Finding the Holy Prophet in want, and enriching him, do not refer to his temporal or pecuniary circumstances only, if they refer to them at all, but rather to his spiritual needs and the spiritual wealth with which he was enriched.

9 Therefore the orphan, oppress not.[2758]

فَأَمَّا الْيَتِيْمَ فَلَا تَقْهَرْ ۞

10 And him who asks, chide not.[2759]

وَأَمَّا السَّآئِلَ فَلَا تَنْهَرْ ۞

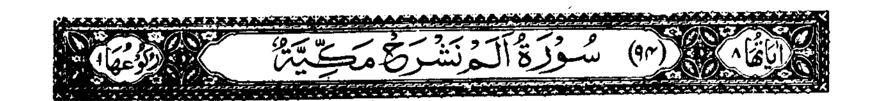
11 And the favour of thy Lord, proclaim.[2760]

وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ ۞

2758 Not taking care of the orphans is really their oppression. In one of the many of his sayings the Prophet says: *He who takes care of the orphan and I are like these two* (showing his two fingers close to each other) (B. 70:24).

2759 The word *sā'il* occurring in this verse is interpreted generally as meaning *a beggar*. But *petitioner*, or one who asks, is a much better rendering, for it retains the breadth of the original. Ḥasan interpreted the word as meaning *he who asks about knowledge*, and this interpretation is corroborated by what is related in the opening verses of ch. 80. It is, moreover, in consonance with the chief object of a prophet's mission, which aims at spreading true knowledge.

2760 The *ni'mat*, or *the favour*, is no other than *revelation*, the greatest of all Divine favours, as it is recognized to be throughout the Holy Qur'ān. This was the favour which the Holy Prophet continued to announce throughout his life. Mujāhid says: The *favour referred to here is the Qur'ān* (Rz).



CHAPTER 94

Al-Inshirāh : THE EXPANSION

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 8 *verses*)

This chapter, like its predecessors, comforts the Prophet. His difficulties were not to continue, but would soon be followed by ease, and it was a sufficient indication of this that his breast was *opened* or *expanded* for the Truth, whence the title of this chapter. The great burden which almost broke his back, his deep anxiety for humanity, had been removed by Divine revelation. This chapter is closely connected with the preceding one, to which it forms, as it were, a supplement. It is one of the earliest revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 Have We not expanded for thee thy breast,[2761]

اَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ ۝١

2 And removed from thee thy burden,

وَوَضَعْنَا عَنْكَ وِزْرَكَ ۝٢

3 Which weighed down thy back,[2762]

الَّذِيْٓ اَنْقَضَ ظَهْرَكَ ۝٣

4 And exalted for thee thy mention ?[2763]

وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ ۝٤

2761 *The expanding of the breast* is also mentioned in Moses' prayer in 20:25: "My Lord, expand my breast for me". The same words occur also in 6:126: "So whomsoever Allāh intends to guide aright, He expands his breast for Islām". As opposed to this, it is added: "And whomsoever He intends to leave in error, He makes his breast strait and narrow". There is a report according to which Gabriel opened the breast of the Holy Prophet while he was yet a boy in the charge of his nurse, and washed his heart; the authenticity of this has been questioned on critical grounds (Rz). But even that criticism is due to a misconception, for the same incident is related to have taken place again, when the Holy Prophet was entrusted with his Divine mission. The incident was therefore evidently a *kashf*, or *a clear vision*. AH says: "*The expanding of the breast signifies its illumination with wisdom and its vastness for the reception of what was to be revealed to him*". Rāghib gives a similar explanation, viz., *its expansion with Divine light and tranquillity*. The expansion of the breast stands, in one word, for the greatness of the heart of the Prophet.

2762 The burden which *weighed down his back* signifies anxiety for raising humanity from the ignorance and superstition in which it was involved. Compare 26:3: "Perhaps thou wilt kill thyself with grief because they believe not" The *removal* of the burden signifies giving relief from anxiety.

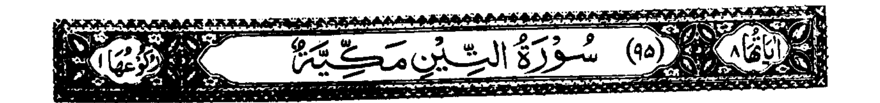
2763 This is a clear prophecy of the glorious eminence to which the Holy

5 Surely with difficulty is ease,	فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ۝٥
6 With difficulty is surely ease.[2764]	إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ۝٦
7 So when thou art free (from anxiety), work hard,[2765]	فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانْصَبْ ۝٧
8 And make thy Lord thy exclusive object.	وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَارْغَبْ ۝٨

Prophet was to be raised, uttered at a time when he was alone and unknown.

2764 In consonance with what is said in v. 4, the *ease* refers to the ***ultimate triumph,*** and the ***difficulty*** to ***the trials*** which the Prophet was then undergoing. But the passage as well reveals a general law of nature that difficulty is followed by ease. The statement is repeated, showing that Islām would twice be in great difficulties and face hard trials, and that on both occasions it would come out with ultimate triumph. There are clear indications in the Holy Qur'ān and in the sayings of the Holy Prophet of the trials and difficulties of Islām in the latter days, as great as those at the time of its birth, and of its ultimate triumph on both occasions.

2765 The Prophet's being ***free*** signifies his *freedom from anxiety,* in reference to what is said in the previous verse. Being now free from all anxiety, he was to work hard for the regeneration of a fallen humanity, and make his Lord his exclusive object, i.e., apply himself wholly to establish the greatness of God.



CHAPTER 95

Al-Tīn: THE FIG

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 8 *verses*)

This chapter shows — by drawing a comparison between the Mosaic dispensation, of which *the fig* is a symbol and gives its name to this chapter, and the Islamic dispensation — that man is so created that he can rise to the highest degree of eminence, if he sets before himself right principles and acts on them, and that he degrades himself to the lowest position in creation, if he is not guided by right principles, or, being so guided, fails to act upon them. The chapter belongs to the same early period as the other chapters preceding it.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful. | بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 By the fig and the olive! | وَ التِّيْنِ وَ الزَّيْتُوْنِ ۝

2 And mount Sinai! | وَ طُوْرِ سِيْنِيْنَ ۝

3 And this City made secure!—[2766] | وَ هٰذَا الْبَلَدِ الْاَمِيْنِ ۝

2766 The *fig* and the *olive* stand respectively for *the law given on Mount Sinai* and *that revealed in the sacred city of Makkah;* and the two verses that follow make this clear. It must be remembered that a comparison between Moses and the Holy Prophet Muḥammad is introduced in very early revelations, as here and in 52:1-6 and 73:15. The fig stands for the Jewish dispensation, and this is the significance underlying the cursing of the fig-tree by Jesus. It is said that coming from Bethany early in the morning and finding himself to be hungry, Jesus drew near to a fig-tree so that he might gather some figs; and seeing nothing but leaves upon it, he cursed the tree, and immediately it withered to the root (Matt. 21:19). This action of Jesus evidently signified the rejection of the Jews, who resembled the fig-tree, which had only leaves but no fruit, and even the leaves, representing as they did their outward actions of piety, should now wither away. The rejection of the Jews is still more plainly referred to in the parable of the garden (Matt. 21:33), which ends with the significant words: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21:43). It may be added that the Prophet Jeremiah also compares the Jewish nation to two baskets of figs, the good figs standing for the righteous from among the Jews and the vile figs for the wicked ones (Jer. ch. 24).

As regards the olive, some Bible references no doubt hint at that also as being a symbol of the Jewish nation, but the Holy Qur'ān compares it here with the law of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad. This is explained and clarified by a later revelation: "A likeness of His light is as a pillar on which is a lamp, the lamp is in a glass, (and) the glass is as it were a brightly shining star, lit from a blessed olive tree, neither Eastern nor Western" (24:35).

4 Certainly We created man in the best make.

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾

5 Then We render him the lowest of the low,

ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ ﴿٥﴾

6 Except those who believe and do good ; so theirs is a reward never to be cut off.[2767]

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ ﴿٦﴾

7 So who can give the lie to thee after (this) about the Judgment ?

فَمَا يُكَذِّبُكَ بَعْدُ بِالدِّينِ ﴿٧﴾

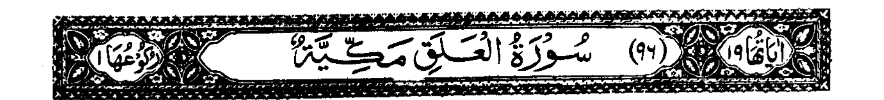
8 Is not Allāh the Best of the Judges ?[2768]

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَحْكَمِ الْحَاكِمِينَ ﴿٨﴾

The comparison shows that, whereas the law given on Mount Sinai passed away like the fig-tree in Jesus' parable, the new light, lit from the blessed olive-tree, was never to be extinguished, because it belonged neither to the East nor to the West, but was meant for all men in all ages, and was in fact destined to unite the East and the West.

2767 By man's being created *in the best make* is meant *his enormous capability for advancement.* When he does not take advantage of the opportunity offered to him, he is reduced to the lowest of the low. With unthought of advancement in science, men are even to-day flying at each other's throats like the beasts of the jungle, because they are not guided by Divine revelation.

2768 Both this verse and the one preceding it refer to the Divine judgment awaiting the rejectors of Truth. The Judgment is as well a judgment of the guilty in this life as in the next.



CHAPTER 96

Al-'Alaq : THE CLOT

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 19 *verses*)

The first five verses of this chapter are by universal admission the first revelation which the Holy Prophet received. The chapter is called *The Clot* because of the statement made in the second verse that Allāh created man from *a clot* of blood, which contains a hint that, as a beautiful human form is evolved out of such a humble origin, even so the Holy Prophet would raise humanity to the greatest eminence morally and spiritually.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Read in the name of thy Lord who creates —[2769]

اِقْرَاْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِىْ خَلَقَ ①

2 Creates man from a clot,[2770]

خَلَقَ الْاِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ②

2769 The Arabs were an *ummī* people, a people who made no use of reading and writing, with very rare exceptions, and the Prophet himself did not know reading or writing, yet the very first revelation which he received from on High was a command *to read.* The significance of this order is expressed in v. 3, v. 2 being parenthetical as referring to the origin of man. The order to *read* is repeated in v. 3 with the addition of the words that thy Lord is most Generous, to show that it is through reading and writing that man can attain to a position of glory, while v. 4 says that it is by the use of the pen that knowledge can be acquired. The words *in the name of thy Lord* signify *by the help of thy Lord.* The use of the word *Rabb* (*Nourisher unto perfection*) is to show that revelation was being granted to the Prophet, to bring him, and through him the whole of humanity, to perfection. The circumstances attending this first revelation are met with in trustworthy reports, and from these it appears that the Holy Prophet's first reply to the angel who brought this message was, that *he was unable to read* (B. 1:1).

2770 *'Alaq* signifies *a clot of blood* as well as *attachment* and *love* (T, LL). The former significance is the one generally adopted, because of the mention of *'alaqah* in the process of the creation of man in other places in the Holy Qur'ān, and it indicates the insignificance of man's origin. Having regard to the other significance of *'alaq,* the words may, however, also be translated as meaning *created man out of love.* The Prophet is reported to have said: *I loved that I should be known, so I created man.*

3 Read and thy Lord is most Generous,[2771]

اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ﴿٣﴾

4 Who taught by the pen,[2772]

الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ﴿٤﴾

5 Taught man what he knew not.

عَلَّمَ الْإِنسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ﴿٥﴾

6 Nay, man is surely inordinate,

كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنسَانَ لَيَطْغَىٰ ﴿٦﴾

7 Because he looks upon himself as self-sufficient.[2773]

أَن رَّآهُ اسْتَغْنَىٰ ﴿٧﴾

8 Surely to thy Lord is the return.

إِنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الرُّجْعَىٰ ﴿٨﴾

9 Hast thou seen him who forbids

أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يَنْهَىٰ ﴿٩﴾

10 A servant when he prays?[2774]

عَبْدًا إِذَا صَلَّىٰ ﴿١٠﴾

11 Seest thou if he is on the right way,

أَرَأَيْتَ إِن كَانَ عَلَى الْهُدَىٰ ﴿١١﴾

12 Or enjoins observance of duty?

أَوْ أَمَرَ بِالتَّقْوَىٰ ﴿١٢﴾

13 Seest thou if he denies and turns away?

أَرَأَيْتَ إِن كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّىٰ ﴿١٣﴾

14 Knows he not that Allāh sees?

أَلَمْ يَعْلَم بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَرَىٰ ﴿١٤﴾

15 Nay, if he desist not, We will seize him by the forelock —[2775]

كَلَّا لَئِن لَّمْ يَنتَهِ لَنَسْفَعًا بِالنَّاصِيَةِ ﴿١٥﴾

2771 *Akram* and *Karīm* (from *karuma, it was highly esteemed* or *excellent* or *valuable*) mean *Generous* as well as *Honourable* (LL). This word has been used here in reference to the great goal of honour and glory which the Prophet was destined to attain.

2772 The mention of the *pen* in this, the very first, revelation of the Holy Prophet, is significant, and it not only indicates, as Rodwell says, "the powerful help for propagating the knowledge of the Divine Unity" which the Holy Prophet was to find in the *pen*, but signifies as well that the pen should be specially used in guarding the revelation which was to be granted to the Holy Prophet. It is a fact that the pen has played an important part in the propagation of Islām as well as in the protection of the Qur'ān against corruption of every sort. The frequent mention of writing and the pen in the Holy Qur'ān, and particularly in connection with the revelation of the Holy Prophet, is rather striking when it is borne in mind that not only was the use of writing a rare novelty in the Arabian peninsula, but the Prophet was himself unacquainted with writing and reading.

2773 Some reports apply the words from here to the end of this chapter to Abū Jahl, but the words are general. In fact, we are told here that man becomes inordinate or rebellious because he thinks himself to be self-sufficient, and free from all need of God Who breathed into him of His Spirit. The soul of man has in fact a mystic relation with the invisible Divine Spirit, which the materialist fails to realize.

2774 There is special reference in the indefinite form to the Holy Prophet. So great was the opposition that the Prophet and his companions could not say their prayers in a public place.

2775 Seizing by the forelock signifies *abasement*. In the battle of Badr — thirteen years after this — these opponents were actually abased.

16 A lying, sinful forelock!

17 Then let him summon his council,

18 We will summon the braves of the army.[2776]

19 Nay! Obey him not, but prostrate thyself, and draw nigh (to Allāh).[2776a]

Prostration

نَاصِيَةٍ كَاذِبَةٍ خَاطِئَةٍ ﴿١٦﴾

فَلْيَدْعُ نَادِيَهُ ﴿١٧﴾

سَنَدْعُ الزَّبَانِيَةَ ﴿١٨﴾

كَلَّا ۖ لَا تُطِعْهُ وَاسْجُدْ وَاقْتَرِبْ ﴿١٩﴾ ۩

2776 *Al-nādī* signifies *al-majlis* or *the council*. The *dār al-Nadwah* (from the same root *nadā*) was the great council-hall of the nation, where the chief men assembled together in consultation over matters of importance relating to the whole of the nation, the undertaking of wars, etc. The significance therefore is that they should take their decision unitedly and do their utmost against the Prophet and his message. The *zabāniyah* "with the Arabs of the classical age" signifies the *shuraṭ* (LL, so also Kf, Bd, Rz), "applied in the earlier sense of *the braves of an army*, or in the later sense of *the armed attendants of the prefect of police*. This is the primary significance" (LL). The two verses thus clearly speak of the battles in which the mighty men of both sides were to be brought into conflict.

2776a The recital of this verse is followed by an actual prostration; see 978.



CHAPTER 97

Al-Qadr : THE MAJESTY

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 5 *verses*)

The very first revelation of the Holy Qur'ān contained in the last chapter is suitably followed in arrangement by one that relates when the revelation of the Qur'ān began. It was the *Night of Majesty* (one of the last ten nights of the month of Ramaḍān), which first witnessed the shining of that light which was destined to illumine the whole world. And the coming of the first revelation on the Night of *Majesty,* which gives its name to this chapter, contained a clear indication that the most majestic of all revelations was now being granted to the world, and that the majesty of this revelation, as well as of its recipient, would be established in the world. The chapter is unquestionably one of the very earliest revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ ۝

1 Surely We revealed it on the Night of Majesty —[2777]

اِنَّاۤ اَنۡزَلۡنٰہُ فِیۡ لَیۡلَۃِ الۡقَدۡرِ ۝۱

2 And what will make thee comprehend what the Night of Majesty is?

وَ مَاۤ اَدۡرٰىکَ مَا لَیۡلَۃُ الۡقَدۡرِ ۝۲

2777 *Lailat al-Qadr,* literally *the Night of Majesty* or *Grandeur* or *Greatness,* is a well-known night in the last ten days of the month of Ramaḍān, being more probably the 25th or 27th or 29th night of the month. In 44:3 it is called *the blessed night.* From 2:185, it appears that the Holy Qur'ān was revealed in the month of Ramaḍān, and from the above it appears to have been revealed on the *lailat al-Qadr;* by revelation of course being meant the commencement of its revelation, because the whole was revealed in portions during twenty-three years; and the word "Qur'ān" is applicable as well to a portion as to the whole. That the reference is here to the commencement of the revelation is also clear from the arrangement of the chapters, the opening verses of the last chapter being admittedly the first revelation to the Prophet. In fact, *lailat al-Qadr* owes its importance to the fact that it was on this night that the most blessed and perfect of all revelations was vouchsafed to the world. Moses' fasting for forty days previous to the receipt of revelation (Exod. 24:18), and Jesus' keeping fast for the same number of days before he was called upon to undertake the office of prophethood (Matt. 4:2), show that Divine blessings are associated with fasting in sacred history. Hence the Muslims are required to fast every year for thirty days, and special Divine blessings are promised to them in the concluding days of the fasts.

3 The Night of Majesty is better than a thousand months.[2778]

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ ۝٣

4 The angels and the Spirit descend in it by the permission of their Lord — for every affair —[2779]

تَنَزَّلُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ ۚ مِّنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ ۝٤

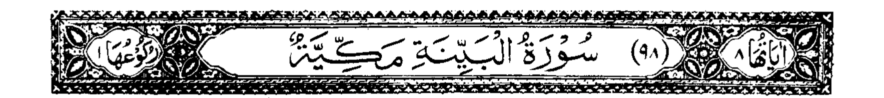
5 Peace! it is till the rising of the morning.[2780]

سَلٰمٌ ۛ هِيَ حَتّٰى مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ ۝٥

2778 A thousand months may be taken as the equivalent of a very long time. Numerically they are equal to about 83 years, leaving 17 years to complete a century. There is a saying of the Holy Prophet according to which a *mujaddid*, or a *reformer*, will appear among the Muslims at the commencement of every century. The *lailat al-Qadr* being a time of great spiritual blessings may also signify the time during which the Prophet worked in person, being actually a period of twenty-three years, or the time during which a *mujaddid* would ordinarily work, which period is more blessed spiritually than the rest of the century.

2779 The Spirit here may signify the Divine Spirit, which is really the force through which the regeneration of humanity is brought about, or it may mean Divine inspiration. The descent of the angels and the Spirit also shows that *lailat al-Qadr*, as hinted at in the last note, has a deeper significance, for though a particular night in the month of *Ramaḍān* may be characterized by great Divine blessings, it is more especially in connection with the mission of one appointed by Allāh for the regeneration of the world that "the angels and the Spirit" come down from heaven, turning men's minds to the spiritual values of life.

2780 "Peace" is the distinctive mark of *lailat al-Qadr*. This *peace* comes to the hearts of the true devotees in the form of a tranquillity of mind which makes them fit to receive Divine blessings. But it is also through one commissioned by God that the basis of peace among men is laid.



CHAPTER 98

Al-Bayyinah: THE CLEAR EVIDENCE

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 8 *verses*)

The Holy Prophet, who received the mightiest of revelations, or that revelation itself, is here called *The Clear Evidence,* the words supplying the name to this chapter, because this revelation, as this chapter shows, contained all the pure and essential teachings of previous scriptures. It may not be one of the very early revelations, but there seems to be no doubt that it is a Makkan revelation, such being the opinion of the majority.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Those who disbelieve from among the People of the Book and the idolaters could not have been freed till clear evidence came to them —[2781]

لَمْ يَكُنِ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْ اَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ وَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ مُنْفَكِّيْنَ حَتّٰى تَاْتِيَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَةُ ۙ①

2 A Messenger from Allāh, reciting pure pages,[2782]

رَسُوْلٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ يَتْلُوْا صُحُفًا مُّطَهَّرَةً ۙ②

3 Wherein are (all) right books.[2783]

فِيْهَا كُتُبٌ قَيِّمَةٌ ؕ③

2781 Both the People of the Book, people to whom revelation had been granted at some previous time, and the idolaters of Arabia, among whom no prophet had ever appeared, were sunk so deep in immorality and sin that only a Divine Messenger could now free them from this bondage. The Jews and the Christians, one after another, had exerted themselves to their utmost to reform Arabia, but both had failed. In fact they were themselves demoralized like the Arabs. "It was not until they heard the spirit-stirring strains of the Arabian Prophet that they too awoke from their slumber, and sprang suddenly into a new and earnest life" (Muir). That by the Clear Evidence is meant the Prophet is made clear in the next verse, where this Clear Evidence is spoken of as being a *Messenger from Allāh.*

2782 It should be noted that the Messenger is here described as reciting pure *pages,* thus showing clearly that the Qur'ān existed in a written form at the time of the revelation of this chapter. Their designation as *pure* is to show that the Holy Qur'ān brought them out of all impurities.

2783 *Kitāb* (pl. *kutub*) means a *book* or an ordinance. Whichever significance may be adopted, the meaning of the passage is that all those right directions necessary for the guidance of man, whether previously revealed or not, are to be

4 Nor did those to whom the Book was given become divided till clear evidence came to them.[2784]

وَمَا تَفَرَّقَ الَّذِيْنَ أُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ إِلَّا مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا جَآءَتْهُمُ الْبَيِّنَةُ ۝٤

5 And they are enjoined naught but to serve Allāh, being sincere to Him in obedience, upright, and to keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, and that is the right religion.

وَمَآ أُمِرُوْٓا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ مُخْلِصِيْنَ لَهُ الدِّيْنَ ۵ حُنَفَآءَ وَيُقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكٰوةَ وَذٰلِكَ دِيْنُ الْقَيِّمَةِ ۝٥

6 Those who disbelieve from among the People of the Book and the idolaters will be in the Fire of hell, abiding therein. They are the worst of creatures.

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتٰبِ وَالْمُشْرِكِيْنَ فِيْ نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ط أُولٰٓئِكَ هُمْ شَرُّ الْبَرِيَّةِ ۝٦

7 Those who believe and do good, they are the best of creatures.

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ لا أُولٰٓئِكَ هُمْ خَيْرُ الْبَرِيَّةِ ۝٧

8 Their reward is with their Lord: Gardens of perpetuity wherein flow rivers, abiding therein for ever. Allāh is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him.[2785] That is for him who fears his Lord.

جَزَآؤُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنّٰتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَآ أَبَدًا ط رَضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوْا عَنْهُ ط ذٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ رَبَّهُ ۝٨

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met with in the Holy Qur'ān. The Qur'ān thus claims to contain all the good points of other sacred books, and, in addition, to supply their deficiencies.

2784 The division mentioned here is the division into believers and disbelievers, some accepting the Messenger and others rejecting him.

2785 The companions of the Holy Prophet are here spoken of as having attained to the highest spiritual stage; compare 89:27-30, where the same words occur regarding spiritual perfection; see 2732. This shows clearly that they were above all worldly motives, and not only joined Islām with the single object of pleasing God but also that their sincerity was above all reproach to the end, so that God was pleased with them and made them enter His Garden.



CHAPTER 99

Al-Zilzāl : THE SHAKING

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH : 8 *verses*)

This chapter is entitled *Zilzāl* or *Shaking*. This word occurs in the very first verse, and hints at the severe shaking which was destined to bring about a transformation first in Arabia, and later on in the whole world. This shows the connection with the last chapter, which speaks of a transformation being brought about in the world by the Prophet. It is one of the earliest revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 When the earth is shaken with her shaking,

إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا ۝١

2 And the earth brings forth her burdens,

وَأَخْرَجَتِ الْأَرْضُ أَثْقَالَهَا ۝٢

3 And man says : What has befallen her ?

وَقَالَ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا لَهَا ۝٣

4 On that day she will tell her news,

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا ۝٤

5 As if thy Lord had revealed to her.[2786]

بِأَنَّ رَبَّكَ أَوْحٰى لَهَا ۝٥

2786 The first verse speaks of a violent shaking of the earth. For the significance of *zalzalah* or *shaking*, see 1668. That such a shaking would take place at the Resurrection cannot be denied. That it took place in the Prophet's lifetime is a fact. This was the shaking which brought about that wonderful transformation in Arabia, and then in the whole world, which is spoken of in the last chapter. The second verse speaks of the earth as bringing forth her burdens. This has been taken as signifying both the bringing forth of the dead and the yielding of her hidden treasures (RM). How the earth is bringing forth her hidden treasures of mineral wealth shows the wonderful knowledge of the future disclosed in the Qur'ān. That these are the preliminaries of a great transformation is the one theme of these early revelations. The transformation brought about in the Prophet's lifetime was in fact the first stage in the greater transformation to be brought about in the whole world later on, the *ākhirah* of 93:4, for which see 2754. The mighty world-conflicts of our day and the unimaginable treasures brought forth in these days are in fact portents of what must follow, the spiritual awakening to be brought about in the world. Vv. 3-5 indicate that, at the happenings referred to in the first two verses, man will wonder and cry out, *what has befallen the earth ?* This shows that extraordinary happenings will be witnessed by man in this very life. The earth will *tell her news*, that is to say, great secrets hitherto unknown will be revealed. This is further stressed in v. 5, *as if thy Lord*

6 On that day men will come forth in sundry bodies that they may be shown their works.

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَّصْدُرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا ۙ لِّيُرَوْا أَعْمَالَهُمْ ۝٦

7 So he who does an atom's weight of good will see it.

فَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَّرَهُ ۝٧

8 And he who does an atom's weight of evil will see it.[2786a]

وَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَّرَهُ ۝٨

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had revealed to her. In other words, as revelation discloses things which are unknown to man, so will great secrets hitherto unknown be revealed. Maybe there is a deeper reference here that in the wake of these extraordinary happenings will come a general spiritual awakening, as if God had revealed to the earth itself.

2786a Men will be shown their works in the Resurrection by being made to taste of their fruits, but they can also see the good or evil of their works in this life. Good and evil, when practised on a large scale, bring their reward or requital in this life as well. Note that the words here are *he who does,* and thus include both the Muslim and the non-Muslim. Even a non-Muslim who does an atom's weight of good will have its reward, and a Muslim who does an atom's weight of evil will be requited for it.

سُوْرَةُ الْعٰدِيٰتِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (١٠٠) — اٰيَاتُهَا ١١ — رُكُوْعُهَا ١

CHAPTER 100

Al-'Ādiyāt : THE ASSAULTERS

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 11 *verses*)

This chapter receives its title from the prophetic mention of *The Assaulters* in the first verse, showing that some of the great disasters spoken of in the last chapter were to be brought about by means of wars. This proved true not only in the time of the Holy Prophet, but its truth shines still more clearly in our own day, and the unprecedented wars of our time are no doubt a precursor of a great spiritual awakening, even as they proved in Arabia thirteen centuries ago. As regards its date of revelation, this chapter may be classed with the one preceding it.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 By those running and uttering cries !

وَالْعٰدِيٰتِ ضَبْحًا ۙ ①

2 And those producing fire, striking !

فَالْمُوْرِيٰتِ قَدْحًا ۙ ②

3 And those suddenly attacking at morn !

فَالْمُغِيْرٰتِ صُبْحًا ۙ ③

4 Then thereby they raise dust,

فَاَثَرْنَ بِهٖ نَقْعًا ۙ ④

5 Then penetrate thereby gatherings —

فَوَسَطْنَ بِهٖ جَمْعًا ۙ ⑤

6 Surely man is ungrateful to his Lord.[2787]

اِنَّ الْاِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهٖ لَكَنُوْدٌ ۚ ⑥

2787 *'Ādiyāt* (from *'adw, to run*) are *those running,* as also *assaulters,* and *ḍabḥ* is *the uttering of sound* in running fast (R). *Mūriyāt* (from *warā, it produced fire*) are *those that produce fire,* and *qadḥ* carries a number of significations, among these being *making a crack* or *a hole* or *corrosion* or *an act of striking fire* (LL). *Mughīrāt* is from *aghāra* meaning *he hastened* or *ran fast* or *vehemently* or *made a sudden attack* (LL). There is much difference of opinion as to what is meant by these words. According to I'Ab, these words describe the condition of the camels running on the occasion of the pilgrimage, but the majority of the commentators interpret these as meaning horses, the reference being to the part they play in war (RM). In this case it would be a prophetical description of the wars through which the opponents, who wanted to destroy Truth by the sword, were ultimately to be brought low. The words are so wide that they may also apply to modern means of warfare. If the strength of an attack on the enemy depended on the swiftness with which the attack was made, and therefore, in days

7 And surely he is a witness of that.

وَإِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ لَشَهِيدٌ ⑦

8 And truly on account of the love of wealth he is niggardly.

وَإِنَّهُ لِحُبِّ الْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ ⑧

9 Knows he not when that which is in the graves is raised,

أَفَلَا يَعْلَمُ إِذَا بُعْثِرَ مَا فِي الْقُبُورِ ⑨

10 And that which is in the breasts is made manifest?

وَحُصِّلَ مَا فِي الصُّدُورِ ⑩

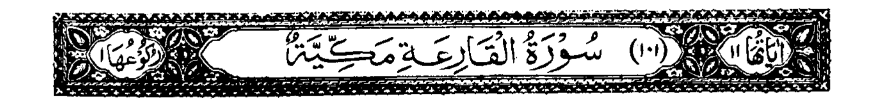
11 Surely their Lord this day is Aware of them.[2787a]

إِنَّ رَبَّهُمْ بِهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَخَبِيرٌ ⑪

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gone by, on the striking force of its horse, the words describe even more fittingly the air attacks of our own days. They, too, make a sound and throw out fire causing holes and fissures and splitting the earth. They, too, attack in the early hours of the morning, raise dust from demolished buildings and penetrate into the thickest parts of the towns. Others understand that these are groups of spiritual wayfarers, who run fast in the way of God. Man's ungratefulness to his Lord and his excessive love of wealth is the real theme in all cases. He sees only the material side of life and does not pay heed to its spiritual values. The balance of life is thus upset. Disasters come and he is violently shaken so that his eyes may be opened to the real values of life.

2787a A day will come, we are told, when those in the graves — the dead — will be raised to life and what is hidden in the breasts — the deeds which man did, hiding them from the eyes of others — will be made manifest. God is Aware even now, but as in nature, the consequences are made manifest in due time. They may not be as clear here as they will be at the Resurrection, when the sight will be sharpened (50:22), but sometimes they are made manifest here, too.



CHAPTER 101

Al-Qāri'ah : THE CALAMITY

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH : 11 *verses*)

The repelling *Calamity* of this chapter, which gives it its title, is the same as the shaking of the last chapter but one. The date of revelation is also about the same.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 The calamity !

اَلْقَارِعَةُ ۙ ①

2 What is the calamity ?

مَا الْقَارِعَةُ ۚ ②

3 And what will make thee know how terrible is the calamity ?[2788]

وَمَآ اَدْرٰىكَ مَا الْقَارِعَةُ ۗ ③

4 The day wherein men will be as scattered moths,

يَوْمَ يَكُوْنُ النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوْثِ ۙ ④

5 And the mountains will be as carded wool.[2789]

وَتَكُوْنُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ الْمَنْفُوْشِ ۗ ⑤

6 Then as for him whose measure (of good deeds) is heavy,

فَاَمَّا مَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِيْنُهٗ ۙ ⑥

7 He will live a pleasant life.

فَهُوَ فِيْ عِيْشَةٍ رَّاضِيَةٍ ۗ ⑦

8 And as for him whose measure (of good deeds) is light,

وَاَمَّا مَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِيْنُهٗ ۙ ⑧

9 The abyss is a mother to him.[2790]

فَاُمُّهٗ هَاوِيَةٌ ۗ ⑨

2788 *Al-Qāri'ah* (from *qar'*, meaning *striking with severity*) signifies *a very great calamity*, and the word occurs without the definite article *al* in 13 : 31, where it is said: "And as for those who disbelieve, there will not cease to afflict them, because of what they do, *a calamity* (*qāri'ah*) . . . until the promise of Allāh comes about". This use of the word *qāri'ah* shows that the word signifies one of those great calamities which befell the Quraish from time to time, and *al* is added to indicate that it is the *promised* calamity. In 69 : 4, *al-qāri'ah* signifies the great calamity which destroys a nation, i.e., their doom. *Al-qāri'ah* is also a name of the day of Resurrection or of the great Calamity which will destroy this earth, after which comes the Resurrection.

2789 This description may also apply to the doom of the opponents of Truth ; see 1280.

2790 *Hāwiyah* (from *hawā, he made it to fall down*) signifies *a deep place*

10 And what will make thee know what that is?

11 A burning Fire.

وَمَآ أَدْرٰىكَ مَا هِيَهْ ⑩

نَارٌ حَامِيَةٌ ⑪

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of which the bottom cannot be reached or *abyss* (LL). The word *umm* means primarily a *mother,* and in all secondary significances some idea of the primary significance is retained. Thus among its various secondary significances are *source, origin, foundation, support, efficient cause of subsistence, anything to which other things are collected together, the main part of a thing,* a *man who has charge of the food and service of a people* (LL). A place of habitation or abode is also called *umm* (LL), because it grants protection to a man, as does the mother to a babe. The abyss, or hell, is here called a mother to indicate that man's connection with hell is similar to that of a baby with its mother, viz., that his abode there fits him for progress in the spiritual world — he being brought up, as it were, in the bosom of hell, as a child is brought up in the bosom of its mother, and that his stay in hell is only for a time, as the child draws nourishment from his mother only for a time.

سُوْرَةُ التَّكَاثُرِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (١٠٢) آيَاتُهَا ٨ رُكُوْعُهَا ١

CHAPTER 102

Al-Takāthur : THE ABUNDANCE OF WEALTH

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH : 8 *verses*)

This chapter, which is appropriately entitled *The Abundance of Wealth,* from the occurrence of the word abundance in the first verse, states that vying one with another to have wealth and more wealth is the great impediment which keeps men away from the real object of life ; and therefore, to make them realize it, it is sometimes necessary to divest them of some of these comforts. It is for this reason that Divine wisdom sometimes requires disasters to be brought upon men. Hence this chapter is closely connected with the previous chapters, which speak of disasters. The truth of what is stated here was never so clearly realized by the world as it is to-day. The chapter is one of the earliest revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

1 Abundance diverts you,

أَلْهٰكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ ۝١

2 Until you come to the graves.[2791]

حَتّٰى زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ ۝٢

3 Nay, you will soon know,

كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝٣

4 Nay, again, you will soon know.

ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝٤

5 Nay, would that you knew with a certain knowledge ![2791a]

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِيْنِ ۝٥

6 You will certainly see hell ;

لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيْمَ ۝٦

7 Then you will see it with certainty of sight ;

ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِيْنِ ۝٧

2791 *Takāthur* (from *kathura, it became abundant* or *multiplied*) means *contending together for superiority in* (the *amount* or *number of*) *property* or *children* or *men* (LL). According to Rz, the measure of *tafā'ul* stands sometimes for the *fi'l* itself, and *takāthur* thus may mean *increase* or *abundance of wealth,* etc. *Coming to the graves* stands for *death.* The significance therefore is that vying one with another in increase of wealth diverts a man from the real object of life until he meets death.

2791a When a man dies, he then comes to know that the acquisition of wealth was in no way the real object of his life. But if he had proceeded on the basis of certain knowledge, he could have seen this in this very life.

8 Then on that day you shall certainly be questioned about the boons.[2792]

ثُمَّ لَتُسْـَٔلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ ۝٨

2792 Verses 5-8 are considered as disclosing three degrees of certainty — *'ilm al-yaqīn, 'ain al-yaqīn* and *ḥaqq al-yaqīn,* i.e., *certainty by inference, certainty by sight* and *certainty by realization.* A man can by inference attain to a certainty of the existence of hell in this very life (vv. 5 and 6); after his death he will see hell with his own eyes (v. 7); but a perfect manifestation of it will be realized by him on the day of Resurrection (v. 8). *Being questioned about the boons* implies *tasting of the punishment* for failing to make right use of what was granted to man. But the words may also be taken as applying to this life. By pondering on the very nature of evil a man can become certain of hell, this being the certainty by inference. Then he can acquire a certain knowledge by sight, by seeing the fate of others. Lastly, he is made to realize it by disasters being brought upon himself.

CHAPTER 103

Al-'Aṣr : THE TIME

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH : 3 *verses*)

This chapter draws attention to the testimony of *Time* in showing that those alone prosper who accept the Truth, and hence its title. As against those spoken of in the last chapter, those who are led away from the real object of life by making the acquisition of wealth its goal, we are here told that only those prosper who accept the Truth and exhort others to it. The chapter is one of the earliest revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

1 By the time! —

2 Surely man is in loss,

3 Except those who believe and do good, and exhort one another to Truth, and exhort one another to patience.[2793]

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

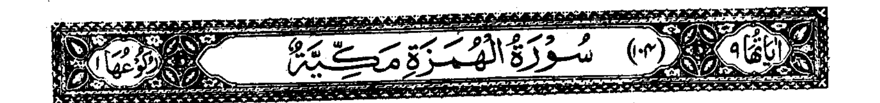
وَالْعَصْرِ ①

اِنَّ الْاِنْسَانَ لَفِيْ خُسْرٍ ②

اِلَّا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ

وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ ۙ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ③

2793 The testimony of time is threefold; the flight of time affords the testimony that it is only those who do not waste the opportunity of doing good that reap the benefit; the light which shines along the path of bygone ages shows us that those who did good and enjoined good on others prospered, while the evildoers were brought to naught; lastly, the time of the Holy Prophet afforded the clearest and most conclusive evidence that the believers and doers of good were successful, while their opponents sustained evident loss. *'Aṣr* signifies *time* or *succession of ages* (LL). Some, however, understand by *al-'aṣr* the time of the Holy Prophet, and an authentic saying of his, in which he compares his own time *to 'aṣr*, or the *afternoon* (B), supports this interpretation. In fact, both significances hold good. While taking time in a general sense, it is true that every man who is not engaged in doing some permanent and lasting good is really losing every minute that passes away; the time of the Holy Prophet in which a great spiritual resurrection was brought about affords the clearest evidence that those who did not respond to the Prophet's call were the losers, while the faithful brought about a revolution in the whole world by exhorting goodness and patience on others. The enjoining of patience on each other follows the direction to enjoin Truth, because the preaching of Truth brings man face to face with difficulties, and unless he is patient and forbearing under hardships, he cannot adhere to the Truth.



CHAPTER 104

Al-Humazah : THE SLANDERER

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH : 9 *verses*)

As opposed to those who are spoken of in the last chapter as believing, doing good and enjoining truth and patience, we have here a description of those who, instead of doing any permanent good, amass wealth, and instead of enjoining truth, slander others ; hence the name of the chapter *Al-Humazah* or *The Slanderer*, occurring in the first verse. It is one of the earliest revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

1 Woe to every slanderer, defamer ![2794]

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ ۝١

2 Who amasses wealth and counts it —[2795]

الَّذِيْ جَمَعَ مَالًا وَّعَدَّدَهٗ ۝٢

3 He thinks that his wealth will make him abide.[2796]

يَحْسَبُ اَنَّ مَالَهٗۤ اَخْلَدَهٗ ۝٣

4 Nay, he will certainly be hurled into the crushing disaster ;[2797]

كَلَّا لَيُنْۢبَذَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ ۝٤

2794 The slanderers and defamers are condemned here generally, with particular reference to the opponents, who started their persecution of the Holy Prophet by bitterly slandering and defaming him, so that the pilgrims coming to Makkah from afar should not listen to his teaching. Just as goodness and patience are combined in the previous chapter as the two qualities which are the foundations on which human character should be built, the amassing of wealth and defaming are combined here as the two evils which lead ultimately to disaster.

2795 *'Addada-hū* signifies *he considered it a provision against the casualties of fortune* (LA). It also means *he reckoned or counted it* (LL). It is a succinct but exact picture of the material civilization of our day.

2796 By *abiding* is meant *abiding in prosperity,* or *lasting for ever.*

2797 *Al-huṭamah* is derived from *ḥaṭima,* meaning *it became broken into pieces* (LL). The name is applied to *hell,* because it crushes everything that is cast into it. It includes both hell and other disasters which, it is prophesied, would crush the wealthy defamers of the Truth, their punishment being called by this name because they wanted to *crush* the Truth.

5 And what will make thee realize what the crushing disaster is?	وَمَآ أَدْرٰىكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ ۝
6 It is the Fire kindled by Allāh,	نَارُ اللّٰهِ الْمُوْقَدَةُ ۝
7 Which rises over the hearts.[2798]	الَّتِىْ تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْاَفْـِٕدَةِ ۝
8 Surely it is closed in on them,	اِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِمْ مُّؤْصَدَةٌ ۝
9 In extended columns.[2799]	فِىْ عَمَدٍ مُّمَدَّدَةٍ ۝

2798 The Fire of hell is described as *rising over the hearts*, showing that it is within the heart of man that the origin of hell-fire lies. A man's hell is thus within his own heart in this life.

2799 It is inordinate desires *extending* beyond all limits that give rise to *extended* columns of fire. Spiritually they may be witnessed in this life, but they assume a palpable shape in the next.

سُورَةُ الْفِيلِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (١٠٥)

CHAPTER 105

Al-Fīl: THE ELEPHANT

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 5 *verses*)

This chapter is entitled *Al-Fīl* or *The Elephant*, on account of the presence of one or more elephants in the army which invaded Makkah with the object of destroying the Ka'bah. This happened in the year in which the Prophet was born. This army met with a crushing disaster, and was annihilated — thus did the *Crushing Disaster* of the last chapter overtake an iniquitous people. It is one of the earliest revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

1 Hast thou not seen how thy Lord dealt with the possessors of the elephant?[2800]

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ ۝١

2 Did He not cause their war to end in confusion?

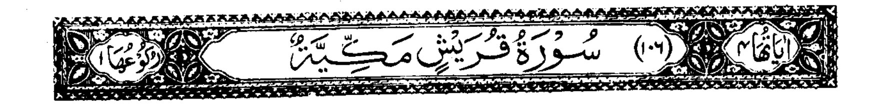
أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضْلِيلٍ ۝٢

2800 The reference is to the memorable invasion of Makkah by Abrahah, the Christian viceroy in Yaman of the king of Abyssinia. Abrahah's object was to destroy the Ka'bah so as to divert Arab religious enthusiasm and Arab trade to Ṣan'ā, where he had built a magnificent cathedral for the purpose. This army is known in Arabia as the *aṣḥāb al-Fīl*, or *the possessors of the Elephant*, because of the presence in it of one or more elephants. The year in which the invasion took place is known as the year of the Elephant, being the year 570 of the Christian era, and coinciding with the year of the Holy Prophet's birth. Unable to defend the Holy House against the huge army, 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib thus prayed aloud, leaning upon the door of the Ka'bah: "Defend, O Lord, Thine own House! and suffer not the Cross to triumph over the Ka'bah" (Zurqānī). Then the whole population of Makkah repaired to the hills around the Holy City. Meanwhile a virulent form of small-pox, or some other pestilence, broke out in Abrahah's army with such severity that the army retreated "in confusion and dismay", many of them, being unable to find their way back, perishing in the valleys, while a part was swept away by floods (Muir's *Life of Muḥammad*, Introduction, p.c.). There seems to be also an allusion to the circumstance that, in protecting the Ka'bah against an enemy, though idols were worshipped there at the time, Almighty God had shown a purpose in its preservation. The coincidence of this year with the year of the Prophet's birth no doubt furnishes the key to that purpose, because the Arabs not only knew that the Sacred House had Abraham's blessing, but also that Abraham had prayed for the appearance of a prophet from among them who should purify the House. The mention of the incident thus conveyed a warning to the Quraish that, if the Lord had destroyed

3 And send against them birds in flocks ?	وَّ اَرۡسَلَ عَلَيۡهِمۡ طَيۡرًا اَبَابِيۡلَ ۟ۙ
4 Casting at them decreed stones —	تَرۡمِيۡهِمۡ بِحِجَارَةٍ مِّنۡ سِجِّيۡلٍ ۪ۙ
5 So He rendered them like straw eaten up ?[2801]	فَجَعَلَهُمۡ كَعَصۡفٍ مَّاۡكُوۡلٍ ۟

an army on account of its intention to demolish His Sacred House, would He leave those alone who wanted to destroy His Prophet ?

2801 There is no authentic ḥadīth as to how Abrahah's army was destroyed. According to 'Ikrimah, everyone at whom a stone was flung was affected with small-pox (RM). A report from Ya'qūb to the same effect is narrated by Ibn Kathīr. Thus it was a virulent small-pox that broke out in the invading army while yet a little distance from Makkah, and the result was that Abrahah himself being affected with the pestilence, the whole army fled in a state of confusion, leaving the corpses of the dead for the birds to feast on. The words *tarmī-him bi-ḥijārat-in* may mean *the birds cast at them stones* or *flung them against stones,* the reference in the latter case being to the birds tearing off flesh from their bodies. For *ḥijārat-in min sijjīl,* see 1198. For birds as indicating the destruction of an enemy, see 1387.



CHAPTER 106

Al-Quraish : THE QURAISH

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 4 *verses*)

This chapter is closely connected with the last, and in fact continues the subject-matter, reminding the Quraish of the great benefits conferred on them because of their guardianship of the Ka'bah. For this reason the two chapters were sometimes read together, leading some to think that this is a portion of the previous chapter. The date of revelation is also the same.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

1 For the protection of the Quraish —[2802]

لِاِيْلٰفِ قُرَيْشٍ ۙ

2 Their protection during their journey in the winter and the summer.[2803]

اٖلٰفِهِمْ رِحْلَةَ الشِّتَآءِ وَ الصَّيْفِ ۚ

3 So let them serve the Lord of this House,

فَلْيَعْبُدُوْا رَبَّ هٰذَا الْبَيْتِ ۙ

4 Who feeds them against hunger, and gives them security against fear.[2804]

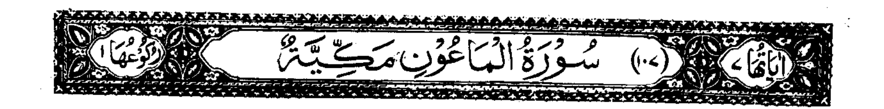
الَّذِيْۤ اَطْعَمَهُمْ مِّنْ جُوْعٍ ۙ۬ وَّ اٰمَنَهُمْ مِّنْ خَوْفٍ

2802 *Quraish* is the name given to the tribe descended from Naḍr ibn Kanānah. According to some the word Quraish is the diminutive of *qarsh*, a big animal of the sea, which eats others but is not itself eaten. The Quraish were settled at Makkah and had charge of the Sacred House, to which pilgrims resorted from all parts of Arabia, and therefore, being guardians of the Holy House, they enjoyed special honour among the tribes of Arabia. Moreover Makkah had thus become the centre of Arabia, bringing prosperity to the Quraish.

The first verse of this chapter is connected with the last chapter, the significance being that the Divine protection of the Ka'bah and the destruction of its enemies was a special favour granted to the Quraish, for it led to their protection. It is a fact that, as stated in the last chapter, being guardians of the Ka'bah, they were respected when they set out on their journeys, while within the sacred territory they enjoyed an unparalleled security.

2803 The protection mentioned in the last note was of special use to them in their journeys northward to Syria and southward to Yaman, the former of which was undertaken in the summer and the latter in winter, to carry on their trade.

2804 Feeding against hunger and granting security against fear were the two special favours conferred on the Quraish through the sacredness of the Ka'bah, because the pilgrimage gave a special impetus to their trade and the necessaries of life were brought to their very doors, while they were totally secure from all fear of attack, to which the other Arab tribes were constantly exposed.



CHAPTER 107

Al-Mā'ūn : ACTS OF KINDNESS

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH : 7 *verses*)

This chapter gives expression to the prominence which Islām gives to helping the needy and uplifting the poor. Anyone who pays no attention to this is spoken of as belying *religion.* Prayer to God and help of the poor are repeatedly spoken of in the Holy Qur'ān as the two foundations of Islām, but here we are told that even prayer is a mere show, if it does not generate feelings of love and sympathy for humanity. Hence its title *al-Mā'ūn* or *Acts of Kindness,* the word itself occurring in the last verse. It is one of the very early Makkan revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

1 Hast thou seen him who belies religion ?

اَرَءَيْتَ الَّذِيْ يُكَذِّبُ بِالدِّيْنِ ۝١

2 That is the one who is rough to the orphan,

فَذٰلِكَ الَّذِيْ يَدُعُّ الْيَتِيْمَ ۝٢

3 And urges not the feeding of the needy.[2805]

وَلَا يَحُضُّ عَلٰى طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِيْنِ ۝٣

4 So woe to the praying ones,

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلْمُصَلِّيْنَ ۝٤

5 Who are unmindful of their prayer ![2805a]

الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُوْنَ ۝٥

6 Who do (good) to be seen,

الَّذِيْنَ هُمْ يُرَآءُوْنَ ۝٦

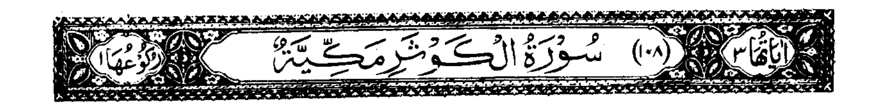
7 And refrain from acts of kindness ![2806]

وَيَمْنَعُوْنَ الْمَاعُوْنَ ۝٧

2805 *Dīn* is generally taken here as meaning *judgment,* but I would prefer its more well-known significance, *religion.* Not taking care of orphans and helping the needy is really a denial of religion. Vv. 4-6 make it clear that praying to God is useless, a mere show, unless one is kind to orphans and helps the needy.

2805a Being *unmindful* of prayer means not paying heed to the *spirit* of prayer, which is described in the two previous verses as being the help of the orphan and the needy.

2806 *Al-Mā'ūn* is explained by Bukhārī as meaning *al-Ma'rūf kullu-hū,* i.e., *every good* or *kind deed.* And it is added that according to 'Ikrimah, its highest form is obligatory zakāt and lowest lending of a thing or giving any useful thing to another (B. 65 : cvii). The root is *ma'n,* which means *a useful* or *easy thing.* Having regard to what is said in the opening verses, *al-Mā'ūn* includes all acts of kindness done to fellow-men.



CHAPTER 108

Al-Kauthar : THE ABUNDANCE OF GOOD

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH : 3 *verses*)

As against *The Abundance of Wealth* spoken of in ch. 102, which leads man away from the real object of life, this chapter speaks of *The Abundance of Good*, and of the means to attain it. The two means to attain it are here stated to be prayer to God, which fills the heart with the noblest of aspirations, and sacrifice, which means the devoting of one's life to the service of humanity. It is one of the earliest revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ ○

1 Surely We have given thee abundance of good.[2807]

اِنَّاۤ اَعۡطَیۡنٰکَ الۡکَوۡثَرَ ؕ ①

2 So pray to thy Lord and sacrifice.[2808]

فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّکَ وَ انۡحَرۡ ؕ ②

3 Surely thy enemy is cut off (from good).[2809]

اِنَّ شَانِئَکَ ہُوَ الۡاَبۡتَرُ ع ③

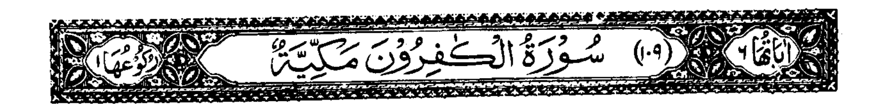
2807 *Al-kauthar* (from the same root *kathura* as *takāthur* — see 2791) means *the abundance* or *the abundance of good*. "It has been said that *the kauthar* here means *the abundance of good* which God will give to the followers of the Prophet on the day of Resurrection. . . . And what is mentioned in commentaries about *the kauthar* was all given to the Prophet ; that is to say, he was given abundance of good, and he was promised the triumph of Islām over all religions and he was granted help against his enemies and he was granted intercession for his community, and he was granted of goodness that which cannot be counted" (LA). 'Ikrimah said that *kauthar* meant abundant good and the Qur'ān and wisdom ; Sa'īd said that God granted him abundance of good of every kind, and on being asked if it was a river in paradise replied, the river and all (good) besides it (IJ). According to I'Ab, *the kauthar* is the abundance of good which God gave the Prophet (B. 65 : cviii). From what is stated further on, it is clear that it is not the Prophet alone who is promised this abundance of good but also every true follower of his who makes use of the means for the attainment of it as described in the next verse.

2808 Two ways are pointed out in this verse to attain the abundance of good promised in the first verse, praying to God, and *naḥr* or *sacrifice*, which means the devoting of one's life to the good of humanity. Prayer is communion with God which raises in man's heart the highest aspirations and makes him drink deep at the fountain of Divine morals. To aspire after good is the first need. If there is no aspiration for good, it is simply impossible to do good ; hence prayer is mentioned first. And when these noble aspirations arise, man is told

2809, see next page.

to lay down his very life for the service of humanity, not of one group or one nation or one community. The word *naḥr* means *the uppermost part of the breast* and *naḥara* means *he stabbed an animal in the naḥr* (LL), and thus stands for *sacrificing an animal.* But the sacrifice of an animal itself stands for sacrifice of self, for which see 1691 and 1696.

2809 The word *abtar* (from *batr,* meaning *the cutting off of a thing entirely*), as applied to a beast, means *one whose tail is cut off.* As applied to a man it conveys several significances, for instance, *in want* or *poor, suffering loss, one from whom all good or prosperity is cut off, having no offspring or progeny* (LL). All good is cut off from him because he walks contrary to the ways in which good can be attained.



CHAPTER 109

Al-Kāfirūn : THE DISBELIEVERS

(Revealed at Makkah : 6 *verses*)

The Disbelievers — hence the title — are told in this chapter that they shall be requited for their misdeeds, while the Prophet and the faithful will reap the reward of their deeds. It belongs to the early Makkan period.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Say : O disbelievers,

قُلْ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الْكٰفِرُوْنَ ①

2 I serve not that which you serve,

لَآ اَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُوْنَ ②

3 Nor do you serve Him Whom I serve,

وَلَآ اَنْتُمْ عٰبِدُوْنَ مَآ اَعْبُدُ ③

4 Nor shall I serve that which ye serve,

وَلَآ اَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدْتُّمْ ④

5 Nor do you serve Him Whom I serve.

وَلَآ اَنْتُمْ عٰبِدُوْنَ مَآ اَعْبُدُ ⑤

6 For you is your recompense and for me my recompense.[2810]

لَكُمْ دِيْنُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِيْنِ ⑥

2810 Among the various significances of *dīn* is *recompense* or *reward* (LL), and this is what is meant here. It is a prophecy that those who serve Allāh will have a goodly reward from Him, while those who serve idols will not obtain any help from their false gods. The next chapter refers to the reward of the truthful, Divine help and victory, and men entering into Islām in hosts, while the one following it shows that the recompense of the idol-worshippers is that their wealth and all their efforts will be entirely unavailing. Those who think that these words indicate that the Holy Prophet had despaired of the disbelievers are mistaken. Not for a single moment did he cease to invite the disbelievers to accept Islām and to forsake the worship of idols.

سُورَةُ النَّصرِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (١١٠) رُكُوعُهَا ١ آيَاتُهَا ٣

CHAPTER 110

Al-Naṣr : THE HELP

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 3 *verses*)

This chapter speaks of the great Divine *Help* (from which it receives its title) and victory with which the Holy Prophet's endeavours in the cause of Truth were crowned. According to I'Ab it was an indication of the Holy Prophet's approaching end (B. 65 : cx, 2). Ibn 'Umar is reported as saying that this chapter was revealed during the last pilgrimage of the Holy Prophet, and that he lived only eighty days after its revelation (AH). It was therefore revealed at Makkah during the Madīnah period towards the close of the Prophet's life. As a complete chapter it may be said to be the last revelation of the Holy Prophet, and, coming down at Makkah, it showed how those wonderful prophecies, announced in utter loneliness and helplessness, were now fulfilled by the Prophet visiting Makkah with the whole of Arabia at his feet.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 When Allāh's help and victory comes,[2811]

إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللّٰهِ وَالْفَتْحُ ①

2 And thou seest men entering the religion of Allāh in companies,

وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِيْ دِيْنِ اللّٰهِ أَفْوَاجًا ②

3 Celebrate the praise of thy Lord and ask His protection.[2812] Surely He is ever Returning (to mercy).

فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا ③

2811 The great victory which had come was the triumph of the religion of Islām in the whole of Arabia. Deputation after deputation from all parts of Arabia came to Madīnah and accepted Islām. History does not present another example of the wonderful transformation wrought by the Prophet within the short space of twenty years.

2812 On witnessing the greatest triumph known to history, the Prophet is told to celebrate the praise of his Lord, and to ask protection. For whom was protection to be asked? If it was for himself, it was a protection against elation at an unprecedented victory, because elation ill befitted a Teacher of righteousness. But more likely, he was required to ask protection for the masses which were now accepting Islām in companies. In fact he was required to ask Divine forgiveness or protection for his erstwhile oppressors, forgiveness for his deadly enemies, who were guilty of the gravest crimes.

CHAPTER 111

Al-Lahab : THE FLAME

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 5 *verses*)

The chapter shows that the fiery-tempered opponents of Truth led their lives in heart-burning, which assumes the palpable shape of flames of fire in another life (v. 5). The chapter is entitled *Lahab* in reference to this, or in reference to the name of the Prophet's uncle, 'Abd al-'Uzzā, who was in deadly opposition to the Prophet, Abū Lahab being his *kunyah,* occurring in the first verse. This chapter thus deals with the end of opposition to Truth — heart-burning in this life and palpable fire in the Hereafter. It is an early Makkan revelation.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Abū Lahab's hands will perish and he will perish.[2813]

تَبَّتْ يَدَآ اَبِيْ لَهَبٍ وَّتَبَّ ①

2 His wealth and that which he earns will not avail him.

مَآ اَغْنٰى عَنْهُ مَالُهٗ وَمَا كَسَبَ ②

3 He will burn in fire giving rise to flames —[2814]

سَيَصْلٰى نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ ③

2813 A man of a fiery temper may be called *abū-lahab* or *father of flame,* as *abu-l-khair* (*father of goodness*) means a *good man.* 'Abd al-'Uzzā, an uncle of the Holy Prophet, being a son of his grandfather 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, was known by this name, because of his ruddy complexion or because of his fiery temper. It is related that the Holy Prophet, being commanded to warn his near relatives, called them together and delivered the Divine message, at which 'Abd al-'Uzzā cried out: "Mayest thou perish! Was it for this that thou didst summon us?" (B. 65: cxi). It is also related that he followed the Prophet when he went out to preach, saying to the people that the Prophet was a mad relative of his.

His two hands will perish means that all that he did in opposition to the Prophet will end in naught. And it is added that he himself will perish. He is reported to have died seven days after hearing of the defeat of the Quraish at Badr.

2814 He burned in fire in this very life owing to the fact that his life was a life of heart-burning, on account of his failure to check the advance of Truth: This fire gave rise to flames which burned others as well, including his own wife, who is spoken of in the next verse. There is also a reference to the palpable shape which this fire will take in the Hereafter.

4 And his wife — the bearer of slander ;[2815]

وَّامْرَاَتُهٗ ؕ حَمَّالَةَ الْحَطَبِ ۝

5 Upon her neck a halter of twisted rope ![2816]

فِىْ جِيْدِهَا حَبْلٌ مِّنْ مَّسَدٍ ۝

2815 The flames that sprang from the fire in which Abū Lahab lived enveloped his own wife, so that even she took part in the opposition to the Prophet. Her part in opposition is here described as being *ḥammālat al-ḥaṭab,* which is generally translated as meaning *bearer of fuel.* It is thought that the reference here is to the thorny bushes which she brought from the wood to spread in the Prophet's way. But according to Mjd, the words mean *bearer of slander,* as she used to spread false reports against the Prophet (B. 65 : cxi, 3). The same explanation is given by lexicologists who say that *ḥaṭab* means *fuel* as well as *calumny* or *slander, yaḥmilu al-ḥaṭaba* means *he goes about with slander* or *calumny* (LL). A similar explanation is given by Qatādah, who adds that she used to spread false reports about the Prophet (Rz).

2816 It is said that Abū Lahab's wife died by being strangled by the very rope in which she used to bring thorns. But *jīd* is explained by LL as meaning the *part of the neck on which the necklace is borne,* and it is related that she was a wealthy woman who possessed a necklace of jewelry. Maybe the twisted rope is a reference to her jewelry, as a jewelled necklace is as worthless in the eye of God as a rope. It is to the inner worth that God looks and not to the outward ornaments. Being a bearer of slander and calumny, she was morally as low as a woman with a halter or palm-fibre on her neck.



CHAPTER 112

Al-Ikhlāṣ : THE UNITY

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 4 *verses*)

This is really the concluding chapter of the Holy Qur'ān — the two chapters that follow only show how the protection of the Lord is to be sought — and it gives the sum and substance of the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān, which is the declaration of the *Unity* of the Divine Being. *Ikhlāṣ* means *purification* of a thing from dross, and as this chapter purifies the Unity of God of all dross of polytheism, it is called *al-Ikhlāṣ*. The chapter is one of the earliest revelations.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Say : He, Allāh, is One.

قُلْ هُوَ اللّٰهُ اَحَدٌ ①

2 Allāh is He on Whom all depend.

اَللّٰهُ الصَّمَدُ ②

3 He begets not, nor is He begotten ;

لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُوْلَدْ ③

4 And none is like Him.[2817]

وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَّهٗ كُفُوًا اَحَدٌ ④

2817 This, a very early Makkan revelation, points out the fundamental errors of many religions, including Christianity, in its four short sentences. The first verse proclaims the absolute Unity of the Divine Being, and deals a death-blow to all forms of polytheism, including the doctrine of the Trinity.

In the second verse Allāh is said to be *Ṣamad,* which the Holy Prophet is reported to have explained as meaning *the Lord to Whom recourse is had in every need* (AH), so that all have need of Him and He has need of none. This statement negatives the doctrine according to which soul and matter are co-eternal with God and God stands in need of them to bring about creation. The doctrine prevails in India, and could not have been known to the Holy Prophet.

The third verse points out the error of those religions which describe God as being father or son, such as the Christian religion.

The fourth verse negatives such doctrines as the doctrine of incarnation, according to which a mere man is likened to God.

Thus four kinds of *shirk* are rejected here, a belief in the plurality of gods (v. 1), a belief that other things possess the perfect attributes of the Divine Being (v. 2), a belief that God is either a father or a son (v. 3), and a belief that others can do that which is ascribable only to God.

سُورَةُ الْفَلَقِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (۱۱۳) آياتها ٥ ركوعها ١

CHAPTER 113

Al-Falaq : THE DAWN

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 5 *verses*)

This chapter and the one that follows — both together known as *mu'awwidhatān* from *'ādha, he sought refuge* — teach man how to seek refuge in Allāh and how to betake himself to His protection. This subject being referred to in Makkan revelations, as in ch. 16 and 41, the two chapters must have been revealed at Makkah, and most probably they belong to the early Makkan period. The stories regarding their revelation at Madīnah, as stated by some commentators, must be rejected as concoctions of a later age. This chapter is called *Al-Falaq* or *The Dawn,* that word occurring in the first verse, showing that Truth would ultimately dispel all darkness.

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ○

1 Say : I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn,[2818]

قُلْ أَعُوْذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ ①

2 From the evil of that which He has created,

مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ ②

3 And from the evil of intense darkness,[2819] when it comes,

وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ ③

4 And from the evil of those who cast (evil suggestions) in firm resolutions,[2820]

وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفّٰثٰتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ ④

2818 *Falaq* signifies the *daybreak* (LL), meaning primarily *cleaving* or *splitting,* the daybreak being so called because it cleaves through the darkness. Hence it comes to signify *the plain appearing of the Truth after its having been dubious* (T, LL). The reference in the *Lord of the dawn* is to the gradual manifestation of the Truth and its ultimate triumph.

2819 *Ghāsiq* is derived from *ghasaq,* which signifies *intense darkness* (R). Hence it means darkness in which there is no ray of light, and stands for the dark difficulties with which an affair is sometimes attended — difficulties through which a man is unable to see his way. Man is, therefore, here taught to pray that his affairs may not be enveloped in utter darkness.

2820 *Naffāthāt* is the plural of *naffāth,* which is an intensive nominative from *nafatha,* meaning primarily *he blew.* But *nafatha fī qalbi-hī* means *he put a thing into his heart* (LL), *and nafatha fī rū'ī* means *he inspired* or *put it into my mind* (N). *'Uqad* is the plural of *'uqdah,* which signifies *a tie* (LL), and *judgment and consideration of one's affairs* (T), and *management, regulating* and

5 And from the evil of the envier when he envies.[2821]

وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ ۝

ordering of one's affairs (LL). It also signifies *a promise of obedience* or *vow of allegiance* (LA, LL). Hence the *naffāthāt fi l-'uqad* are really those who put evil suggestions into the resolution of men or into the management of their affairs. Note that *naffāthāt* are not necessarily *women;* the word equally applies to *jamā'āt,* or *companies of men* (Rz).

This verse deals with the second difficulty in the management of an affair. The first difficulty is its being enveloped in utter gloom (**v. 3**); the second is that darkness is dispelled, but the resolution to accomplish the affair is yet weak.

2821 This is the third difficulty. Success is now in sight, but there are those who envy that success. Therefore, Divine protection has still to be sought when a man is successful in accomplishing an affair.

Note that the Prophet, who was charged with the heavy task of establishing Truth in the world and making it triumphant over falsehood, had to face all these difficulties, and his faithful followers, whose goal of life is the same as that of the Prophet, stand most in need of resorting to this prayer with which the Holy Qur'ān draws to a close.

سُورَةُ النَّاسِ مَكِّيَّةٌ (۱۱۴)

CHAPTER 114

Al-Nās : THE MEN

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH : 6 *verses*)

The introductory note on the last chapter may also be read here. *Al-Nās,* or *The Men,* the name of this concluding chapter of the Holy Qur'ān, has reference to the fact that it is for the perfection of mankind that the Holy Qur'ān has been revealed. This name is taken from the opening verses of the chapter in which God is spoken of as *Rabb of men,* i.e., their *Nourisher unto perfection, King of men,* i.e., the real *Controller of their affairs,* and the *Ilāh of men,* i.e., the *Controller of their hearts.*

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.	بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ
1 Say : I seek refuge in the Lord of men,	قُلْ أَعُوْذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ ﴿١﴾
2 The King of men,	مَلِكِ النَّاسِ ﴿٢﴾
3 The God of men,	إِلٰهِ النَّاسِ ﴿٣﴾
4 From the evil of the whisperings of the slinking (devil),	مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ ﴿٤﴾
5 Who whispers into the hearts of men,	الَّذِيْ يُوَسْوِسُ فِيْ صُدُوْرِ النَّاسِ ﴿٥﴾
6 From among the jinn and the men.[2822]	مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ ﴿٦﴾

2822 These verses are, as it were, a complement to the previous chapter. Three kinds of mischief are pointed out there which may be done to the cause of Truth. Here a fourth, but the gravest mischief of all, is pointed out. This is the mischief of the *slinking devil,* who comes stealthily and casts evil suggestions into the hearts of men. The whispering of the evil one is the greatest mischief because its source is *in the hearts of men* (v. 5). The word *khannās* is derived from *khanasa,* meaning *he held back* or *hung back,* and also *he hid himself* (LL), and *al-khannās* is *the devil,* because he retires or shrinks or hides himself (LL).

Man is here taught to seek refuge in God Who is, in the first place, the *Rabb* of mankind, i.e., its Nourisher by degrees to perfection ; secondly, He is the *Malik* or *King of mankind,* i.e., holds control over them, so far as the physical laws of nature are concerned ; thirdly, He is the *Ilāh* of mankind, Who alone deserves to be worshipped and before Whom the whole of mankind must ultimately bow. In other words, the protection of God is sought because He is the Nourisher Who brings to perfection, and He holds control over Matter as well as Mind. The Divine purpose is thus again disclosed at the end, as it is disclosed in the very beginning (1 : 1) of the Holy Qur'ān. It is to bring mankind to perfection. Nothing in this world can frustrate this purpose, as God holds control over matter as well as mind.

ARABIC WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED

(The number indicates the number of the footnote)

Ab, 412, 790
Abad, 1201
'Abd, 'ibād, 971, 2626a
Abkār, 2432
Abṣir bi-hī wa asmi', 1496
Abtar, 2809
Abyad, tabyaḍḍut wujūh, 474
'Ād, ghaira bāgh-in wa lā 'ād-in, 211
Aḍalla, 44, 623
'Addada-hū, 2795
Adhā, 287, 352, yu'dhūn, 2010
'Adhāb, 1562
Adhina la-hū, 2699
'Ādiyāt, 2787
'Afā, 232; -llāhu 'an-ka, 1065; 'afw, 380
Āfāq, 2215
Aghwaita-nī, 1339
Aḥāṭa, 1440a
Ahillah, hilāl, 236
Ahl, 917a; ahl al-bait, 1191, 1989
Ahla-hū, 2146
Aḥmad, 2496
Aḥqāb, 2645; ḥuqub, 1512
Aimān, 560
'Ain, 1519
'Ain, sīn, qāf, 2216
Ajal, 1115
A'jaza, mu'jiz, 1173
'Ajila, 946
Akh, 412, 904
Akhadha fī kadhā, 1026
Ākhirah, 19, 2754
Ākhira-hū, 448
Akhlafa, see khalf
'Ākif, 1686
'Alā, 1407d; -ḥarf, 1678; -shai', 157
'Ālamīn, 6, 77, 1667
'Alaq, 2770
Alif, lām, mīm, 11
Alif, lām, mīm, rā, 1261
Alif, lām, mīm, ṣād, 853
Alif, lām, rā, 1109, 1261
Allāh, 2
Alqā, 652, 1596; alqiyā, 2342
'Amā, 2205
Amānat, amānāt, 592
Amīn, 769, 1828
Ammārah, 1239
Amr, 708, 927, 946, 1959, 2277; -Allāh, 1354, 2230
'An, 187
Anfāl, 979
Annā, 288
Anṣār, see nāṣir
Anzala, 2156, 2456
'Aqabah, 2738a
Aqāma, 16
'Aqīm, 1704
A'rāb, 1082
A'rāf (al-), 890
'Arafāt, 259
'Arsh, 895, 1164
'Aṣā, iḍrib bi 'aṣā-ka-l-ḥajar, 96; iḍril bi 'aṣā-ka-l-baḥr, 1815; see also ḍarl
Āṣāl, aṣl, aṣīl, 977
Asarra, 1136
'Aṣr, 2793
Ātā-hu-llāhu, 345
Athāba, 506
Āthār, 2185; athar, 1600
Athkhana, 1024, 2294
Atrāb, 2148a
Au, 1194a, 2535
Aulād, 1425
Auliyā', 407
Autād, 2132
Awwaba, 2022
Awwala bait-in wuḍi'a li-l-nāsi, 168a
Āyat, 67, 152, 1819
Ayyām-Allāh, see yaum
Āzifah (yaum al-), 2183
'Azīz, 1227
Azlām, 663

Bā, 1
Badī' 162
Bāgh, 211; see 'ād
Baḥīrah, 742
Baḥr, 82, 736, 2354; biḥār, 2673
Bain, 1506

Bait, 168a ; al-'atīq, al-ḥarām ; al-ma'mūr ; 168a
Bakkah, 467
Bal, 1639
Ba'l, 2119
Balīgh, 596
Banān, 2607
Baqiyyat, 329, 1206 ; -Allāh, 329, 1200
Bariqa, 2608
Barzakh, 1731
Bashar, 797
Bashshir, tabshīr, 636
Baṣīr, 1254
Ba'th, 1671
Ba'ūḍah, 43
Bayān, 2405
Bayyaḍa, 1248 ; see ibyaḍḍa
Bid', 2284
Biḍ', 1235, 1930
Biḍā'ah, 1240
Binā', 35
Bushrā, mubashsharāt, 1142
Burūj, 2704

Dābbah, 993 ; dābbat al-arḍ, 1863, 2029
Ḍabḥ, 2787
Daḥā, 2659
Ḍāḥik, 1848 ; ḍāḥikah, 2697
Dā'irah, dā'irat al-sau', 1086
Ḍalāl, 2578 ; ḍalālah, 876 ; ḍāll, 1811, 2756 ;ḍalla, aḍalla, 44, 623, 2291 ; yuḍillu, 1312, 1367
Dār, 2479
Ḍarb, 96, 112 ; ḍarb-an fi-l-arḍ, 361 ; iḍ-ribū-hu bi-ba'ḍi-hā, 112
Dhakkaitum, tadhkiyah, 661
Dhālika, 12
Dhanb, 393, 2307
Dhar', 1193, 1912
Dhikr, 194, 1369, 1614, 2127, 2238 ; dhikrā, 855
Dhu-l-autād, 2132
Dhu-l-Kifl, 1649
Dhu-l-Nūn, 1650
Dhu-ntiqām, 386
Dhurriyyah, 1147
Ḍighth, 2147
Dīn, 8, 2805, 2810 ; yakūn al-dīnu li-llāhi, 244
Dīnār, 453
Ḍiyā', ḍau', 1111
Ḍuḥā, 924, 2740
Dukhān, 2201, 2269

Fā, 1717
Faḍl, 258, 314 ; dhī faḍl, 1161
Fāḥishah, 551, 556, 1986 ; faḥshā', 357a
Fai', 2477
Falaq, 2388, 2818
Farī, 1541
Farīḍah, 312
Fārigh, 1872
Farsh, 834
Fasād, 148
Fatīl, 584a
Fatq, 1625
Fauq al-a'nāq, 986
Fawwārah, 1178
Fi-l-riqāb, 217 ; -l-nār, 1842
Fisq, 836 ; fusūq, 256
Fitnah, 241, 388, 611, 764
Fiṭrah, 2050
Fujūr, 2745
Furqān, 85, 385, 1769
Furūj, 1714
Fuṭūr, 2529

Ghafr, istighfār, 380, 752a, 1875, 2307 ; ghafūr, 380, 1405 ; istaghfir li-dhanbi-ka, 2194 ; mustaghfir, 397a
Ghaib, 15
Ghanama, ghanīmat, 1007
Gharq, 2653
Gharūr, 1957
Ghāsiq, 2819 ; Ghassāq, 2149
Ghaul, 2109a
Ghawā, 1609, aghwā, yughwiya, 865, ighwā', 1339
Ghislīn, 2560
Ghulf, 130
Ghuluww, 724a

Habaṭa, 64
Ḥabl-Allāh, 471
Hādhā, 12
Ḥadīth, 1479
Hady, hadyah, 659
Ḥajar, ḥijārah, 38, 96
Ḥajj, 248
Ḥakīm, 1110
Ḥalālah, 303
Ḥamala-ha-l-insānu, 2016
Ḥāmī, 742
Ḥā mīm, 2171
Ḥanīf, 175
Ḥaqq, 382 ; ḥaqqa 'alai-hi kadhā, 876 ; ḥaqqa 'alai-hi, 1365 al-ḥāqqah, 2551
Ḥaraḍ, 1249
Ḥaraj, 854
Ḥarām, 1659 ; ḥaram, 1928a
Hārūt, 149
Hashīm, 2395
Ḥashr, 2672
Ḥāṣib, 1448, 2396
Ḥaṣīd, 1615
Ḥaṭab, 2815
Ḥattā, 1660
Hawā, 2371
Ḥawārī, Hawāriyyūn, 433
Hāwiyah, 1341, 2790
Ḥayāt, 346
Hazz, 40
Hidāyat, 8b ; hadā, 1589 ; al-hudā, 165
Hijr-an maḥjūr-an, 1780
Hill, 2734
Ḥisān, 2423

Ḥiṭṭat-un, 93
Hudhud, 1849
Ḥukm, 795
Ḥūr, 2356
Ḥuṭamah, 2797

'Ibādat, 8a
Ibil, 2722
Iblīs, 57, 1505
Ibtalā', 990, 1165
Ibyaḍḍa, ibyaḍḍat 'ainā-hu, 1248; see abyaḍ
'Īd, 749
Idhn, 141
Ifāḍah, 259
Iḥfaẓū aimāna-kum, 731
Iḥsān, 560a
Ikhfā', 1580
Ikhtalafa, 1203
Illā, 58, 1839, 1843
'Illiyyūn, 2695
'Ilm, 165, 185
Iltaqama, 2123
'Imād, 2724
Imām, 37, 183, 1348, 1450
Īmān, 186
Imr'at 'Imrān, 412; see ukht
In, 677, 1617, 2718
'Īn, 2356
Ināth, 625
Injīl, 383
Insān, 2405
Intaṣara, 2231, -min-hu, 2295
Intiqām, 386
Inzāl, see anzala
I'rāḍ, 632
Irji'ūni, 1730
'Īsā, 424
'Ishār, 2671
Islām, aslama, 156. 400
Ism, asmā', 53
'Iṣmat, 718
Isma'ū, 135
Iṣr, 380
Isrā', 1410
Isti'ānat, 8a
Istighfār, see ghafr
Istafazza-hū, 1471
Istahwat-hu, 788
Istaqsama, 663
Istawā, 2375, -'ala-l-'arsh, 895
Iṣṭafainā-hu, 173; see Muṣṭafā
I'tadā, see 'udwān
Ithm, 393, ithmī, ithmi-ka, 687
I'tikāf, 234

Jabal, 1604, 1865, jibāl, 1280
Jāhada, jihād, 1073, 1902; -kabīr, 1793, jāhid, 2522
Jaḥīm, jahannam, 1341
Jālūt, 332
Ja-m'u-kum, 892
Janāḥ, 2050
Janb, 574
Jasad, 944
Jibillat, jibill, 1824
Jibrīl, 140
Jibt, 585
Jīd, 2816
Jidāl, 256
Jihād, see Jāhada
Jinn, 806, 813, 822, 2027, 2415, 2580
Jizyah, 1049
Jumi' al-shamsu wal-qamar, 2610
Jumu'ah, 2505
Junub, 578
Juz', 349

Kabad, 2736
Ka'bah, 738
Kāf, 348
Kāffah, 2036
Kaffara-l-sayyi'at, 1903
Kāf, hā, yā, 'ain, ṣād, 1530
Kāfir, 2453; kufr, 1207, 1763
Kāfūr, 2626
Kahf, 1481
Kahl, 426
Kaid, 965, hum al-makīdūn, 2367
Kalālah, 549, 655
Kalimah, kalimāt-un min-Allāh, 418, 423, 652, 1497, lā tabdila li kalimāti -llāh, 1143
Kāna, 271
Karīm, 2439
Kashf 'ani-l-sāq, 1855, 2546
Kauthar, 2807
Kawā'ib, 2649
Khāda'a, 23
Khair, 151, 223, 473; -al-mākirīn, 434; khairāt, 2423
Khaiṭ, al-abyaḍ, -al-aswad, 233
Khalf, khalaf, 955, akhlafa, 2041
Khalq, 428
Khālidūn, 68; khallada, 2430
Khalīfah, 48
Khamr, 280
Khannās, 2822
Kharajū, 319
Khasafa, 1370, 1897
Khātam al-nabiyyīn, 1994
Khul', 301
Khuluq, 1820
Khumr, khimār, 1751a
Khunnas, 2681
Khurṭūm, 2542
Khurūj, 2337
Kidhb, 54
Kifāt, 2637
Kisaf, 1825
Kitāb, 13, 311, 383, 619, 1110, 1755; -an-mutashābih, 2161; kataba, 942
Kun fa-yakūnu, 163, 443
Kunta 'alai-hā, 184
Kursī, 340

Lā, 2606
La'alla-ka, 1167a

Lahw, 1617
Lail, 1534, lailat al-qadr, 227a, 2267, 2777
Lām, 1150
Lamam, 2384
La'nat, 131
Lan naqdira 'alai-hi, 1652
Lawāqiḥ, 1333
Lawwā lisāna-hū bi-kadhā ; alwābi-l-kalām, 455
Laẓā, 1341
Libās al-taqwā, 870 ; -al-jū' ; -al-khauf, 1406
Liqā Allāh, 1960
Lisāna ṣidq, 1550

Mā, 2379, 2744
Ma'ād, 1898
Madda-hū, 2700
Madīnīn, 2442
Mafātiḥ, miftaḥ, maftaḥ, 781, 1895
Maghrib al-shams, 1518
Maḥaqa, 367
Maḥrūm, 2349
Mā'idah, 748
Maisir, 281
Makr, 434, 1229 ; see khair
Malak, 47
Mālik, 7, 2260
Mā malakat aimanu-kum, 536, 560, 575, 1752
Mann, 90, 352
Manṭiq, 1844
Maqāmi', 1683
Maqām Ibrāhīm, 168b
Marīd, 626
Mārūt, 149
Masaḥa shai'-an, 2140
Masakha, 2094
Ma'shar, 824
Mash'ar al-ḥarām, 260
Mashāriq, Rabb al-mashāriq, 2100 ; mashriqain, 2247
Masīḥ, 424
Masjid, 1491
Matā', 1270
Mathal, 1467, 1785, 1935a, amthāl, 2293
Maṭr, 918
Maubiq, 1506
Maulā, 2451, 566
Mā'ūn, 2806
Maut, 88, 346, 1304, mautā, 430
Mawāqi', 2438
Mihād, 267, 2641
Mīkāl, 140
Min, 185, 2511, 2566c
Mishkāt, 1757
Miṣr, 100
Mīthāq, 557a ; -al-nabiyyīn, 458
Mīzān, 2224, 2407 ; mauzūn, wazn, mawāzīn, 859, 1732
Mu'adhdhir, 1081
Mu'aqqibāt, 1269
Mubārak, 468, 844
Muddaththir, 2596
Mudhabdhab, 639
Mufliḥ, aflaḥa, 19a
Mughīrāt, 2787
Muhaimin, 703
Muhājirīn, muhājir, 1087
Muḥkam, 387, 1110
Mulk, 146
Muntahā, 2381
Muqarrabūn, 425, 2058
Mūriyāt, 2787
Muṣābarah, 530
Musāfiḥat, 560a
Musawwimīn, 486
Muslim, 171
Muṣṭafā, 173
Mustamirr, 2389
Mustaqarr, 787, 805
Mustaqdimīn, 1335
Mustauda', 805
Muṭaffif, 2692
Mutashābih, 387, 2161
Mutawaffī-ka, 436 ; see Tawaffā,
Mutawassim, 1346
Muttaka'a 1230
Muttaqī, ittaqā, 14
Muzzammil, 2588

Naba', 787 ; -'aẓīm, 2640
Nabī (al), 726, nubuwwat, 795
Nabtahil, ibtahala, 444
Nādī, 2776
Nafs, 531, 408a ; anfusa-kum, 564 ; anfus, 1382
Naffāthāt, 2820
Nafkh, 428
Najdain, 2738
Najm, 2371
Nakaḥa, 1737
Nāla min-hu, 1103
Namlah, 1847
Naqama, 713
Nār, 472
Nās, 38, 2195
Nashaṭa, 2653
Nasī', 1059
Nāṣir, anṣār, 1087
Nasiya, 1607 ; nisyān, 893
Natq, 957
Nazagha, 973, 2209
Nāzi'āt, 2653
Nu'ās, 507
Nuḥās, 2417
Nūn, 2536
Nūr, 1757
Nushūz, 572, 632
Nuṭfah, 1356

Qāb, 2378
Qadam, 1110a
Qadḥ, 2787
Qadr, 797 ; Qādir, Qadīr, 2333 ; Qaddara, 2665
Qāf, 2333

Qāhir, 931
Qā'id, qawā'id, 1765
Qalā'id, 659
Qarār, 1723
Qarāṭīs, 798
Qarḍ, 321
Qāri'ah, 2552, 2788
Qarīn, 2341a
Qaryah, 1659
Qāsirāt al-ṭarf, 2110
Qaṭ' al-sabīl, 1911 ; quṭṭi'at-il-arḍu, 1280 ; qaṭ' yad, 693
Qatl, 102, 110 ; fa-qtulū anfusa-kum, 86
Qaul, 124, 136
Qawwāmūn, 568
Qayyim, 1478a
Qayyūm, 2555
Qiblah, 181, 1149
Qiradah, 107
Qisṭ, 874
Qiṭmīr, 2053
Qiyām, 538 ; al-qiyāmah, 2606
Qur'ān, 227a ; -al-fajr, 1457
Qurbā, 2226
Quwwah, 1020

Rabb, 5, 163, 852 ; -al-'Arsh, 1620 ; Rabbi-kumā, 2408 ; rabbānī, ribbī, 456
Rabwah, 1723
Raddū aidiya-hum fī afwāhi-him, 1299
Rādifah, 2655
Raf', 105, 1553 ; rāfi'u-ka ilayya, 437
Rafath, 256
Raghad, 61
Raḥmān, 3, 1476, 1571, 1630 ; Raḥīm, 3 ; raḥmat, 151
Rahw, 2272
Rā'i-nā, 150
Rajafa, 2654 ; rajfah, 915, 920
Rajīm, 414
Ramā, 989
Ramaḍān, 227
Raqabah, riqāb, 217
Raqīm, 1481
Rāq-in, 2618
Rasūl, 1551
Rattala, 1784
Rauḥ, 653
Rāwada-hū, 1223
Ribā, 364
Ribāṭ, 530
Rīḥ, 2025
Riḥm, arḥām, 533
Rijs, 908
Rīsh, 869
Rizq, 40
Rūḥ, 653, 1337, 1355, 1464, 1960, 2181, 2651 ; -al-Amīn, 1399
Rujūm, rajm, 2530
Ruqūd, 1485

Sā'ah, 592, 966, 1669
Saba', 1850
Sābighāt, 2024
Sabīl-Allāh, 196, 350, 1069
Sab'a ; Sab'īna, 46
Ṣabr, 1273
Sabt, 106
Ṣād, 853 ; Ṣādiq, 2126
Ṣadaqāt, 1069
Ṣadīd, 1303
Ṣaduqāt, 537
Ṣāfināt, 2139
Sāhama, 2122
Ṣāḥib, aṣḥāb al-jannat, 120
Sā'ibah, 742
Ṣa'īd, 581
Ṣaiḥah, 1721, 2078, 2395
Sā'il, 2759
Ṣā'iqah, 87
Sa'īr, 1341
Sajada, 56 ; sujūd, 2343b
Ṣākhkhah, 2666
Sakīnah, 328
Sakn, sakana ilai-hā, 968
Salām, 614 ; dār al-salām, 1123
Ṣalāt, 16 ; -al-wusṭā, 315
Ṣāliḥāt, 2356
Salsabīl, 2628a
Salwā, 90
Samā', 33, 46 ; man fi-l-samā', 2531
Ṣamad, 2817
Samī, 1533
Sāq, 1855 ; see kashf
Saqar, 1341
Saqīm, 2114
Sau'āt, 866
Sauṭ, 2725
Ṣawāb, 54
Sa'y, 248
Sha'ā'ir, 658
Shadda 'alai-hi, 1151
Shadīd, ashiddā', 2324
Shafā'at, 79, 607
Shafaq, 2702
Shafī', 339
Shaghafa-hā, 1228
Shahid, 37, 183, 576a, 598, shuhadā, 1168
Shai', 157
Shaiṭān, 26, 57, 985, 1647, 2143, 2144 ; shayāṭīn, 2027 ; ru'ūs al-shayāṭīn, 2112
Shākir, 641
Shaqq, 2388
Sharḥ al-ṣadr, 2761
Shihāb, 2104
Shimāl, 2339
Shirb, 1821
Shirk, 584, 1789 ; shurakā', 2307
Shubbiha la-hum, 646
Ṣibghah, 178
Ṣidq, 54, 1110a ; ṣiddīq, 598
Sidrah, 2381
Siḥr, 148, 1166, 1611
Sijjīl, 1198
Sijjīn, 2693

Silm, 267a
Sittati ayyām, 894a
Sū', 565, sayyi'ah, 2232
Subḥāna-hū, 161
Ṣuḥuf, 2676
Sujūd, see sajada
Suḥt, 715
Sukārā, 577
Sullam, 2365
Sunnah, sunan, 493
Suqiṭa fī aidī-him, 945
Ṣur-hunna ilai-ka, 349
Ṣūr, 789

Ṭa'ām, 737
Tābi'īn, 1752
Tābūt, 328, 330
Tadallā, 2377
Tadhkiyah, 661
Taghābun, ghabn, 2509
Ṭāghiyah, 2553
Ṭāghūt, 343
Ṭā hā, 1573
Tahajjud, 1458
Taḥiyyah, 608
Taḥrīm, 2517
Ṭā'if, 974
Ṭair, 428, 1387, 1846; ṭāir, 349, 933, 1417, 1846
Takāthur, 2791
Takhawwafa, 1372
Takhtānūn, 232
Talā, 166, 2741 ; -'alai-hi, 145
Ṭalāq, 293, 302
Ṭall, 355
Ṭālūt, 325
Tamannā, 1701
Tamannawu-l-mauta, 138
Tamaththala, 1536
Tamīda bi-kum, 1358
Ṭāmmah, 2660
Ṭams, 583
Tannūr, 1178
Taqallub, 1371
Taqwā, 257, 2745 ; see muttaqī
Ṭaraf, aṭrāf-l-arḍ, 487, 1293
Ṭāriq, 2707
Taṣbīh, 51, 1430a
Tashrīq, 264
Ṭā, sīn, mīm, 1802
Tasnīm, 2696
Tastaqsimū bi-l-azlām, 663
Taṭawwu', 226a
Taubah, 66, 1100
Taud, 1816
Taurāt, 383
Tawaffā, mutawaffī-ka, tawaffā-hu-llāhu, 436
Tawallaitum, 2303
Tawārat bi-l-ḥijāb, 2140
Ta'wīl, 388, 594
Tayammum, 581
Ṭayyibāt, 2356
Thamma, 2630
Thanā ṣadra-hū, 1162
Thāniya 'iṭfi-hī, 1677
Thaqalān, 2415
Thiyāb, 1163, 2570
Thumma, 45, 895
Ṭibāq, 2528
Tijārah, 2056
Tīn, 2766
Ṭīn, 428
Ṭūbā, 1279
Ṭūfān, 934
Ṭughyān, 1516
Tukhāliṭū-hum, 283
Tumnā, 2385
Ṭuwā, 1579

Udhun, 1070
'Udwān, i'tadā, 245
Ufuq, 2684
'Ufuww, 380
Ukht, 412, 2250 ; ukht Hārūn, 1542
Ukul, 833
Ūlā, 2751, 2754
Ulū baqiyyat-in, 329, 1206
Ulūf, 319
Umm, 267, 412 ; -al-kitāb, 1292, 2237 ; -al-qurā, 799 ; ummu-hū hāwiyah, 2790
Ummat, 1407c ; -wasaṭ, 182
Ummī, 117, 950
Umniyyah, 117
'Umrah, 248
'Uqdah, 1583 ; 'uqūd, 656 ; 'uqad, 2820
Urkuḍ bi-rijli-ka, 2145

Wafd, 1569
Waḥy, 1379, 2235
Wailatā, 1190
Wajh, 156, 160 ; 'alā wajhi-hī, 745 ; wujūh, 583
Wallā kadhā, 187
Wāqi'ah, 2554
Warā', 1189
Wārith, 1334
Wasaṭ, 182 ; ṣalāt al-wuṣtā, 315
Waṣīlah, 742
Waṣṣala, 1886
Wāw, 45, 1639, 2099
Wazīr, 1584
Wazn, see mīzān
Wird, 1570
Wuḥūsh, 2672

Yad, 1049 ; -baiḍā', 1582
Ya'fikūn, 929
Yaḥmilu 'arsha, 2555 ; also see 2174
Yaḥyā, 417
Yamīn, 2339
Yaqbiḍu, 322
Yaqīn, 1353
Yaqūlu 'alai-hi, 145
Yā Sīn, 2064
Yastahzi'u bi-him, 27
Yatāma-l-nisā'i, 630
Yatasannah, 348

Yathnūn, see thanā
Yathrib, 1977
Yaum, 8, 894a; -al-aḥzāb, 2189; -al-tanād, 2190; ayyām-Allāh, 1297
Yuḥājjū-kum, 450
Yukhlifu-hū, 2041
Yulḥidūn, 964
Yunfau min-al-arḍ, 691
Yuṭīqūna, 226

Zabāniyah, 2776
Zabūr, 1437; Zubur, 527
Zād, 257
Zaḥf, 988
Zakāt, 1713; zakkā-hā, 2746
Zallat, 63
Zalzalah, zalāzil, 1668
Zanjabīl, 2628
Ẓann, 76
Zaqqūm, 1442, 2111
Zauj, 1276; zaujain, 1179; zawwaja, 2356
Ẓihār, 1967
Ẓill, 591, 1288, 2638
Zīnat, 877, 1751
Ẓufr, 837
Ẓuhr, 1205
Ẓullah, 1827
Ẓulm, 860, 1207, 1654; ẓalamtu nafsī, 1876; ẓulumāt, ẓulmat, 784; ẓulumāt al-baḥr, 1653
Zurq, 1601a

INDEX

Explanation.—The first number in the references represents the chapter and the following the verse; as in 20:30, where the number 20 stands for the 20th chapter and 30 for the 30th verse. A number standing alone like 1584 indicates the number of the foot-note in which a reference occurs. The reference to page when necessary is indicated by inserting p. before the number. The reader's attention is drawn to the following headings of this index in which more important subjects have been introduced as dealt with in the Holy Qur'ān: Civic life, Home life, Divine attributes, Evolution of man, Intellectual development, Human soul, Divine revelation, Humanitarian aspect of revelation, Prayer, and State Polity, etc.

Aaron, Moses' request for help of, 20:30; 1584, 1588; 26:13; 28:34; is made a prophet, 4:163; 6:85; 10:75; 19:53; 21:48; 23:45; 25:35; leader of Israelites in Moses' absence, 7:142; not guilty of making the calf, 84; 20:90; 1595; 20:95; 1599; his excuse, 7:150; 947. See Moses

'Abbās, 1041

Abbreviations (Muqaṭṭa'āt), 11; explanations of, given by companions, 2536

'Abd Allāh, the Prophet's father, 2755

'Abd Allāh ibn Shuraiḥ, 2662

'Abd Allāh ibn Ubayy, 1080; 1741; 1756; 2475; desire of, to become a leader, 22; deserts the Muslim army, 482; funeral service of, 1077

'Abd al-Masīḥ, 445

'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, 2755; prayer of, 2800

'Abd al-'Uzzā, 2813

Abel, 686

Ablution, 5:6; total ablution, when necessary, 578

Abrahah, 2800; 2801

Abraham, entire submission of, to Allāh, 2:124, 131; 3:66; 4:125; 16:120; 37:83, 84; made a prophet and a leader, 2:124, 130; 3:32; 16:120-122; 21:73; 38:45-47; prophethood granted to descendants of, 29:27; 37:113; 57:26; preaches against idolatry, 6:75; 19:42-48; 21:52-56, 62-65; 26:69:82; 29:16, 17; 37:85-96; 43:26, 27; preaches against worship of heavenly bodies, 6:76-84; 791; 792; 37:88, 89; breaks the idols, 21:57, 58; 1638; 1639; 37:91-93; plans against, to cast into fire, 21:68; 1641; 29:24; 1910; 37:97; is delivered, 21:69, 70, 71; 29:24-26; 1910a; 37:98, 99; controversy with a sun-worshipper, 2:258; 347; is promised a great kingdom, 345; seeks to understand law of rise and fall of nations, 2:260; 349; expedition of, against king of Elam, 1642; asks forgiveness for his sire, 9:114; is the progenitor of Arabs, 90:3; 2735; prays for a righteous son, 37:100; given good news of Ishmael, 37:101; vision of, to sacrifice his son, 37:102; 2116; settles Ishmael near the Ka'bah, 170; 14:37; 1319; prays for a secure city to be raised there, 2:126; 14:35; 1316; 2733; prays for Makkah to be made the spiritual centre of the world, 14:37, 38; enjoined to purify the Sacred House of idols, 2:125; 22:26; prays for a nation keeping up prayer to be raised in Arabia, 2:128; 14:40; prays, with Ishmael, for a messenger to be raised in Makkah, 2:129; with Ishmael rebuilds Ka'bah, 2:127; covenant made with, 2:124; 168; standing-place of, 2:125; 168b; 3:96; 469; Islām as the religion of, 3:66; Muḥammad and his followers are nearest to, 3:67; scriptures of, 87:19; messengers come to, 11:69, 70; 15:51, 52; 51:24, 25; informed of birth of a son, 15:53-56; 51:28-30; and a grandson, 6:85; 11:71; 1189; 19:49; 21:72;

29:27; 37:112; pleads for Lot's people, 11:74-76; enjoins unity on his descendants, 2:132; 43:28; severs connection with enemies, 60:4, 5; 2486; an exemplar, 16:120; 60:4; to be remembered with goodness among later generations, 37:108-111.
Abrogation, doctrine of, in the Qur'ān refuted, 152; 1398; of previous scriptures, 152
Abū 'Āmir, 960; 1094
Abū Bakr, xii; xxxvii; xxxviii; 1930; 2075; 2399; collection of the Qur'ān by, in writing, xii; accompanies the Prophet in his flight, 9:40; 1062; 1705; superiority of, to other companions, 1745
Abū Jahl, 1858; 1889; 2111; 2773
Abū Khuzaimah, xxxviii
Abū Lahab, 1858; 111:1-3; 2813; curses the Prophet, 1834; wife of, 111:4, 5; 2815; her end, 2816
Abū Sufyān, 710; 980; 1384
Abū Ṭālib, 2755; on death bed, 1889
Abyssinia, Muslims find a shelter in, 728; flight to, 1705
Accessions made in war, 8:1; 979; see Ghanīmat
Actions, consequences of, 17:13; 1417
'Ād, 7:65; 9:70; 11:50-60; 14:9; 25:38; 41:13-16; 50:13; 53:50; 54:18-22; 69:4, 6, 7; 89:6-8; 2724; successors of Noah's people, 7:69; tribe of, 903; deities of, 903; tallness of stature of, 907; their punishment, 7:72; 910
Adam, created to rule on earth, 2:30; 48; is created from dust, 3:58; 443; 15:28; 38:71; 862; 1336; 2152; is taught the names, 2:31; 53; is made complete and granted inspiration, 15:29; 38:72; angels ordered to make submission to, 2:34; 56; 7:11; 15:28; 17:61; 18:50; 20:116; 38:72; 2152; Iblīs refuses to submit to, 2:34; 7:11; 15:31; 17:61; 18:50; 20:116; 38:73, 74; is made to live in the garden with Eve, 2:35; 60; 7:19; 20:117-119; 1608; both forbidden to approach the tree, 2:35; 62; 7:19; is misled by the devil, 2:36; 7:20-22; 20:120, 121; result of tasting the tree, 7:22; 866; 20:121; 1609; clothing of which he was divested, 871; new condition in which he is placed, 64; fault of, due to forgetting, 20:115; 1607; is made conscious of the fault, 867; repentance of, 2:37; 66; 7:23; excels the whole creation, 2:34; 56; allegorical nature of the story of, 1609; standing for man generally, 443; 861; as a prototype of the perfect man, 2152; how Eve was created from, 1382; Adam and his descendants chosen, 3:32; two sons of, 5:27
'Addās, 1400
'Adī, 743
Adoption, 33:4; 1967
Adornment, not prohibited, 7:32; 877
Adultery, punishment for, 24:1, 2; light view taken of, in civilized society, 1736; interdict against, 24:3; 1737; strong evidence required to establish the charge, 24:4, 13; 1743; preventives against, 24:27, 30, 31; punishment for indecency short of, 4:15, 16; 551
Æsop, 1950
Agreement, fulfilment of, 5:1; 656; 16:91, 92; 1395, may be repudiated in case of treachery, 8:58; 1019
Ahmad, prophecy about, 61:6; 2496
'Aish, 1400
'Ā'ishah, 223; 2000; 2517; 2539; slander against, 24:11-20; 1740; punishment of the chief slanderer of, 1741
'Alī, xxxvii; 223; 1705; 2136; collection of the Qur'ān by, xlix
Allāh, proper name, 2; is above limitations, 6:104; 42:11; is One, 2:163; 3:17; 112:1, not two or three gods, 16:51; 4:171; has no son, 2:116; 19:35; 19:90-93; 112:3; submission is due to Him, 16:48, 49; 3:82; service is due to Him, 1:4; 51:51; 39:64-66; 36:60, 61; pray to Him alone, 1:4; 72:18-20; 10:105-107
— is Loving: 11:90; 85:13, 14; loves those who do good to others, 2:195; 3:133, 147; loves those who turn to Him, 2:222; loves the patient, 3:145; loves the dutiful, 3:75; 9:4, 7; loves those who trust in Him, 3:158; loves the equitable, 5:42
— is Merciful: (every ch. except 9th starts with this declaration); Merciful to sinners, 39:53; embraces all in mercy, 40:7; 6:148; 7:156; all should rejoice in mercy of, 10:58; has created all for mercy, 11:119; none should despair of His mercy, 12:87
— is Omniscient: knows suggestions of mind, 50:16; knows the Hour and all in wombs, 41:47; knows the secret and yet more hidden — the subconscience, 20:7; knows atom and less than that, 10:61; 34:2, 3; 57:3, 4; knows unseen and seen, 13:8-10; knows secret thoughts and open words, 6:3; knows every fall-

ing leaf, 6 : 59 ; His knowledge covers heavens and earth, 2 : 255 ; knows secret counsels, 58 : 7
— is Omnipotent : gives life to dead earth, 30 : 19 ; raised heavens without pillars, 13 : 2, 3 ; everything makes obeisance to Him, 13 : 15 ; 16 : 48-50
— is Omnipresent : nearer to man than life-vein, 50 : 16 ; in all directions you face God, 2 : 115 ; none can hide himself from God, 4 : 108 ; is the fourth in every three, 58 : 7
— is Creator of all : created heavens and earth in six periods without any fatigue, 50 : 38 ; created what you know not, 16 : 8 ; Creator of all, 13 : 16 ; Creator of matter, Maker of souls, Fashioner, 59 : 24
— Controls all, 4 : 85
— Is Good to all, 27 : 73
— Creator and Sustainer, 56 : 58-74 ; Sustainer of all, 11 : 6 ; Originator, 2 : 117 ; Creator and Destroyer, 53 : 42-46 ; not tired by creating, 46 : 33 ; does not need rest, 50 : 38 ; 2343a ; ever-enduring, 55 : 27 ; the Truth, 31 : 30 ; accepts repentance and prayer, 42 : 25, 26 ; ultimate cause of all things, 6 : 1 ; 753 ; pleasure of, exercised according to His laws, 2605 ; brings about evolution, 5; other attributes of, 59 : 22, 24; meeting with, 84: 6; 2701; remembrance of, sets heart at rest, 13 : 28; coming of, 2 : 210; 268, 6 : 159; 846
— doctrine of the Unity of, 3 : 17 ; 398 ; inherent in human nature, 775 ; is the basis of all religions, p. 131 ; Unity of law bears witness to, 21 : 22 ; 1620 ; declared by diversity in nature, 2 : 164 ; 203 ; 1262 ; absolute Unity proclaimed, 37 : 4; 112 : 1-4 ; 2817 ; ultimate triumph of, 6 : 3
Allegiance, oath of, 48 : 10 ; 2310 ; 48 : 18 ; 2315 ; from women converts, 60 : 12 ; 2493
Allies, Battle of, 33 : 9 ; 1971 ; assistance of angels at, 3 : 124 ; prophecy relating to, 785 ; 38 : 11 ; 2131 ; prophecy fulfilled, 33 : 9 ; 1972 ; 33 : 22 ; 1981
Amalekites, 1852
Amīn, Al-, Prophet known as, 769 ; 1118 ; 2539
Āminah, 2755
'Ammār, son of Yāsir, 1402
Amran, 3 : 32 ; 410 ; 3 : 34 ; 412
'Amr ibn Lohayy, 2577
'Amr ibn Salamah, xl
Ancient House, 22 : 29 ; 1690
Angels, significance of belief in, 214 ; as bearers of messages, 47 ; existence of, 47 ; Allāh's speaking to, 47 ; submit to Adam, see Adam ; coming of, 812 ; 6 : 112 ; 6 : 159 ; 846 ; 25 : 21, 22 ; 1779 ; 268 ; 1328 ; 757 ; 16 : 33 ; 1362 ; assistance of, 3 : 122, 123; 485; 33 : 9; 1973; 8 : 10; 983; make believers firm, 8 : 12; ask forgiveness for men, 40 : 7-9; 42 : 5; 2217; coming of, with inspiration, 16 : 2; 1355; descend upon believers, 41 : 30; 2208; coming with revelation to the Holy Prophet, 19 : 64; 1556; guardian angels, 13 : 11 ; 1269 ; recording angels, 82 : 10-12 ; 2691 ; unbelievers' demand for angel messengers, 17 : 94, 95 ; could not be messengers to men, 6 : 8, 9 ; 758 ; the wings of, 35 : 1 ; 2050 ; looked upon as female divinities, 43 : 19 ; called daughters of Allāh, 53 : 27, 28 ; 2383
Anṣār, 1087 ; 9 : 100 ; 9 : 117 ; 2479
Antichrist, 2195 ; 1478 ; see also, 1526 ; shall not enter Makkah, 469
Apostates, 2 : 217 ; 279 ; 5 : 54 ; 710 ; were not put to death, 279
'Aqabah, oath of allegiance taken at, 669 ; 1697
'Aqbah ibn Abī Mu'aiṭ, 1858
A'rāb, 9 : 97, 99 ; 49 : 14-17 ; 1082
Arabia, subjugated to the Prophet temporally and spiritually, 1864 ; granting of life to, 29 : 63 ; 1928 ; towns destroyed on borders of, 46 : 27, 28 ; 2289 ; prophecy of its regeneration and subjugation fulfilled, 2811
Arabs, wonderful memories of, xxxix ; better followers of truth than Jews and Christians, 6 : 157, 158 ; bearers of Prophet's message to other nations, 16 : 89 ; 1391 ; called Ummī, 950 ; made masters of mighty empires, 1499 ; 18 : 31 ; to be raised to eminence through the Prophet, 2702 ; Bible prophecy about, 1831 ; pre-Islamite, in a state of mutual warfare, 3 : 102 ; 472 ; compelled wives to obtain divorce, 304 ; denied inheritance to women and children, 544 ; 89 : 19 ; 2728 ; took women as heritage, 4 : 19 ; 554 ; married mothers, 4: 22; causing injury to women, 555 ; 557 ; deciding important affairs by arrows, 663 ; setting free animals in honour of idols, 5 : 103 ; 742 ; setting apart part of produce for idols, 826 ; making sacrifice to idols, 6 : 138 ; 828 ; superstitions of, 237 ; 6 : 139, 140 ; 835 ; auguring evil from birds, 933 ; 1417 ; practice of postponing pilgrimage, 9 : 36 ; 1057 ; birth of daughter regarded a misfortune, 16 : 58 ; 43 : 17 ; 2234 ; buried

daughters alive, 6:138; 828; 16:59; 2675; powerful tribes set agreements at naught, 16:92; 1395; denied resurrection, 1433; denied beneficence of God, 21:36; 1630; prostitution among, 1756; killed each other for trivial offences, 2232; belief in astrologers, 2365; brought idols from Syria, 2577; belief that devils listen by stealth, 2686; evil of drink among, 280; fairs for trading purposes, 258; boastful gatherings, 262
A'rāf, 7:46, 47; 890
Aram, 89:7; 2724
Ark, the, 328; 330; 11:37; 1183; 23:27
Arrows, used to divide flesh of animals and for divining purposes, 5:3; dividing by, forbidden, 5:90
'Arsh, 895; 40:7; 2174; bearers of, 2555
Asad, 611
Ascension of Moses, 1511
Ascension of the Prophet, p. 543; 17:1; 1410; 17:60; signified his future triumph, 1441
Aṣḥāb, see Muhammad, companions of
Ashāb al-fīl, 2800
Asmā', daughter of Nu'mān Kindī, 1999
Astrologers, 2365; 2530
Atom, splitting of, 1140
Atonement, refutation of the doctrine of, 678; contradicted by Lord's prayer, 1571; 6:165; 851
Atonement, 17:15; 1418; 1571; 1903; 29:7
Aus and Khazraj, quarrel between, 127; 2329
Āzar, 6:75; 790
'Azīz (al-), 1227

Backbiting, 49:12
Badr, prophecies relating to battle of, in Bible, 395; in the Qur'ān, 8:7; 982; 984; 1012; 25:25, 27; 1782; 1783; 2035; 1931; 44:16; 2270; 54:44-46; 2399; 64:9, 10; 78:18-20; 54:47, 48; 2401; prophecy as to when it will take place, 34:30; 2037; appointed time of punishment of enemy, 18:58; 1508; force of persecution to be broken at, 20:129; enemy demanded a judgment in the battle of, 8:19; 992; afforded a distinction, 85; sign in the battle of, 3:12; numbers of the opposing sides, 395; Divine help at, 3:122; 8:9; encounter necessary to manifest truth, 8:6-8; Muslims out to meet invading army at, 980; position of and encounter at, 980; Muslims strengthened at, 8:11; 984; Allāh's hand in the fighting at, 8:17; 989; situation of parties at, 8:42; 1008; as a proof of truth, 8:42; 1012; unbelievers marching to, in exultation, 8:47, 48; 1014; how unbelievers were smitten at, 8:50, 51; release of prisoners at, 1024; prisoners of war at, to be released, 8:70; Quraish leaders slain at, 1858
Badr al-Ṣughrā, 3:172-174; 521a
Bai'at al-'Aqabah, 2310
Bai'at al-riḍwān, 2310
Bakkah, 3:95; 467
Ba'l, 37:125; 2119
Balaam, 960
Balance, the, 7:8, 9; 859; 23:102; 1732; 55:7-9; 2407; revealed by Allāh, 42:17; 2224
Banī 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, 1007
Banī Bakr, 1039
Banī Ḍamrah, 1032
Banī Ghanam, 1094
Banī Ḥārithah, 483
Banī Hāshim, 1007
Banī Kanānah, 1032
Banī Mudlaj, 610
Banī Naḍīr, 127; 670; 1971; banishment of, 59:2; p. 1043; 2475; destroyed their own houses, 59:2
Banī Qainuqā', 2482
Banī Quraiẓah, 127; 1971; treachery of, 33:26; 1983; besieged, 1983; punishment of, 33:26, 27; 1983
Banī Salimah, 483
Banī Tamīm, p. 976
Bank, interest on deposits in, 369
Baptism, the Divine, 2:138; 178
Barzakh, 23:100; 1731
Begging, discountenanced, 2:273; 362
Benjamin, 1246
Bequest, for charitable purposes, 2:180; law of, not abrogated, 223; 2:182; 4:11, 12; 5:106
Bible, not a full or trustworthy record of Israelite history, 331; silence of, on resurrection, 1126; as a guidance is second to Qur'ān, 1885; corruption of, 2:75; 115; 3:76, 77; 455; 4:46; 582; 5:13; 5:44-47; 697-703; 5:68; 719. For differences with Qur'ān, see Qur'ān
Bilāl, 1402
Birds, as indicating ill-luck, 933; as signifying vanquishment of enemy, 1387; 2532; as signifying actions, 1417; significance of the voices of, 1844; subjugated by Solomon, 27:17; 1846; standing for cavalry, 1846
Bi'r Ma'ūnah, murder of reciters at, xlii

Bismillāh, p. 1; omission of in ninth chapter, p. 383
Black Sea, the, 1519
Black Stone, as a symbol, 191a
Bloodwit, 2:178; 221
Book, as signifying laws of nature, 782; as signifying previous revelation, 1295; Book of Deeds, 1504; 45:28; 2280; 84:7-15
Books, circulation of, prophesied, 81:10; 2676
Bracelets of gold, 35:33; 2059
Bribery, 715
Britain — the first Christian Church in, 1483
Brotherhood of man, as inculcated by Islām, 49:13; 2331
Budail, 743
Buḥairah, the monk, 1400
Burden, what constitutes a man's, 851; each one to bear his own, 29:12, 13; 1906; 35:18
Burnt-offering, 3:182; 525
Bushrā, 1723

Caesar, prophecy regarding palaces of, 1981
Cain, 686; 5:27-31
Caleb, 683; 5:23
Calf, the golden, 2:51; 84; 7:148; 944; 20:90; 1597; 1600
Camels, prophecy relating to their being neglected, 81:4; 2671
Cattle, created for benefit of man, 6:143-145; 39:6; 2156
Cave, story of the dwellers of, p. 567
Cave and Inscription, companions of, 18:9; 1481; 1483
Chaldeans, 2117
Charity, regularized by Islām, 16; fruit of, 2:261; not to be followed by reproach or injury, 2:262-264, 266; 352; to be seen of men, 2:264; 4:38; the Gospel injunction, 353; for Allāh's pleasure, 2:265; 355; what things to be spent in, 2:267; open and secret, 2:271; for public welfare, 358; object of, for public good, 359; object of secret charity, 2:273; 360; leads to success, 2:274; 363; fundamental principle of natural religion, 30:39; 1940; withholders of, are disbelievers in religion, 107:7
Charmers, 2618
Chastity, 1736
Chosroes II, 1930
Christian nations, political dominance of, 1054; neglecting their spiritual needs, 18:104; 1527; false charges of — critics, 1259
Christianity, based on wrong interpretation of allegorical statements, p. 127; 387; wars of, 238; belief in death of Christ on cross, fundamental doctrine of, 4:159; 650; denies beneficence of God, 1571; self contradictions of, 1571; connection of with cave, p. 567; early followers of, were Unitarians, 18:14; 1483a; as a persecuted religion, 1495; decrepitude of, before advent of Islām, 1941; early refutation of by Qur'ān, 112:3; 2817
Christians, as leaving the middle path, 10; how they can attain salvation, 2:62; 104; love of life of, 2:96; 139; commanded to fast, 225; challenged to test truth of claims by means of prayer, 3:60; 445; lodged in mosque, 445; invited to take common principles for a basis of mutual understanding, 3:63; exceeding bounds in deifying a mortal, 4:171; covenant with, 5:14; mutual enmity and hatred of, 5:14; 674; only following earlier people in deifying a man, 5:77; 724a; nearest to Islām, 5:82; 727; professing Islām, 5:83; 728; narrow views of, on grant of revelation, 1390; deny beneficence of God, 1476; lethargy of, 1485; commercial activities of, p. 567; 1487; take a man for God, 18:102; 1526
Civic Life — work and labour: 92:4; 79:34, 35; 53:39-41; 39:39; striving hard even to meet the Lord, 84:6; going deep into matters, 79:1-5; no work will be wasted, 3:194; striving shall be rewarded fully, 53:39-41; reward of labourers is excellent, 3:135; earning of wealth, 4:32; 67:15; 34:18; travelling recommended to earn wealth, 34:18; wealth to be obtained from the sea, 17:66; 16:14; 35:12; from cattle, 16:5-7; from mountains, 16:15-18; trade to be carried on, 4:29; wealth not to be earned by false means, 2:188; 4:100; earth is full of abundant resources, 4:100; inheritance of wealth: men and women both inherit, 4:7; 4:29-33; proper use of wealth: wealth neither to be squandered nor withheld, 17:26-29; 25:67; to be given away for love of God, 2:177; to be spent for parents, offspring, kindred, needy and wayfarers, 2:215; spending of wealth for others brings abundance, 2:268; love of wealth: 89:17-20; 100:6-8; diverts man from real object of life, 102:1, 2; attention drawn to higher values of life, 18:46, 105; 3:13; 63:9; hoarding of wealth denounced, 9:34; honesty in dealing: 83:1-6; 17:35;

2:280, 282, 283; evidence: 12:26, 27; 2:140, 282, 283; 65:2; 4:15; 24:4, 5; 5:8; 5:106, 107; social relations with other communities, 5:2; 5:5
Comforter, 383; 941; 2496
Companions, see Muhammad
Concubinage, 561; 1753
Conjugal relations, object of, 30:21; 1935
Constantine, 1495
Contracts, writing of, 2:282
Controversy, principle of, 16:125; 1408; 29:46; 1916
Counsel, necessary in all important matters, 3:158; 515; 42:38; 2230
Court of wards, 4:5; 538
Covenant of Allah, significance of, 120a
Cow, slaughter of, ordained in Mosaic law, 84
Cow-sacrifice, as an expiation among Jews, 108
Cow-worship, p. 6; 108
Cyrus, 149, 348, 1517

Dābbat al-arḍ, 27:82; 1863; 34:14; 2029
Dacoits, punishment of, 690; 5:33
Damascus, 1723
Daniel, vision of, 1517
Darius I, 1517; 1521; p. 567
David, 2:251; 4:163; 5:78; 6:85; 21:78; 27:15, 16; 34:10-13; 38:17-30; kills Goliath and is made a king, 2:251; 334; sings praises of the Holy Prophet, 336; made a prophet and granted scripture, 4:163; 651; 6:85; curses Israelites, 5:78; curses his enemies, 1437; significance of mountains and birds being made subservient to, 1644; making of coats of mail by, 1645; conquests of, 2022; iron made pliant to, 34:10, 11; 2023; false charge against, 2136
Day, meaning of, 8; as equal to a thousand years, 22:47; 32:5; of fifty thousand years, 70:4, 2566
Days of Allāh, 45:14; 2276
Dead, cannot return to life in this world, 21:95; 1659; 23:100; 1731; 39:42; 2165; the spiritually dead, 6:36; 772; shall speak, 6:112; 812; raising of, to life, 6:123; 817; 1280; 1862; 75:40; 2623
Decius, 1483
Deeds, how rendered null, 25:23; 1781; 47:1, 8, 9; 2291
Defamatory speech, 4:148
Defaulters, 83:1-3; 2692; their punishment, 83:4-10; 2693
Deluge, the, not world-wide, 902; 1178; 1180
Derbent, 1523
Devil, the, in human form, 144; 3:174; 522; 8:48; 1015; 1306; 1670; 22:3; as signifying leaders in unbelief, 26; standing for wicked opponents, 23:97; 1729; evil-doers are forces of, 1444; as applied to foreign tribes, 38:37; 2143; applied to soothsayers, 2101; signifying divers, 1647; as meaning a serpent, 2112; significance of disbelief in, 214; creation of, from fire, 7:12; 862; 2153; sees man but man does not see him, 7:27; has no authority over man, 15:42; 1340; 17:65; 1446; has no authority except over those who befriend him, 16:99, 100; promptings of, cease to affect with growth of spiritual life, 15:36; 1338; stealing a hearing, 15:16-18; 1332; compared to a coward, 1443; respited, 7:14, 15; made abject, 7:13; is disappointed, 7:16; 865; misleads Adam, 2:36; 7:20; 20:120; leads man to evil, 63; as a tempter, 7:17; suggests evil practices, 4:119, 120; changes the natural religion of man, 4:119; 628; gives false promises, 14:22; 1307; disowns responsibility for having misled, 1309; sharing in wealth and children, 1445; threatens to mislead humanity, 17:62; incites unbelievers, 19:83; descends upon the sinful, 26:221-223; opposes prophets, 22:52, 53; 1701; causes mischief against the righteous, 41:36; 2209; makes evil deeds look attractive, 16:63; 1840; whisperings of, 114:1-6; 2822; struggle of, shall fail, 4:76; 600; visitation from, how guarded against, 7:201; 974, 975; party of the, 58:18-20
Devil of the desert, 985; 2144
Dhu-l-Kifl, 21:85; 1649
Dhu-l-Qarnain, 18:83, 94; 1517; p. 586
Dhū Nawās, 2705
Ditch, the Battle of, 1971; prophecy relating to, 2705
Diviners, 1332; 2365; 68:47
Divining, 5:3; 663
Divorce, cannot be pronounced in menstruation, 65:1; 2512; not to be resorted to except in exceptional circumstances, 293; causes of, not limited, 293; discouraged by the Prophet, 293; period of waiting, 2:228; 295; 65:4; 2512; may be revoked twice, 2:229; 298; must be given in case of dissension, 299; full payment of dowery as a check, 300; wife's right to claim divorce, 301; not individual's right, 301; when it

becomes irrevocable, 2:230; 303; liberality to be shown when divorcing, 2:231; becomes necessary if injury is caused to wife, 2:231; 304; remarriage with first husband allowed, 2:232; 306; provision for divorced women, 2:236, 312; arbiters to be appointed as preliminary to, 4:35; 573; in case of ill-usage or desertion of wife, 4:128; before consummation of marriage, 33:49; abuse of, p. 1069; divorced women to be treated kindly, 65:1, 2, 6, 7; 2514
Dowry, necessary to be settled on wife, 4:4; 537; not to be taken back, 4:19; amount not limited, 4:20; remissible in case of *khul'*, 2:229; 301; when not payable in case of divorce, 2:236; when half is payable, 2:237
Dualism, 753

Earth, creation of, in six periods, 41:9, 10; 2199; made after heaven, 79:30; 2659; seven earths, 2516
Earthquake, wider significance of, 1668; as indicating great transformation, p. 1198; as signifying war, 2654
Eber, 905
Egypt, 1723; vision of the king of, 12:43; interpreted by Joseph, 12:47, 48
Egyptians, overtaken by plagues, 7:133-135; 933; a superstitious people, 1231; gods of, 1813
Ela, 954
Elephant, possessors of, 105:1; 2800; year of the, 2800
Elias, 6:86
Elisha, 6:87
Enoch, 1553
Ephesus, Council of, 751
Ethiopia, 1511
Eve, see Adam
Event, the, 56:1
Evidence, 2:282; 375; witnesses should not suffer loss, 2:282; 376; when doubtful, may be rebutted, 5:107
Evil, hampers progress, 2693; degrees of, 1393; consequences of, 2:81; 119; 30:9, 10; removal of, 2510; should be repelled with good, 13:22; 1274; 23:96; 1727; 41:34; 2208; requital of, 142; 4:123; punishment should be similar to, 10:27; 1056; 42:40; 2232; hatred for, 40:10; 2177; evil inclinations, 378
Evolution, 1:1; 5; 71:14, 17; 2573; 2574
Exalted chiefs, 38:69; 2151
Exodus, 319
Exultation, 17:37

Eyes and ears, evidence of, 41:20-23; 2206
Ezekiel, 1649; vision of, 348
Ezra, as a son of God, 9:30; 1050

Fadk, 2477
Faith, light of, 2:257; 344; 57:11, 12
Famine at Makkah, 785; 1406; 1724; 2533; prophecy of the, 44:10-12; 2269; severity of, 2269
Fasting, enjoined, 2:183; a universal institution, 225; meaning introduced into, by Islām, 225; sick and travellers, 2:184, 185; exceptions, 226; limits and requirements, 2:187; rigour of, under previous laws, removed, 232; where the day is of long duration, 233; brings blessings, 2777
Fatalism, 1134
Fātiḥah, sublime ideal of, p. 2; Divine attributes in, p. 2; as essence of the Qur'ān, p. 2
Fāṭimah, 2477
Fatrah, p. 1115
Female slaves, marriage with, 536; conditions for marrying, 4:25; 561
Feminine divinities, 625
Fidk, 2477
Fig, as a symbol of Mosaic dispensation, 2766
Fire, see hell; seen by Moses in a vision, 1578
Flight, the, 9:40; 1062; 1368; 1705; prophetical reference, 25:54; 1795; 2266
Forbidden foods, 2:173; 209; 210; 5:3; 661; 6:122; 6:146; 16:115; reasons of prohibition, 836; as affecting morals, 207; forbidden to Israelites, 6:147; 837; 838
Forgiveness, 42:40; 2232
Fornication, 17:32; 24:2; 1736; 25:68; increasing with civilization, 1426
Friday service, 106; 62:9-11; 2505
Furqān, 85; 385

Gabriel, 2:97, 98; 140; 1828; 2683; 2761; conveys Divine messages, 128
Gambling, 2:219; 281; 5:90; 732; reason of prohibition, 5:91; 733
Garden, standing for success, 274; 36:26; 2076; see Paradise
Ghanīmat, 8:41; 1007
Ghassān, king of, 1101
Ghaṭfān, 611; 1974
Ghost, the Holy, 128
Ghulām Aḥmad, Mirzā, vii; 1763
Gideon, 331
Glastonbury, 1483
Gods, false, not to be abused, 6:109
Gog and Magog, p. 567; 18:94; 1523; effigies of, 1523; prevalence

of, over the whole of the world, 21:96; 1660; 1661
Goliath, 332; 2:249, 250
Gomorrah, 1913
Goodness, degrees of, 1393; as goal of creation, 1165
Good works, bring tenfold reward, 6:161; weighing of good and evil, 7:8, 9; 859; man's choice of, 2738; abide for ever, 18:46
Gordyœi, 1183
Gospel, 697; 5:46, 47; 702; revelation of, 3:3; is the revelation of Jesus Christ, not of the apostles, 383; significance of the name, 383; current gospels not the Gospel spoken by the Qur'ān, 383; a guidance, 384; promises success for sacrifices made, 9:111; 1097; prophecies of, relating to earthquakes, 1480; its doctrine of returning good for evil, 1727
Gossip, 17:36; 1428; gossip-mongers, 24:23; 1746
Government, to be entrusted to fit persons, 4:58; 592; government by parliament, 42:38; 2230
Grail, 1483
Grove, dwellers of, 50:14
Guardian and ward law, 2:282; 373

Ḥadīth, writing of, prohibited, xxxvii
Ḥafṣah, 2000; 2517
Hagar, blessed, 168; cast forth, 170; 1319; monument of the patience of, 199
Halāl ibn Umayyah, 1093; 1101; 9:106, 118
Ḥalālah, illegality of, 303
Hāmān, 28:6; 1870; 29:39; 40:24; 2186
Ḥamra' al-Asad, 3:171; 521
Ḥāqqah, al, 2551
Hārūt and Mārūt, 2:102; 149
Ḥasan, 492
Hawāzin, 1043; prisoners of the, 1045
Heart, significance of its being sealed, 21; when seals are set on, 1404; 1432; veils on, 18:57; 1507; blindness of, 22:46; 1699
Heaven (or *samā'*), different significances of the word, in the Qur'ān, 33; 35; 46; 1718; a vapour, 41:11; a structure, 35; a canopy, 1628; described as being full of ways, 51:7; 2345; significance of punishment coming from, 95; all things sent down from, 15:21; 40:13; 2180; significance of reaching, 2582; rolling up of, 21:104; 1665; bursting asunder of, 25:25; 1782; 2593; 2635; moving of, 2355; removal of covering of, 81:11; 2677; portion of, 1825; creation of, in six periods, 7:54; 10:3; 32:4; the seven heavens, 2516; called seven ways, 23:17; 1718; raised without pillars, 13:2; 31:10
Heavenly bodies, flotation of, 36:40; 2085
Hell, not eternal, 6:129; 823; 11:107; 1201; 2521; 2645; purges of evil, 1210; 57:15; 2451; necessary as a treatment of spiritual diseases, 2521; fitting man for spiritual progress, 101:8-11; 2790; a manifestation of spiritual realities, 39:48; 2167; 2559; compared to spiritual blindness, 17:72; 1452; life in, begins here, 1452; intense regret for evil done is hell, 2:167; 206; a state of being gnawed by grief, 14:17; 1304; being disgraced is, 1361; being debarred from the Lord is, 83:15; 2694; fire of, arises within the heart, 104:6, 7; 2798; is hidden from the eye, 26:91; 1818; is neither a state of life nor of death, 87:12, 13; 2719; 20:74; 1592; a punishment corresponding to sin, 78:21-30; 2646; 2647; as signifying the evil plight of the wicked, 2113; manifestation of, in this life, 2196; 79:36; 2660; as applied to punishment of this life, 29:54; 1923; 2678; righteous shall not go to, 21:101, 102; 1663; only for the wicked, 1558; 19:68-72; continuance of the punishment of, 4:56; 590; seven gates of, 15:44; seven different names of, 1341; the parable of nineteen relating to, 74:30, 31; 2602; inmates of, call out to dwellers of garden, 7:50; covering of, 77:30-33; 2638
Heraclius, 446; 710; 751
Hind, 2707
Holy Spirit, the, 2:87; 128; 16:102, 1399
Home life — privacy of, 24:27, 28; position of woman: spiritually equal with man, 40:40; 4:124; 16:97; 28:7; 3:41, 194; materially the same as that of man, 4:4, 7, 32; intermingling of sexes, 24:30, 31, 60; 33:59; respect and love for parents and offspring, 31:14, 15; 17:23, 24; 46:15; 25:74; 4:11; doing good to relatives, 17:26; 30:38; 42:23; 16:90; 25:54; 2:177; 24:22; 4:1; 4:36; relation of husband and wife, of love and compassion, 30:21; 25:74; comfort each other, 7:189; apparel for one another, 2:187; mutual obligations: good fellowship and kindness, 2:228, 229, 231; 4:19;

giving of free gifts to each other, 2:237; lodge wife according to means, 65:6; dowry a free gift, 4:4; even if a heap of gold is given to wife it is hers, 4:19, 20, 21, 24; men are maintainers of women, 4:34

Homicide, 4:92, 93

Hour, the, as signifying *doom,* 1669

Hubal, 2577

Hūd, 7:65-72; 905; 11:50-60, 89; 26:123-140; 46:21-26

Hudad, 1849

Ḥudaibiyah, truce was necessary for safety of Muslims in Makkah, 48:25; 2321; victory gained at, 48:1; 2306; large increase in converts after, 2309

Hudhud, 27:20; 1849

Human sacrifice, 828; 2117

Human soul — Divine Soul is breathed into man, 17:85; 32:7-9; 15:28, 29; purity of, 95:4; 30:30; 14:22; 15:42; 7:172; yearns after God: to pray is in man's nature, 1:4; 39:8, 49; 41:51; 10:12, 22; 22:12; benefit of prayer, 71:10-12; 52:27, 28; 19:4, 48; 29:45; 10:87; 11:52; 9:103; 25:77; acceptance of prayer, 40:60; 27:62; 14:39; 2:186; how to pray, ch. 1; 71:28; 17:80; 18:10; 20:25-28; 25:74; 40:7-9; 46:15; 12:101; 14:40, 41; 2:201, 250, 286; 3:7, 192, 193; 59:10; love of God, 76:8, 9; 2:165, 177; 3:30; 5:54; faith in God, 19:96; 10:9; 2:256, 257; 57:12, 19; 58:22; 33:47; 48:4, 18; 49:7; trust in God, 11:88; 13:30; 12:67; 14:12; 25:58; 65:3; 60:4; 9:129; refuge in God, 113:1, 2; 114:1-3; 23:97, 98; 7:200; 2:67; contentment in God, 89:27, 28; 13:28; meeting with God, 84:6; 53:42; 32:10; 6:31; 2:45, 46, 223; God is man's friend, 45:19; 42:9; 6:14; 2:257; 3:67; 4:45; whom God loves, 2:195, 222; 3:75, 145, 147, 158; 5:42; 9:7; whom God does not love, 2:190; 3:56, 139; 5:64; 6:142; 8:58; 16:23; 28:76; 57:23

Humility, 31:18, 19; 1954

Ḥunain, battle of, 9:25-27; 1043

Hunting by trained beasts and birds of prey, 5:4; 665; game killed by shot, 665

Ḥūr, 2356

Hypocrites, not sincere, 2:8-16; description of, 22; refuse to fight, 3:166, 167; 4:77-80; must be separated, 3:178; 29:11; 47:29-31; do not accept Prophet's judgment, 4:60-64; 24:47-50; secret counsels of, 4:81, 82, 114; spread false reports, 4:83; how to deal with, 4:88-91; 609; dishonesty of, 4:106-112; efforts of, to destroy Muslims, 4:113; their opposition to Prophet doomed to failure, 4:115; punishment of, 4:137-139, 141, 145; 640; practise deception, 4:142, 143; not to be taken as friends, 4:144; to be forgiven if they renounce hypocrisy, 4:146, 147; acting as spies, 5:41; seeking friendship with enemies of Islām, 5:52; shall not be successful 5:53; 709; fears of, 8:49; 9:64; 9:74; do not go to Tabūk, 9:42-45; their presence a source of weakness, 9:47; their plots, 9:48; refuse to bear hardship, 9:49; are dead against Muslims, 9:50-52; their spending not acceptable to Allāh, 9:53-55; false oaths of, 9:56; their desire to run away, 9:57; their carpings, 9:58, 59; punishment meted out to them by the Prophet, 1067; their property and children a source of torture, 9:55, 85; 1068; they molest the Prophet, 9:61; 1070, their false oaths, 9:62, 74; their opposition, 9:63; their mocking, 9:65; a party of them pardoned, 9:66; 1072; they enjoin evil and forbid good, 9:67; they are cursed, 9:68; their works rendered null, 9:69; Prophet should strive hard against, 9:73; their covenant, 9:75; their niggardliness, 9:76; they taunt believers, 9:79; they shall not be forgiven, 9:80; are glad to remain behind in battles, 9:81, 86, 87, 93; relations with, cut off, 1077; 1079; not allowed to go forth with Muslims in wars, 9:83; prayer not to be offered for them, 9:84; poor-rate not accepted from them, 1079; false excuses of, 9:90, 94; not punished with death, 1080; Muslims forbidden to have intercourse with, 1085; punished twice, 9:101; 1090; those who confessed, 9:102, 103; 1091; 1092; build mosque to sow dissension among Muslims and to afford shelter to enemies of Islām, 9:107-110; 1094; their uncleanness increased, 9:125; 1107; their trials, 9:126; 1108; their hearts turned away, 9:127; show cowardice on account of strength of allies, 33:12-20; 1975; 1976; 1979; repentance of, shall be accepted, 33:24; 1982a; spread evil reports, 33:60, 61; 2012; averse to

fighting, 47:20; obey enemies of Islām, 47:25-28; chastisement of, 48:6; excuses offered by, 48:11-14; forbidden to accompany Muslim expeditions, 48:15; are deprived of light, 57:13-15; 2448; false oaths of, 58:14-19; 63:1, 2; untrue to their promise to Jews, 59:11-14; their designs against Muslims, 63:3-8; 2508; jihād against, 66:9; 2522

Iblīs, refuses to make obeisance to Adam, 2:34; 7:11, 12; 15:31-37; 17:61; 18:50; 20:116; is not an angel but one of the jinn, 18:50; 1505; stands for the powers of evil, 57

Ibn Mas'ūd, copy of the Qur'ān of, xlviii

Ibn Umm Maktūm, 2662

Ibrāhīm, Prophet's son, 2517; death of, 967

Idols, stones set up for, 5:3; 662; practice of devoting animals to, 627; 742; offerings to, 16:56; 1373; worshippers of, compared to slaves, 16:75; 1384; belief in the intercession of, 39:3; 2154, 1430; 17:42; bedecked with ornaments, 43:18; 2241

Idrīs, 19:56, 57; 1553; 21:85

Immunity, declaration of, 9:1-3; 1030; necessity of the declaration of, p. 383

Incarnation, 2817

Individual responsibility, doctrine of, 17:15; 1418; 53:38

Infanticide, forbidden, 17:31; among civilized nations, 1425

Inheritance, law of, 4:11, 12, 177; 544

Intellectual development, blind following condemned, 43:22, 23; 7:179; 2:170, 171; 5:104; appeal to reason, 67:10; 45:5; 36:62; 25:44; 6:152; 2:44, 73, 242; 8:22; 5:58

Intercession, 79; 2:255; 339; 4:85; 607; 2264; for foes, 2812

Interpretation, rule of, 3:6; 387; 388; p. 127

Intoxicants, prohibited, 2:219; 5:90; 732; evil miraculously swept off from Arabia, 280; 732; reason of prohibition, 5:91; 733; first step in the prohibition of, 4:43; 577

Iram, see Aram

Iron, 57:25; 2456

Isaac, 2:133, 136, 140; 6:85; 4:163; 11:71; 1189; 12:6; 14:39; 19:49; 21:72; 37:112, 113; 38:45-47

Ishmael, see Abraham, 2:125, 127-129, 133, 136, 140; 4:163; 6:87; 14:39; p. 495; 2735; covenant made with, 168; blessed along with Isaac, 168; rebuilding Ka'bah along with Abraham, 170; 2:127; settled in Arabia, 14:37; 1319; was a prophet, 19:54, 55; 1552

Ishmaelites, inherit Abraham, 655

Islām, significance of, 2:112; 156; 400; fundamental principles of, 2:3, 4; 15, 16, 18, 19; sublime idea of Divine Unity in, 1071; principle of brotherhood of man laid by, 49:13; 2331; as an international religion, 273; as the natural religion of man, 400; 3:82; 30:30; 1937; religion of all prophets, 400; 42:13; 2220; accepts all the prophets of the world, 2:4; 18; high ideal of, 6:163; 850; a perfect religion, 5:3; 664; opposition to, shall be brought to naught, 61:8; 2499; prophecy relating to its experiencing great difficulties twice and being ultimately triumphant, 2764; prophecy that the Arabs would accept Islām and become a great nation, 2544; prophecy of its firm establishment, 32:5; 1959; prophecy of its spread in remote corners of the earth, 2215; prevalence of, over all religions, 9:33; 1054; 48:28; 2323; 61:8; 2499; sacrifices necessary for the triumph of, 351; 61:10-13; victories promised for, 48:21; 2319; prophecy of establishment of the kingdom of, 708; 24:55; 1763; 28:58; 1891; great future of, p. 678; resplendent light of, 24:35-38; 1757; light of, shall be spread in East and West, 1757; compared to a seed sown, 80:24-32; progress of, shall be hampered for 1,000 years, 32:5; 1959; carpings of enemies of, 528; 1980; steady progress of, notwithstanding severest opposition, 41:53; 2215; progress of, at Makkah after the Prophet's flight, 2489; signs of the advancement of, 7:57, 58; 899; principles of, benefiting non-Muslims, gaining ground, 1054; 1667; propagation of, p. 383; missionary propaganda made obligatory, 9:122; 1104; unparalleled tolerance of, 22:40; 1698; 22:67; 1709; regularizes prayer, 16; regularizes charity, 16; forbids compulsion in religion, 2:256; inculcates humility in the hour of triumph, 380; leniency of the martial and criminal laws of, 5:34; 692; recognizes a law being given to every people, 5:48; 704; levels all distinctions, 6:52; 779; superstitions swept off by, 6:137-140, 144, 145; 830; 831; 832; 835; denounces open and

secret sins alike, 6: 121; 815b; introduces a new meaning into the principle of sacrifice, 22: 36, 37; 1691-1695; highly develops idea of resurrection, 1747; disallows vows of celibacy, 24: 32; 1753; 1754; moderation inculcated by, 2232; 42: **40**

Israelites, invited to accept the Prophet, 2: 40; 69; 70; subjected to severe torment by Pharaoh, 2: 49; 80; 81; 7: 167; 40: 25; made to cross the Red Sea, 2: 50; 82; 10: 90; 20: 77; 44: 24; make and worship a calf, 2: 51; 84; 4: 153; 7: 148; 944; repent of calf-worship, 7: 149; 945; not punished for calf-worship, 2: 54; 86; 7: 152, 153; demand sight of Allāh, 2: 55; 87; 4: 153; cloud giving shade to, 2: 57; 89; 7: 160; receive manna and quails, 2: 57; 90; 7: 160; settling in a city, 2: 58; depravity of, 91; 94; punished with plague, 2: 59; 95; 7: 161, 162; ask for water in the wilderness, 2: 60; 96; 97; 7: 160; demand for food in wilderness, 2: 61; 98; abasement of, 2: 61; 101; killing the prophets, 2: 61; 102; 2: 91; plans of, against the Prophet, 102; 2: 87; 129; 686; covenant of, 2: 63, 93; 4: 154; break the covenant, 4: 155; 5: 12, 70; overtaken by earthquake, 4: 153; 7: 171; 957; break Sabbath, 2: 65; 106; made apes, 2: 65; 107; 7: 165, 166; made apes and swine, 5: 60; 714; incontinence of, 107; cow-worship of, 108; 109; attempt to kill Jesus, 2: 72; 110; hard-heartedness of, 2: 74; corruption of scriptures by, 2: 75; hypocrisy of, 2: 76; 116; ignorance of, 2: 78; 117; claim of, to exemption from punishment, 2: 80; 118; 3: 23; alliance of, with the Prophet, 126; recognize but reject the Prophet because not an Israelite, 2: 89-91; 133; hopes of, in the promised prophet, 2: 89; 132; insolence of, 2: 88; 131; love of life of, 2: 96; 139; hate Gabriel, 2: 97; 140; look upon Michael as a patron, 140; persist in rejection of the Prophet, 2: 101; 143; hatred to the Prophet, 2: 104; 150; favours on, 2: 122; cursed by Moses, 201; hatred of swine, 210; how raised to life after death, 2: 243; 319; hundred years' death of, 2: 259; 348; kingdom of God departs from, p. 135; 3: 25; 406; try to kill prophets, 3: 20; plans against the Prophet, 3: 20, 21; plans against Jesus, 3: 53; 435; worship Arab idols, 4: 51; 585; falsely charge Mary of adultery, 4: 156; claim to have killed Christ, 4: 157; believe that Jesus was cursed, 4: 159; 650; iniquity of, 4: 160; take usury, 4: 161; devour property falsely, 4: 161; twelve leaders of, 5: 12; 671; hearts of, hardened for breaking covenant, 5: 13; treachery among, 5: 13; granted kingdom and prophethood, 5: 20; 681; refuse to march on the Holy Land, 5: 22, 24; 682; in the wilderness, 5: 26; 685; plots of, to make Muslims apostatize, 710; acting as spies, 5: 41; they are hypocritical, 5: 61; mock Muslims for raising subscriptions for national defence, 5: 64; 716; turn blind and deaf to truth twice, 5: 71; make mischief twice, 17: 4; 1412; cursed by David and Jesus, 5: 78; 725; 1412; befriend idolaters, 5: 80, 81; most insolent in hatred towards Islām, 5: 82; foods forbidden to, 6: 147; 837; 838; renewed persecution of, by Pharaoh, 7: 127; made rulers in the Holy Land, 7: 137; 938; after false gods, 7: 138; 939; seventy elders chosen from, 7: 155; 949; divided into twelve tribes, 7: 160; cut off into parties, 7: 168; not allowed religious liberty in Egypt, 1149; pray to be delivered from persecution, 10: 85, 86; resettling of, 17: 6; 1413; given a chance at the advent of the Prophet, 17: 8; 1415; must give place to another people, 17: 103; 1473; settled in the promised land, 17: 104; 1472; 1869; let astray by Sāmirī, 20: 85; 1596

I'tikāf, 2: 187; 234

Jābir, son of 'Abd Allāh, 1659

Jabr, 1400

Jacob, 2: 136, 140; 4: 163; 6: 85; 12: 6; 11: 71; 1189; 19: 49; 1549; enjoins Unity on his descendants, 2: 132; on death-bed, 2: 133; did not become blind, 1248; 1254; goes to Egypt, 12: 99

Ja'far, 1571

Jamīlah, 301

Jawairiyah, 2000

Jericho, 91

Jeroboam, 2141

Jerubbabel, 149

Jerusalem, 1723; destroyed twice, 1412; desolation and rebuilding of, 346; 2: 259; 348; destruction of, by Babylonians, 17: 5; 1413; destroyed by Romans, 17: 7; 1414

Jesus Christ, came in fulfilment of prophecy, 4: 171; 652; granted

revelation, 2:87; 5:110; compared his advent to that of a thief, 2707; taught Torah and Gospel, 3:47; 5:110; not equal to the Prophet's task, 941; sent only to Israelites, 3:48; 953; holding swine in abhorrence, 210; kept fasts, 2777; cleared of false charges, 3:54; 438; enemies of, withheld, 5:110; was not rude to his mother, 19:32; 1546; signs of, not the work of Satan, 1833; unbelievers object to divinity of, 43:57, 58; 2254; speaking when in cradle and of old age, 3:45; 426; 5:110; making birds, 3:48; 428; 5:110; healing the sick, 3:48; 429; 5:110; raising the dead, 3:48; 430; 5:110; 1619; why called Messiah, 424; preaches against storing of wealth, 431; verifies Torah, 3:49; modifies the Mosaic law, 3:49; 432; plans against the life of, 3:53; is promised deliverance from death on cross, 3:54; followers of, promised triumph over rejecters, 3:54; apparent death of, 2:73; 112; 113; did not die on cross, 4:157; 645; died a natural death, 436; death of, 5:117; 752; 1359; made a sign, 23:50; finds a shelter in Cashmere, 1723; travels of, in the East, 424; tomb of, in Srinagar, 1723; his ascension to heaven, erroneous belief, 2637; had a mortal body needing food, 5:75; 724; 1613; prayer of, for food, 5:114; an ordinary mortal, 3:58; 443; 19:30-33; 1544; 1545; a mortal according to the Negus, 728; born under ordinary circumstances, 1539; 19:22, 23; exclusive innocence of, cannot be upheld, 1535; divinity of, denounced, 5:72; 722; 1438; 19:88-92; 1571; only an apostle, 4:171; son of God, metaphor, 1623; miraculous feats attributed to, are based on allegorical statements, 387; entered into life with responsibilities of his own, like every other mortal, 851; denying claim to Godhead, 5:116; honoured by Muslims, 43:59; 2255; disciples of, 3:51, 52; revelation to disciples of, 5:111; disciples of, ask for food from heaven, 5:112; exhorting his disciples, 61:14; cause of, made triumphant, 61:14; 2501; followers of, promised triumph over rejecters, 3:54; cursing the fig, 2766; curses Israelites, 5:78; as a sign for the Jews, 43:61; 2256; prophecy of, regarding rejection of Jews, 2766; prophecy of, relating to transference of kingdom of God, 2526; sees prophetically the glory of the Holy Prophet, 336; prophesies advent of Prophet, 36:14; 2070; gives good news of the advent of the Prophet, 61:6. See also, 4:163; 651; 721; 6:86; 1126; 42:13; 57:27

Jethro, 1878

Jews, see Israelites; incurring Divine displeasure, 10; denied resurrection, 60:13; 2494; untrue to Torah, 62:5

Jihād, significance of, 1073; 1405; 1793; 2522; at Makkah, 29:6; 1902; see Muslim wars

Jinn, creation of, from fire, 15:27; 1336; 55:15; 2409; significance of, 822; 2580; as spirits of evil, 2580; as signifying leaders, 813; 1168; 1466; as applying to strange people, 2027; applied to foreigners, 2143; listen to the Qur'ān, 46:29; as leaders of some Jewish tribes, 46:30, 31; 2290; subjugated by Solomon, 27:17; 1846; as applied to non-Israelite tribes, 2029

Jizyah, 1049

Job, 4:163; 651; 6:85; 21:83, 84; 38:41-44; 2144-2147

John of Damascus, 751

John the Baptist, 412; 3:38; 417; 418; 6:85; 19:7-15; 21:90; greatness of, 1533; sinlessness of, 19:13, 14; 1535; Christians of, 103

Jonah, 4:163; 651; 6:87; p. 417; 68:48-50; 2549; people of, believe, 10:98; 1157; resemblance of, to the Prophet, 1157; flight of, 37:140; 2121; was not in wrath with Allāh, 1651; prayer of, 1654; not devoured by the fish, 2123; 2124

Joseph, 6:85; 40:34; sees the vision, 12:4-6; his brothers plot against him, 12:7-18; taken out of the pit by travellers, 12:19, 20; in Potiphar's house, 12:21; granted wisdom, 12:22; remains firm under temptations, 12:23-25; his innocence established, 12:26-29; further temptations, 12:30-34; cast into prison, 12:35; Joseph and the two prisoners, 12:36; preaches to them, 12:37-40; interprets their visions, 12:41; interprets the king's vision, 12:43-49; cleared of false charges, 12:50-53; raised to dignity, 12:54-56; his brothers go to him and he helps them, 12:58-62; the youngest brother, 12:63-69; incident of the cup, 12:70-77; reveals himself to his brothers, 12:80-91; forgives them, 12:92; prayer of, 12:101; history of, repeated in Prophet's history, 12:102, 103; 1259

Joseph, husband of Mary, 1546

Joseph of Arimathæa, 1483; 2075

Joshua, 683; 5:23; 1510
Judgment, day of, 51:12-14; 82:17-19
Jūdī, 11:44; 1183
Justice, to be held out between Muslims and non-Muslims, 4:105; 620; firmness in, 4:135; 633; Islamic conception of, 6:153; 842; broad significance of, 874

Ka'b, son of Ashraf, 2475
Ka'b ibn Mālik, 9:106; 1093; 1101
Ka'bah, made a resort for men, 2:125; as House of God, 2:125; 168a, 169, 168a, 170a; appointed as *Qiblah*, 168b; great antiquity of, 170, 1690; rebuilt by Abraham, 170a; connection of, with Abraham and Ishmael, 169; as the Muslim centre, 2:144; 187; reasons, 191; 192; 193; 2:148; not worshipped, 191a; a support for men, 5:97; 739; a sign, 913; practice of going naked round, 873; 877; 1030; shall not be approached by unbelievers, 9:28; 1046; service of, cannot compare with struggle to propagate truth, 9:19-22; freed from idols, 1040; 1461; sacrifice of animals at, 22:33; a prophecy of its clearance from idols, 1710; protection of, p. 1209; 2800
Kāhin, 2530
Kauthar, 108:1; 2807
Kedār, 1831
Khabbāb, xxxvii
Khadījah, 2000; 2662
Khaibar, 48:18; 2316
Khālid, converted to Islām, 487
Khaulah, wife of Aus, 2460
Khazraj, see Aus
Khul', 301
Khuzā'ah, 1039
Kingdom of God, p. 2; 22:56; 1704; p. 1079; 2526
Kingdom of heaven, granted to Muslims, 4:54; 587; inaccessible to unbelievers, 7:40; 887
Kisra, bracelets of, 1685; prophecy regarding palaces of, 1981
Knowledge — acquirement of: Reading and use of pen recommended, 96:1-5; raises man in dignity, 39:9; travelling in search of knowledge, 18:65, 66; Prophet asked to pray for increase of, 20:114; prophets given, 21:79; — for protection in wars, 21:80; Adam given — of all things, 2:31; Prophet raised to be a Teacher, 2:151; wisdom is a great good, 2:269; study of nature, 17:12; 45:3-5; 10:5, 6; 13:3, 4; 16:10-16; 3:189, 190; study of the conditions of different countries, 29:20; 17:17-21; 35:27, 28; 22:46; study of histories of different nations, 30:9; 40:21; 35:43, 44; 12:111; 14:5; 3:116; 33:62; man can rule forces of nature with, 17:70; 45:12, 13; 31:20; 14:32-34; 16:12, 14; 21:79, 81, 82; 22:3, 65; 7:140; 2:30, 34; three degrees of, 102:5-8; 2792
Korah, 28:76-82; 1895; 29:39; 40:24; 2186

Laban, 1877; 1878
Lailat al-qadr, 97:1-5; 2777; 2778; 2779; 2780
Lāt, 625; 53:19
Lauḥ Maḥfūẓ, 2706
Law, uniformity of, 2406
Li'ān, 24:6-10; 1739
Life, is not sport, 29:64; 57:20; 2452; seriousness of, 30:8; a struggle with difficulties, 90:4; 2736; great purpose of, 23:115-118; 1735; three states of, 1731; water as source of, 21:30; 1626; created in pairs, 36:36; 2081; evolution of man: man grows out of earth, 71:13-17; 53:32; 18:37; 40:67; 23:12-14
Life after death, grows out of man's deeds, 82:10-12; 83:7, 18; 50:3, 4, 18; 17:13, 14; 45:29; 43:80; 21:94; 13:11; begins in this life, 89:27-30; 55:46; 41:30-32; 3:197; complete manifestation of a higher life, 99:6-8; 86:8, 9; 69:18; 50:22; 39:69, 70; 57:12; progress in higher life is unceasing, 39:20; 66:8
Light, of faith, 66:8; of Islām, resplendence of, 24:35; 1757
Lord's prayer, 750; contradicts atonement, 1571
Lot, 6:85-87; 793; 11:89; 54:33-40; was a prophet, 917; preaches and is rejected, 7:80-84; coming of messengers to, 11:77; 15:61; a stranger among the Sodomites, 1194; his people demand the guests, 15:67-69; forbidden to shelter strangers, 15:70; offers his daughters as hostages, 11:78; 1194; 15:71, 72; 1345; leaves the city, 11:81; 15:65, 66; his people destroyed, 7:83, 84; 918; 11:82; people of, 50:13; their crimes, 1911; their punishment, 918; wife of, 66:10
Luqmān, p. 786; 31:12; 1950

Ma'ārab, bursting of the dyke of, 2030
Madīnah, enriched by the advent of Muslims, 1075; attacked by allied forces, 33:9; 1971

Magi, dualistic doctrine of, 6:1; 753; 806
Magians, 22:17
Magog, see Gog
Mahdī, advent of, 2610
Maimūnah, 2000
Majority, age of, 541
Makkah, situation of, 170; Abraham's prayer for, and its security, 2:126; 14:35; inviolability of, 2:191; 242; inviolability of things relating to, 2:194; 246; prophecy of the conquest of, by Muslims, 251; 1455; 17:76; 1461; 2734; prophecy that it shall be the Muslim centre, 1687; security of, prophesied, 28:57; 1890; a guidance for the nations, 3:95; 467; its blessings to continue for ever, 468; three prophecies relating to the future of Makkah, 3:96; 469; to be made the universal spiritual centre, 799; conquest of, effect on opponents, 856; as a commercial centre, 1048; unproductive of fruit, 14:37; punishment of, for Prophet's rejection, 16:112; 1406; made sacred, 27:91; 1866; sacredness of the territory of, 29:67; 1928a; 2734; not warned before, 32:3; 1958a; 36:6; warned by Prophet, 47:13; 2297; 65:8-10; Prophet's re-entry into, conquest of, 2446; religious metropolis and trade centre of Arabia, 2723; as the scene of fulfilment of early prophecies, p. 1216; invasion of, by Abrahah, 2800
Mālik, the angel, 43:77; 2260
Māmūn, Al, 103
Man, 40:67; creation of, from dust, 6:2; 754; 7:11, 12; 862; 22:5; 1672; 32:7; 35:11; 55:14; from extract of clay, 23:12; 1716; from clay giving sound and fashioned in shape, 15:26; 1336; creation of, from haste, 862; object of creation of, 11:7; 1165; 51:56-58; 75:36; 2622; made to rule universe, 14:32-34; 1315; 16:10-19; 31:20; 45:12, 13; his excellence above creation due to discretionary power, 705; unable to chalk out a moral code for himself, 1378; attains to perfection by Divine inspiration, 1337; Divine spirit breathed into, 32:9; 1960; greatness and vast capabilities of, p. 17; 2767; is taught language, 55:3, 4; 2405; how he can rise to eminence, p. 1189; turns to Allāh in affliction but forgets Him in ease, 7:189-192; 969; 17:67; 1447; ungratefulness of, for Divine blessings, 41:49-51; 2214; unfaithfulness of, to trust, 33:72; 2016; threefold duty of, 734; 5:93; spiritual needs of, must be provided for, 6:38; 774; shall live and die on earth, 7:25; best clothing granted to, is piety, 7:26; 870; stages in the physical growth of, 22:5; 1673; 23:14; 1717.
Manāt, 625; 53:20
Manna, 90
Mariolatry, 751
Marriage, a contract, 4:21; obligatory, 24:32, 33; 1753; 1754; divorced women and widows free to remarry, 2:232, 234, 235; women whom it is forbidden to marry, 4:23; when were slave girls married, 4:25 — Intermarriages, with idolaters forbidden, 2:221; 284; 285; 60:10, 11; with followers of scriptures, 5:5; 667; Islamic, Jewish and Christian laws compared, 667
Mārūt, see Hārūt
Marwah, 2:158; 199; 200
Mary, mother of Jesus, 3:34; 412; birth of, 3:35; given in charge of Zacharias, 3:36; faith of, in God, 3:36; 415; is chosen, 3:41; her marriage, 3:43; 422; receives news of birth of a son, 3:44; falsely charged with fornication, 4:156; 644; death of, 5:17; 677; a truthful woman, 5:75; divinity of, 723; taken for a god by Christians, 5:116; 751; vision of, 19:17-21; 1536; called sister of Aaron, 19:28; 1542; immaculate conception, 1657; given a shelter in Cashmere with Jesus, 23:50; 1723; gave birth to a prophet, 2525; set as an example to believers, 66:12
Mary, the Coptic, 2517
Masonic societies, 149
Media and Persia, kingdom of, 1517
Meekness, 31:18, 19; 1954
Menstruation, 2:222
Mesopotamia, 1499; 1775; 2419
Messiah, advent of, 1054; the promised 2499; 2503; to be raised among the Muslims, 1763; 2503
Michael, 2:98; 140
Midian, 7:85; 919; 9:70; 11:84
Mingana, Dr., lix
Miracles, see Signs
Mi'rāj, p. 543; 17:1; 1410. See Ascension
Misṭaḥ, 1745
Monkery, 5:87; 729; a Christian innovation, 57:27; 2457
Months, number of, 9:36; sacred months, 2:189; 236; 9:36
Moon, rending asunder of, 54:1; 2388; darkening of, 75:8; 2609; as standing for the Prophet, 84:18; 2702

Moral development of man, good helps the progress of man and evil retards it, 91:9, 10; 92:4-10; 53:31, 39-41; 10:23; 11:114; 14:24-26; 16:75, 76, 97; 6:161; 25:70; 2:216; basic principle of good morals, 92:19-21; 6:163; 2:207, 265; 4:74, 114; 60:1; 5:16

Morals: truth, 103:2, 3; 39:3, 32; 17:81; 16:116; 22:30; 25:72; 3:60; 4:135; 33:24, 35, 70; 5:119; 9:119; sincerity, 107:4-6; 98:5; 39:2, 3; 3:166; 4:107, 142, 146; purity, 74:4, 5; 91:9, 10; 87:14; 53:32; 2:222; 33:33; 24:21; 5:6; 9:103, 108; unselfishness, 92:19, 20; 76:8, 9; 11:51; 6:163; 64:16; 2:207, 262; 3:91; 4:53; 59:9; humility, 17:37, 38; 40:35; 28:83; 31:18, 19; 16:23, 29; 6:63; 7:13, 55, 146; 2:45, 46; patience, 103:2, 3; 29:58, 59; 39:10; 42:43; 11:11; 16:126, 127; 28:80; 2:153-157, 177, 249; 3:145, 199; perseverance, 30:43; 41:6, 30, 31; 11:112; 13:22; thankfulness, 46:15; 39:7, 66; 28:73; 14:7, 8; 2:152, 172, 185, 243; 5:6, 89; self-control, 79:40, 41; 38:26; 30:29; 18:28; 42:37; 7:201; 4:135; chastity, 70:29, 35; 23:5; 17:32; 25:68; 24:30, 31, 33; 33:35; courage, 20:46; 6:81-83; 2:38, 112; 3:172-175; 33:39; 9:40; forgiveness, 41:34, 35; 42:37-40; 12:92; 7:199; 2:109; 3:133, 158; 4:149; 24:22; 5:13

Mortgage, 377; 2:283

Moses, revelation to mother of, 20:38; 28:7; cast into river, 20:39; 1585; 28:7; picked up by Pharaoh's people, 20:39; brought back to his mother, 20:40; 28:12, 13; journey of, to Khartum, 18:60-82; travels of, in search of knowledge, p. 582; Ethiopian wife of, 1511; kills an Egyptian, 20:40; 26:14; 1808; 26:19-21; 28:15-21, 33; goes to Midian, 20:40; 28:22-28; serves Jethro for ten years, 1878; discovers fire in return journey, 20:10; 27:7; 28:29; is called, 19:52; 20:11-14; 27:8, 9; 28:30; 79:16; sees in the visionary state that his staff has become a serpent and his hand is white 20:17-23; 27:10-12; 28:31, 32; commanded to go to Pharaoh, 7:103; 10:75; 11:96, 97; 20:24; 23:45, 46; 26:15-17; 27:12; 40:23, 24; 51:38; 79:17; asks for a helper, Aaron, 20:25-35; 26:12-14; 28:33, 34; commanded to demand deliverance of the Israelites, 7:104, 105; 20:46-48; 26:15-17; 44:18; controversy with Pharaoh, 20:49-55; 26:18-31; shows signs to Pharaoh, 7:107, 108; 26:32, 33; 79:20; Pharaoh consults his chiefs and calls enchanters, 7:109-112; 10:76-79; 20:56-59; 26:34-37; Moses and the enchanters, 7:113-126; 10:80-82; 20:60-73; 26:38-51; significance of staff turning into a serpent, 1581; of the hand turning white, 1582; nine signs of, 935; 17:101; 1470; exhorts his people to patience and prayer, 7:128; 10:84; 10:87; 1149; only the weak believe in, 10:83; a secret believer in, 40:28-45; commanded to depart by night, 20:77; 26:52; 44:23, 24; crosses the sea, 7:138; 10:90; 20:78; 26:53-66; appointment of forty nights, 2:51; 83; 7:142; retires to the mountain to receive the law, 7:143-145; 20:83, 84; desires to see Allāh, 7:143; 941; is granted the Torah, 7:142-145; a book revealed to, 2:53; 6:92; 6:155; did not receive written tablets, 942; returns with the law, 7:150; granted distinction, 2:53; 21:48; 1636; orders slaughter of a cow, 2:67-71; prays for drinking-water in the wilderness, 2:60; finds twelve springs, 2:60; 96; identified with twelve wells at Elim, 97; commands his people to march on Holy Land, 5:21; finds his people worshipping a calf, 7:150; 20:86-90; is wroth with Aaron, 7:150; 20:92-94; prays for forgiveness of his people, 7:155, 156; burns the calf, 20:97; false imputations against, 33:69; 2015; troubles of, at the hands of his own people, 61:5; scriptures of, 87:19; ascension of, p. 567; 1510; lays down basis of a great dispensation and a mighty kingdom, 681; gives promise of delivery and the promised land, 7:129; 932; followed by other Israelite messengers, 2:87; law of, amended by Israelite prophets, 432; transgression of Israelites prophesied by, 943; 7:146, 147; prophesies advent of the Prophet, 28:44; 1882; 36:14; 2070; book of, bears testimony to truth of Qur'ān, 11:17; 1171. See also, 4:164; 651; 5:20-26; 6:85; 7:138-140; 10:75, 77; 11:96; 11:110; 17:2; 19:51, 53; 25:35; 29:39; 40:23; 42:13; 51:38; 53:36

Mosques, preventers from, shall be abased, 2:114; 159

Mountains, creation of, 16:15; 1358; as pegs of the earth, 78:7; 2641; provide food, 79:32, 33; declaring Allāh's glory, 34:10; 2022; passing away of, 27:88; 1865; 81:3; 2670; signifying great men, 1280

Muhājirīn, 1087; 9:100; 9:117; 2478

Muḥammad, significance of, 2496; as the ***Promised One***, 70; 651; received revelation through Gabriel, 2:97; secret counsels against, 149; 2:102; revolution to be brought about by, 163; Abraham and Ishmael pray for appearance of, 2:129; as teacher and purifier, 2:129, 151; 3:163; 62:2, 3; revelations of, not outcome of desire, 184; as a practical benefactor of humanity, 217; raised to settle differences of all nations, 2:213; 272; 273; uproots the evil of drink, 280; excellence of, above other prophets, 336: 2:253; 1437; raising the dead to life, 430; lodges Christians in a mosque, 445; invites them to test his truth by prayer, 3:60; 445; writes a letter to Heraclius, 446; truth of, testified to by all prophets, 3:80; 458; requires faith in all prophets, 3:83; 458; special Divine protection granted to, 3:144; 498; his gentle dealing with the greatest delinquents, 3:158; 514; as ablest general, 514; upholds principle of holding counsel in important matters, 515; great anxiety of, for humanity, 9:128; 1108a; 18:6; 1479; 26:3; 1804; 2756; p. 1187; 94:3; 2762; regard of, for the poor and the orphans, 534; 2662; 2727; 2758; commanded to fight alone, 4:84; variety of circumstances affecting the life of, 604; confidence of, in ultimate triumph of his cause, 606; holds out justice between Muslims and non-Muslims, 4:105; 620; to judge with equity among enemies, 5:42, 43; 695; to judge by Divine revelation, 5:49; must deliver the message, 5:67; marvellous faith of, in ultimate triumph, p. 279; as a plain warner, 6:50; 778; stands above all low motives, 6:163; 850; denies possession of superhuman powers, 7:188; 967; his refuge in Allāh from false imputations, 7:200; 973; kindness of, to severest enemies, 1077; strives hard in the cause of truth, 9:88; his compassion for believers, 9:128; 1108a; faithfully follows the Qur'ān, 10:15; 1117; previous life of, a testimony to truth, 10:16; 1118; truthfulness of, 1118; offers simple truth, 1133; had greatest certainty about truth of revelation, 1155; zeal of, 1158; 10:99; to remain upright, 10:105; could not give up the Qur'ān, 11:12; 1167a; sufferings of, 14:13; 1301; prays even for those who do not accept him, 1318; forgives enemies, 15:85; 1350; embellishments of life had no attraction for, 15:88; 1352; charity of, 1352; gentle to his followers, 15:88; 1352; the Quraish propose to make him a king, 1453; firmness of, under severest trials, 1453; ever rising to positions of greater and greater glory, 1459; wealth had no attraction for, 20:131; told to seek comfort in prayer, 20:130; 1610a; as a mercy to the whole world, 21:107; 1667; solicitousness of, for the safety of his followers, 1705; simplicity of life of, 25:7; 1772; helping others, 1772; zeal of his companions in propagating Islām, 1792; untiring zeal of, for bringing about a transformation, 1804; morals of, conformed to the Qur'ān, 1829; as an exemplar, 33:21; 1980; different capacities of, 1980; as a model in every walk of life, 1980; purity and perfection of, 1996; 33:45, 46; 1997; breadth of mind of, 2055; heroic fortitude of, 43:88; 2265; moral greatness of, 43:32; 2244; to bear with patience, 46:35; steadfast in preaching, 42:15; asks no reward, 42:23; 2226; heart of, sealed against their abuses, 42:24; 2227; does not err, 53:2; 2372; attainment of perfection by, 53:6, 7; 2375; 2376; nearness of, to Allāh, 53:8, 9; 2377, 2378; brings men from darkness to light, 65:11; affectionate treatment of his wives by, 2517; 2519; conformed to sublimest morality, 68:4; 2539; morals of, depicted in the Qur'ān, 2539; loved to be classed with the poor, 2662; magnanimity of, 2662; example of, in freeing slaves, 2739; breadth of the heart of, 2761; hatred of false gods entertained by, 109:1-5; never despaired of regenerating his people, 2810; enjoined to ask forgiveness for his oppressors, 110:3; 2812; spiritual resurrection brought about by, 17:51, 52; 1433; 1434; transformation wrought by, 14:48; 1325; 1665; 1801; 25:63-75;

2689; prophecy of triumph of, 2538; 2703; as head of Madīnah republic, 126; a light for the world, 5:15, 16; 676; coming after a cessation of the mission of prophets, 5:19; 680; 21:30; 1625; protection granted to, against all enemies, 5:67; 718; expedition of, against Roman Empire, 1049; flies to Madīnah, 9:40; 1062; Divine protection of, 1269; to follow Abraham's faith, 16:123; love of, was to be inspired in hearts of men, 1572; consolation to, 20:1-8; no prophet to be raised after, 598; the last of prophets, 33:40; 1994; Divine help shall be granted to, 22:15; 1679; the Devil's inability to make evil suggestions to, 1728; all nations should submit to, 22:67; alleged "lapse" of, a false story, 1701; 2382; preaching of, shakes belief in idols, 25:42; cannot guide whom he loves, 28:56; prophecy of his return to Makkah after Flight, 28:85; 1898; corruption prevailing before advent of, 30:41; 1941; not to care for carpers, 33:1, 48; 1965; 1998; has a greater claim on the faithful than themselves, 33:6; covenant with prophets regarding advent of, 33:7; 1970; as a torch to wayfarers, 33:46; enjoined to ask protection from faults, 40:55; 2194; is entitled to intercede, 43:86; 2264; must be judged as a prophet, 46:9; 2284; misunderstandings regarding, and their removal by, peace of Ḥudaibiyah, 2307; good manners to be observed towards, 49:1-5; 2326; 2327; manners in assembly of, 58:11; consultation with, 58:12, 13; 2468; share of, in property gained in wars and how spent, 1007; 2477; should strive against unbelievers and hypocrites, 66:9; allegation against, as to learning the Qur'ān from others, 16:103; 1400; charges of being a poet or soothsayer refuted, 69:38-52; only delivers message, 72:21-23; prayer of, after Ṭā'if, 2585; enjoined to pray by night, 73:1-9; charged with the heaviest task, 73:5; 2589; commanded to warn, 74:1, 2; 2597; a teacher of his immediate followers and those coming later, 62:1-4; 2503; character of, attacked by Christian writers, 2517; greatness of, 81:19-21; 2683; resplendence of the light of, 81:23; 2684; is the comer by night, p. 1164; 86:1-4; 2707; a promise of safety for, 86:4; 2708; never forgot revelation, 87:6, 7; 2716; made free from obligation with respect to Makkah, 90:2; 2734; truth of his cause to shine forth gradually, 93:1-5; 2753; 2754; objections against sinlessness of, 2756; relief afforded to by revelation, 94:1-8; opening of the breast of, 2761; eminence to which he was to be raised, 94:4; 2763; could not read or write, 2769; prophecy of his rising to eminence, 96:3; 2771; as the Distinguisher, 98:1, 2; 2781; abundant good granted to, 2807; year of birth of, 2800; 2756; known as *Al-Amīn*, 769; 6:33; Khadījah's estimate of the character of, 2662; an orphan, 93:6; 2755; relationship of, to the Madinites, 1795; first revelation of, p. 1191; 2769; on the Ṣafa, 1834; warns his relatives, 2813; passing three days in a cave, 1494; releases prisoners at Badr, 1024; marriages of, 33:50; 2000; object of marriages of, 1985; 2007; marries Zainab, 1991; not to divorce his wives, 33:52; 2004; wives of, not to be remarried, 33:53; 2007; separation of, for one month from his wives, 2517; prayer of, at Badr, 982; 2399; vision of, 48:27; 2322; allegiance sworn to, 48:10; 2310; the blind man's incident, 80:1-10; 2662; the incident of honey, 2517; likeness of, to Moses, 190; 655; 73:15; 2592; 2766; 46:10; 2286; comparison drawn between Moses and, 52:1-7; 2354; appearance of, waited for by Jews, 2:89; 132; waited for by Christians, 132; appearance of, according to previous prophecy, 37:37; 2108; 1831; 26:195, 196; 1882; 28:43-46; advent of, prophesied by Jesus, 7:157; 951; 61:6; 2496; prophecies of Moses and Jesus as to the advent of, 2496; Moses' prophecies of the advent of, 7:157; 950; 951; prophecies relating to, in Gospel, 673; 1461; as *prayer* of Abraham, 652; the Spirit of Truth, 17:81; 1461; fulfilling St. John's Gospel, 2496; universality of the message of, 6:91; 796; 7:158; 953; 1296; 1391; p. 696; 25:1, 2; 1769; 1770; 42:7; 68:52; 2550; 81:27; 2687a; 2766; obedience necessary to, 4:64, 65; fruits of obedience to, 4:69; 598; call of, to be strictly obeyed, 24:62, 63; 1767; wives of, are mothers of believers, 33:6; 1968; wives of, should retain simplicity, 33:28, 29; purity enjoined on wives of, 33:30-32; wives of, should not display their finery, 33:33, 34;

companions of, loved virtue and hated evil, 49:7; companions of, purified from sins, 24:21; 1744; 98:7, 8; 2785; prophecy of final triumph of, 14:14; 1302; his return to Makkah as a conqueror, 1302; followers of, to be raised to greatness, 95:6; 2767; p. 1191; mercy specially ordained for followers of, 7:156; 949a; companions of, compared to stars, 804; called an enchanter, a dreamer, a forger, a poet, 74:18-25; 2600; 21:3, 5; 1611; conjectures regarding, 52:29-34; 2362; charged with forgery, 25:4; not a poet, 36:69; 2096; called mad: the answer, 68:1-7; 2537; 2538; 2539; slandered, 2794; 2815; false imputations against, 33:56, 57; 2009; 2010; plans of the Quraish against, 8:30; 998; 1268; 16:26; 1360; attempts on the life of, 5:11; 670; plans to tempt, 17:73; 1453; doom of opponents of, 7:182-187; 18:59; 1509; 38:67; 2150; 51:59, 60; 69:1-3; 77:12-40; discomfiture of enemies of, 1016; 1145; opposition to, shall be brought to naught, 18:47; 1503; 22:49-54; 1700; 23:62-67; 23:93-95; 1726; 52:35-43; 68:17-33; 2543; 75:10-13; 79:7-9; 2655; 2673; 84:16, 17; 2702; nine chief opponents of, 1858; plan against the life of, prophetical reference to, 27:49; 1859; abasement of opponents of, 27:87; 1864; 42:45; 73:10-14; 2591; prays for famine to overtake persecutors, 1406

Mujaddid, 1763; 2778

Murārah ibn Rabi', 1093; 1101

Murder, 17:33; 1427

Muslim, 2:112; 156; 1123; 1554

Muslims, believe in all the prophets, 2:136; true followers of Abraham, 175; cosmopolitan belief of, 176; a most exalted nation, 2:143; 182; unity of purpose of, 191; grand object of, is to establish Divine Unity, 202; love Allāh most, 2:165; champions of the religious liberty of nations, 244; spend in the way of Allāh, 2:195; 247; 338; goal of, 2752; not to follow Jews and Christians, 3:99, 100; should always have a missionary force, 3:103; 473; the best of nations, 3:109; should study causes of rise and fall of nations, 3:136, 137; are persecuted, 3:194; 241; 16:41, 42; 1368; comforted in persecution, 29:60; 1925; 1927; should be steadfast under persecutions, 29:10; 1905; those recanting under compulsion, 16:106; 1402; should forgive persecutors when they overcome, 22:60; 1706; prophecy that they shall be made eminent, 2:152; 194; promise of conquests for, 2:115; 160; shall be made triumphant, 29:58, 59, 69; prophecy of their future greatness, 345; shall be exalted and granted kingdom, 3:25, 26; 406; shall be made a great nation, 22:65, 66; 1708; shall be made guardians of Ka'bah, 1001; shall be masters of Sacred Mosque, 22:25; 1686; prophecy that they shall inherit the land, 70:40, 41; 2567; conquests promised to, outside Arabia, 33:27; 1984; prophecy that they shall be masters of the Holy Land, 21:105; 1666; prophecy of their being made rulers on earth, 27:62; 1860; 24:55; 1763; prophecy relating to the supremacy of, over unbelievers, 83:34, 35; 2697; granted good visions, 10:63, 64; 1142; strengthened by Holy Spirit, 16:102; angels bring good news to, 41:30, 31; 2208; strengthened by revelation, 9:124; reformers to be raised amongst, 1763; should be true to promises, 2:177; 218; 5:1; 656; should fulfil agreements with idolaters, 9:4; 1032; should practise highest good, 16:90; 1393; not to break oaths and promises, 16:91; should be just to enemies, 5:2; 660; should help one another in goodness, not in sin, 5:2; should be upright and act equitably towards enemies, 5:8; should be just even against themselves and relatives, 4:135; 633; should be strictly truthful, 6:153; 842; enjoined to respect each other, 49:11, 12; to treat as Muslims those who offered Islamic salutation, 4:94; 615; to help each other in religious matters, 8:73; 1028; not to kill one another intentionally, 4:92; 612; should remain united, 3:102; divisions among Muslims to be deprecated, 3:104; should not become sects, 6:160; 848; peace to be made between quarrelling parties of, 49:9, 10; 2329; must sacrifice their lives in the cause of truth and suffer privations, 2:154, 155, 156, 177; 275; 3:185; 528; 3:199; 9:24; 1042; should strive hard in the cause of truth, 9:88; exhorted to make sacrifices, 63:9-11; must undergo trials,

to make sacrifices, 63:9-11; must undergo trials, 29:2, 3; friendly relations of, with non-Muslims, not enemies, not disallowed, 60:8, 9; 2488; friendly relations with enemies forbidden, 60:1-3; 2484; 3:27; 407; 3:117-119; 480; not to take enemy Jews and Christians for friends, 5:51; vastness of the sympathy of, 4:36; 574; 575; grand kingdom granted to, 4:54; 587; limits of obedience to authority, 4:59; 593; greetings of, to each other, 4:86; social relations with non-Muslims, 5:5; 666; not to turn their backs when facing enemy, 8:15, 16; to meet tenfold numbers in battle, 8:65, 66; to give protection to idolaters, 9:6; 1035; to be kind to unbelievers and not to mind their abuses, 17:53; 1435; made leaders for others, 22:78; 1711a; divine light to be met with in houses of, 24:36; three classes of, 35:32; 2058; to be firm against enemies, compassionate among themselves, 48:29; follow a middle course between worldliness and monkery, 57:27-29; 2457; some other guiding rules of life for, 3:16; 6:152-154; 13:19-22; 23:57-61; 25:63-75; 2099; 51:15-19; 61:2, 3; 2495; 64:11-18; 2511; 70:22-35; 74:4, 5; 2598

Muslim wars, permission given, 2:190; 238; 22:39; must not be aggressive, 238; conditions imposed on, 238; contrasted with Israelite wars, 238; persecutors to be punished, 2:191; to be continued till Makkah was taken, 2:191; 240; not to be carried on within the precincts of Makkah unless enemy does it first, 2:191; 242; clemency of, 243; to cease when religious liberty is established, 2:193; 244; necessary for the help of the weaker members, 276; allowed only when need was urgent, 277; were defensive, 3:166; 519; 1022; 22:39; 1697; to be continued so long as persecution exists, 8:39; 1005; against idolaters, due to violation of treaties, 9:5; 1032; 1033; with followers of the Book, aim of, 9:29; 1049; what unbelievers, were to be fought against, 9:123; 1105; object of, to establish religious freedom, 22:40; 1698; also served as punishment, 1725; acquisitions made in, 8:41; 1007; an early prophecy relating to, 79:1-9; 2653; prophecy of Makkans waging war against Muslims, 100:1-6; 2787

Muṭ'im ibn 'Adiyy, 1858

Naḍar ibn al-Harth, 1858

Nā'ilah, 2577

Najrān, deputation of Christians from, 445

Naml, valley of, 27:18; 1847

Nasr, 71:23; 2577

Nations, doom of, 7:34; 880; destroyed when they transgress, 17:16; 1420; death and life of, p. 112; 346; 349; 2527; do not rise until they amend themselves, 13:11

Natural religion, 30:30; 1937; two principles of, 1939

Nature, variety in, 13:3, 4; uniformity prevailing in, 67:3, 4; 2529

Nebuchadnezzar, 720; 2705

Negus, 728; 1571; 2155

Nicknames, 49:11

Niggardliness, 3:179; 4:37

Nile, junction of Blue and White, 18:60; 1511

Noah, 3:32; 6:85; 7:59-64; 10:71-73; 11:25-48; 14:9; 23:23-29; 17:3; 21:76, 77; 37:75-82; 25:37; 26:105-122; 29:14, 15; 51:46; 53:52; 54:9-16; 57:26; 66:10; 69:11, 12; 71:1-28; history of, a warning to opponents of the Prophet, 11:35; is a history of the Prophet, 11:49; 1185; a son of, is drowned, 11:42, 43; 1181; prayer of, for his son, 11:45-48

Nu'aim, 522

Oaths, not to be taken against doing good, 2:224; 289; vain oaths, 290; guarding of, 5:89; 731; expiation of, 5:89; 730; 66:2; 2518; not to be broken, 16:91; not to be made means of deceit, 16:92, 94; object of, 2634

Oaths, in the Qur'ān, significance of, 2099

Olive-tree, 1719; as a symbol of Islām, 1757; 2766

Orbs, movements of, in their spheres, 21:33

Orphans, care of, 2:220; 282; 534; 2758; property of, not to be wasted, 4:2; 6:153; 17:34; should be educated and examined, 4:6; warning against swallowing property of, 4:10; justice should be done to, 4:127; 631

Palestine, 1723

Panther, 644

Parable, setting forth of, 2:26; of the gnat, 2:26; 43; of fire kindled, 2:17, 18; 29, 30; of rain and lightning, 2:19, 20; 33, 34; of birds obeying call, 2:260; of seed yielding

manifold fruit, 2:261; compared to parable of sower in Gospel, 351; of seed sown on stone, 2:264; of garden on elevated land, 2:265; of garden smitten by whirlwind, 2:266; of one perplexed, 6:71; of one who rejects communications, 7:175, 176; 960; of the dog, 7:176; of the scum, 13:17; 1271; of the good tree, 14:24, 25; 1310; of the evil tree, 14:26; 1311; of milk, 16:66; 1378; of wine, 16:67; 1378; of the bee, 16:68, 69; 1379; of master and slave, 16:75; 1384; of the dumb man, 16:76; 1385; of one who unravels her yarn, 16:92; of a secure town, 16:112; of the rich man and the poor man, 18:32-44; 1500; of rain and luxuriance of herbage, 18:45; of one who falls from on high, 22:31; of a fly, 22:73; 1710; of the pillar of light, 24:35; of mirage, 24:39; of intense darkness, 24:40; 1760; of the spider, 29:41; 1914; of the slave and master, 30:28; 1936; of the people of the town, 36:13; 2070; of a slave of many, 39:29; of the garden with rivers of milk, etc., 47:15; 2298; of the ass, 62:5; of the owners of the garden, 68:17-33

Paraclete, 2496

Paradise, fruits of, 2:25; 41; 69:23; 2557; nature of the blessings of, 42; 2148a; 2649; extensiveness of, 3:132; 57:21; 2454a; shades of, stand for ease, 591; highest bliss of, 941; peace prevailing in, 10:10; 1114; 10:25; 1123; 36:56-58; 2091; women entitled to blessings of, along with men, 1276; a likeness of paradise, 13:35; 1287; trees and rivers of, 1310; a true picture of, 15:45-48; 1342; a state of perfect peace, 19:62, 63; 1555; blessings of, not conceivable, 32:17; 1961; is a place where there is no grief, toil, or fatigue, 35:34, 35; blessings of, are tasted by the righteous in this life, 37:41-47; 2109; blessings of, are spiritual, 2109a; beauty and purity of the blessings of, 37:41-49; 2110; talk of those in paradise with those in hell, 37:51-60; unceasing progress in, 39:20; 2159; wives and children of the faithful shall go to, 40:8; 2176; made known to the righteous in this life, 2296; description of, as garden, is only a parable, 47:15; 2298; sight of Allāh in, 50:35; 2343; houris in, 2356; same blessings for men and women in, 2356; as a starting-point for a higher progress, 2521; blessings of, are everlasting, 11:108; 1202; stands for achievement of object, 78:31; 2648; a manifestation of, in this life, 2679; when granted in this life, 89:27-30; 2732

Paran, p. 495

Parents, obedience and kindness to, 17:23, 24; 1421; 29:8; 1904; 31:14, 15; 1952; 46:15

Parliamentary government, basis of, laid by Islām, 2230; see State

Paul, St., prohibits intermarriages with unbelievers, 667

Pen, a prophetical reference to abundant use of, 1956; part played by, in propagation of Islām, 96:4; 2772

Persia, 1499; prophecy relating to vanquishment of, 30:2-4; 1930. See Media

Peter Damian, 751

Pharaoh, 2:49, 50; 80; 81; 82; 3:10; 7:130-136; 8:52, 54; 10:75-92; 1147; 1152; 1153; 11:97, 99; 17:101-103; 20:24-79; 26:10-68; 1813; 28:3, 4, 6-9, 38-40; 1868; 1870, 1880; 29:39; 40:24-37; 2186; 43:46-56; 2251; 44:24-27; 50:13; 51:38; 54:41, 42; 69:9, 10; 73:15, 16; 79:17-25; 85:18; 89:10-13; body of, cast ashore, 10:92; 1153; wife of, her prayer, 66:11; 2524

Pilgrimage, significance of and directions relating to, 2:196-203; 248-265; 5:1, 2; 657-659; 5:94-96; 735; 1689; the minor, 248; the greater, 9:3; 1031; proclaimed, 22:27; 1687

Plague, shall not enter Makkah, 469

Planets, the, 2681; life in, 2516

Poets, 26:224-227; 1838

Polygamy, 4:3; 535; justice between wives, 4:129

Polytheism, the gravest sin, 4:48; 584; 4:116; is devoid of authority, 30:35; 1938; human nature revolts against, p. 527; called a forgery, 2498; different kinds of, 2817

Poor, the care of, 69:34; 90:11-16; 2739; 107:1-3; 2805; shall be raised to eminence through the Qur'ān, 2664

Poor law, of Islām, 2478; 2727

Poor-rate, a fundamental principle of Islām, disbursement of, 9:60; 1069

Potiphar, 1221; 1227

Prayer: To pray is in man's nature, 1:4; 39:8, 49; 41:51; 10:12, 22; 22:12; benefit of, 71:10-12;

52:27, 28; 19:4, 48; 29:45; 10:87; 11:52; 9:103; 25:77; acceptance of, 40:60; 27:62; 14:39; 2:186; how to pray, ch. 1; 71:28; 17:80; 20:25-28; 25:74; 40:7-9; 46:15; 18:10; 12:101; 14:40, 41; 2:201, 250, 286; **3:7, 190-193; 59:10;** the ideal prayer, 1:1-7; regularized by Islām, 16; in danger, 2:239; to be shortened when travelling, 4:101; when actually fighting, 4:102; must be performed at fixed times, 4:103; 619; the five times, 1457; 17:78; 30:17, 18; 1934; the *tahajjud,* 17:79; 1458; middle course to be adopted with regard to, 17:110; 1477; comfort in, 1610a; restrains from sins, 29:45; 1915; 2:186; efficacy of, 230; answered by Allāh, 40:60; as the means of obtaining great good, 2808; when devoid of spirit, 107:4, 5

Predestination, 2605; 2633a

Prideaux, Dr., 2475

Priests, taken as gods, 6:138

Privacy, personal, 24:58, 59; 1764

Promised land, 672

Property, to be treated as a means of support, 4:5; not to be acquired illegally, 4:29; respect for property rights, 2:188; 235; to be respected and safeguarded, 372

Prophethood, cessation of, 21:30; 1625; a phase or part of, 1994

Prophets, belief in, essential, 4:150, 151; Divine secrets are made known to, 72:26, 27; revelation to, specially guarded, 72:27, 28; choice of, is made by Allāh, 22:75; 28:68; raised among all nations, 10:47; 1131; 13:7; 1266; 1390; 16:36; 35:24; 2055; all prophets are not mentioned in the Qur'ān, 4:164; 40:78; granted book, judgment and prophecy, 6:90; 795; sent with arguments and scriptures, 16:43, 44; had wives and children, 13:38; were mortal and ate food, 21:7, 8; 1613; 25:20; to serve as models must be human beings, 1720; Divine promise of help to, 14:13-20; receive Divine help, 12:110; 40:51; mocked at by enemies, 6:10; 759; 15:10, 11; 36:30; doom of the opponents of, 14:13; 77:7; 2634; histories of, meant as a warning, 922; cannot act unfaithfully, 3:160; righteousness of and opposition to, 23:51-56; sinlessness of, 21:25-28; 1624; slaying of, 689; from among jinn, 6:131; 824; teachings of, corrupted by evil generations, 19:59; false prophets would not prosper, 69:44-47; 2561; covenant with, 3:80; 33:7; 1970; differences of degrees of excellence, 2:253; all prophets testified to the truth of the Holy Prophet, 3:80; 458

Prostitution, 24:33; 1756

Qais, 1400

Qatādah, 2536

Qiblah, 168b, meaning of, 181; previous to flight, 181; change in, 2:142; 181; afforded a distinction, 2:143; differences of Jews and Christians with regard to, 2:145; 189; as a symbol of the unity of Muslim brotherhood, 191

Quba', mosque at, 9:108; 1095

Quraish, 106:1; 2802; trade of, 2803; advantages enjoyed by, 106:4; 2804; praying for a decision before going to Badr, 992; the nine chiefs, 1858; doom of, 53:57; 2386; prophecy of the defeat of, 70:40-44; 2568

Qur'ān, the Holy, significance of the name, 227a; names of, xi; the most widely read book, 227a; revealed on a blessed night, 44:3; 2267; 97:1; 2777; original of, 43:4; 2237; uniqueness of, 2:23, 24; 36; 10:37-40; 1126; 11:13, 14; 1168; 17:88; 1466; unique position of, among the books, 2537; a book whose blessings shall not be intercepted, 844; a warning for the whole world, 6:19; 762; 25:1; contains guidance and arguments and affords a distinction, 2:185; 228; contains answers to objections as well as arguments, 25:33; 1785; a collection of moral and spiritual truths, 1919; a collection of best teachings, 39:27; 2162; a collection of all that is best in any religion, 215; 1379; comprises all that is best in sacred books, 98:3; 2783; settles all differences, 16:64; contains the best and highest ideas, 29:49; 1920; is perfect and right-directing, 5:3; 18:1, 2; 1478a; completeness of, 17:89; 1467; contains the best narratives, 12:1-3; 1211; a complete guide, 10:37; 1126; explains everything necessary, 16:89; 1392; a reminder of what is imprinted on human nature, 855; is free from every discrepancy, 4:82; uniformity in, 39:23; 2161; false-

hood shall not prevail against, 41 : 41, 42 ; contains teachings of previous scriptures, 2783 ; is a purifier, 29 : 45 ; 1915 ; gives life to dead hearts, 2210 ; a healing for diseases, 10 : 57 ; 1137 ; 17 : 82 ; 41 : 44 ; 2212 ; is a mercy 29 : 51 ; 1922 ; to be listened to with silence, 7 : 204 ; a book of wisdom, 10 : 1 ; 1110 ; offers mercy first, 1137 ; is characterised by wisdom, 11 : 1 ; brings forth men fromdarkness into light, 14 : 1 ; guides to what is upright, 17 : 9 ; must achieve its object, 20 : 2-5 ; 1574 ; revealed to the Prophet's heart, 2 : 97 ; 26 : 193, 194 ; 1829 ; made to enter into hearts, 26 : 200 ; 1832 ; manifests glory of God, 1915 ; made easy in Arabic, 44 : 58 ; revelation of, was a requirement of the beneficence of the Divine Being, 55 : 1, 2 ; 2404 ; makes prophecy clearer gradually, 2614 ; non-Arabs believing in truth of the Qur'an, 72 : 1-19 ; transformation wrought by, 36 ; 13 : 31 ; 1280 ; 84 : 1-5 ; 2698 ; will make its followers eminent, 855 ; 21 : 10 ; 1614 ; 2127 ; scribes of, shall be honoured, 80 : 13-16 ; 2664 ; verifies previous revelation, 2 : 41 ; 70 ; 2 : 89 ; 2 : 101 ; 6 : 93 ; 35 : 31 ; 2057 ; fulfils previous prophecy, 28 : 52, 53 ; 1887 ; 46 : 12 ; 2287 ; guards all previous revelations, 5 : 48 ; 703 ; takes the place of previous scriptures, 16 : 101 ; 1398 ; connection of, with previous revelation, 28 : 51 ; 1886 ; borne testimony to by Moses, 11 : 17 ; 1171 ; 46 : 10 ; 2286 ; differences of, with the Bible, 84 ; 137 ; 147 ; 349 ; 439 ; 902 ; 926 ; 930 ; 948 ; 949 ; 1180 ; 1219 ; 1226 ; 1243 ; 1599 ; 1857 ; 2116 ; 2343a ; charge of anachronism, 2577 ; not the work of a poet, 26 : 224-226 ; 1838 ; cannot be the work of devil, 26 : 210-212 ; Divine promise to guard it against corruption, 15 : 9 ; 1329 ; 56 : 77-80 ; 2439 ; 85 : 21, 22 ; 2706 ; 2772 ; collection of, xii ; Muir on the collection of, xxxv ; collection of, in the time of Abū Bakr meant collection of manuscripts, xxxviii ; internal evidence of collection of, 75 : 17, 18 ; 2615 ; the whole was written in Prophet's lifetime, xxxv ; evidence of the writing of, 13 ; 2366 ; 2537 ; 2548 ; 98 : 2 ; 2782 ; scribes of the, among the companions, xxxvii ; stress laid by Prophet on learning, xxxix ; zeal of companions to preserve every word of, xxxix ; the whole, committed to memory in Prophet's lifetime, xxxix ; recited by Muslim in day and night prayers, 73 : 20 ; 2594 ; in how many days should it be finished, xli ; arrangement of verses and chapters of, xliii ; allegations of absence of arrangement in the text, xliv ; Muir on arrangement of, xliv, xlv ; revealed in portions to comfort the Prophet, 25 : 32 ; 1784 ; evidence that arrangement was meant to be different from order of revelation, xliv ; arrangement of, by revelation, 25 : 32 ; 1784 ; seven *manzils* (divisions) of, xli ; numbering of verses in the Prophet's time, xlvii; arrangement of chapters and verses of, xliii-xlvi ; connection of the verses, 1696 ; no evidence of change having ever been made in arrangement of, xlvi ; impossibility of error creeping into, lii ; differences in readings of, lvi ; different readings allowed in reading, not meant to be permanent, lvii ; orders given by 'Uthmān to write it in the language of Quraish in case of a difference, lv ; Dr. Mingana's discovery of stray leaves of, lix

Qurrā', l

Rachael, 1247

Ramaḍān, 227 ; revelation of the Qur'ān in, 2 : 185 ; 227 ; fasting the whole month necessary, 2 : 185

Ramesus II, identified with Pharaoh of Moses, 1153

Rass, 25 : 38 ; 1786 ; 50 : 12

Receivers, the two, 50 : 17

Reckoning, by one's own self, 17 : 14 ; 1417a

Record of good, 2695

Record of evil, 2693

Recorders of actions, 82 : 10-12 ; 2691

Red Sea, 82

Reformer, see *Mujaddid*

Rehoboam, 2029 ; 2141

Relationship, to be respected, 4 : 1

Religion, differences of, 22 : 17 ; 1680

Reminder, significance of, 1369

Repentance, what is meant by, 66 ; when not acceptable, 3 : 89 ; 463 ; 4 : 17, 18 ; 553. See Taubah

Resurrection, three senses of, 1671 ; a manifestation of hidden realities, 24 : 24 ; 1747 ; 50 : 22 ; 2341 ; 69 : 18 ; 2556 ; 86 : 9 ; 2710 ; preservation of what is necessary for, 50 : 4 ; 2335 ; the spiritual resurrection, 36 : 33 ; 2080 ; 2689

Retaliation, law of, 2 : 178 ; 220 ; allowed only in murder cases, in

Islām, 2:178; among pre-Islamite Arabs, 220; Jewish law modified, 220; alleviation of punishment, 221; law of, in Torah, 5:45; 700

Revelation, is a universal fact, 99:4, 5; 41:12; 16:68, 69; 8:12; is granted to prophets as well as non-prophets, 4:163; is a universal experience of man, 35:24; 40:78; 4:164; 10:47; descends upon the heart, 53:10, 11; 26:192-194; 2:97; helps the general uplift of man, 92:4-7; 38:28, 67, 68, 87; 68: 52; 20:75; 10:2; 11:2, 3; 14:27; 28:67; 23:1-4; 2:1-5; 58:11; 24:55; helps man to overcome evil, 17:82; 41:44; 29:7; 14:1; 25:70; 2:38; 151; 7:35; 62:2; 4:31; 47:2; 48:5; 8:29; 5:12, 65; is the basis of the moral development of man, 70:23-35; 17:23-39; 25:63-75; 6:152-154; awakens consciousness of a higher life, 71:17, 18; 75:36-40; 56:60, 61; 50:3, 4; 17:21; 32:10; 36:78, 79; 23:15, 16, 115; 2:4. Humanitarian aspect of revelation: national unity, 45:28; 10:49; 7:34; 13:11; 15:4, 5; 49:13; unity of human race, 30:22; 10:19; 23:52; 2:213; 4:1; prophets raised in all nations, 35:24; 10:47; 13:7; 16:36; 40:78; 4:164; 22:67; 5:48; Muslims must believe in all prophets, 2:4, 136, 285; 4:152; service of humanity is the greatest object of man's life, 90:11-16; ch. 107; 89:17, 18; 76:8, 9; 51:19; 39:34; 29:69; 16:90; 7:55; 2:112, 177, 195, 261, 262, 267, 271, 272; 3:91, 133; 4:36-38; breadth introduced into doctrine of, by Islām, 1390; universality of, p. 2; continuance of, 9; a requirement of Divine attributes, 6:92; 797; five kinds of, 1379; granted to man in three ways, 42:51; 2235; granted to true believers, 41:30, 31; 2208; granted to companions of the Prophet, 58:22; granted to Moses' mother, 28:7; granted to disciples of Jesus, 5:111; of prophets as distinguished from that of others, 2235

Righteousness, what it consists in, 2:177

Rock, the, dwellers of, 15:80

Romans, the, 1929; prophecy about victory of, 1930

Rukānah, 303

Saba', 34:15; 2030

Sab' al-Mu'allaqāt, xxxv

Sabbath, violation of, 2:65; 106; 4:47; 583; 7:163; significance of, 2505

Sabians, 2:62; 103; 5:69; 791; 22:17

Sacred months, 246; wars not to be carried on in, except when enemy is aggressive, 2:194; 278; their postponement, 9:37; 1057, 1059

Sacrifice, 22:28; 1689; meaning underlying, 22:34-37; 1691; as the means of obtaining great good, 108:2; 2808

Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās, 223; 1904

Sa'd ibn Mu'ādh, 1983

Ṣafā, 2:158; 199; 200; great gathering on, 1834

Ṣafiyyah, 2000; 2517

Ṣafwān, 1740

Saints, worship of, 17:57; 1438

Ṣāliḥ and Thamūd, 7:73-79; 11:61-68; 14:9; 15:80-84; 25:38; 26:141-159; 27:45-53; 29:38; 41:13, 14, 17, 18; 51:43-45; 53:51; 54:23-31; 69:4, 5; 85:18; 89:9; 91:11-15; she-camel of, as a sign, 54:27; 2394

Salmān, 1400; 2503

Salsabīl, 76:18

Salvation, how attained, 91:9; 2746

Sāmirī, leads Israelites astray, 20:85; 1595; makes a calf, 20:87, 88; 1596; 1597; confesses, 20:96; 1600; is punished by Moses, 20:97

Samuel, 2:246; 323

Ṣan'ā, church at, 2800

Saudah, 2000

Saul, made a king, 2:247; 325; 326; 327; tries Israelites by a river, 2:249; 331

Scandal, preventions against, 24:58, 59; 1764

Scythians, 1523

Seal of prophets, 33:40; 1994

Seas, the two, 25:53; 1794; 35:12; 55:19-25

Secret counsels, 58:7-10; 2462

Sectarianism condemned, 6:160; 848

Sergius, 1400

Seven, significance of, 46

Seven sleepers, 1483

Seventy, significance of, 46

Shaibah ibn Rabī'ah, 1858

Sheba, queen of, 27:20-44; 1849

Shī'ah, view of the Qur'ān, lviii

Shirk, four kinds of, 2817
Shittim, 91
Shiva, 2255
Shu'aib, 7:85-93; 11:84-95; 15:78, 79; 26:176-191; 29:36, 37
Sidrah, the, 2381
Signs, denied, 6:110; 810; 1277; 17:59; 1440; demanded by unbelievers, 17:90-93; shown by the Prophet, 1468; 1469
Sin, division into *kabīrah* and *ṣaghīrah,* 565; release from the bondage of, 1915
Sinlessness, a stage in spiritual advancement, 2626
Slander, 24:4; 1738; 24:27; 104:1; 2794
Slaves, freedom of, enjoined, 217; 47:4; 90:13; 2739; slavery, disallowed, 2294
Sodom, 25:40; 1788; 1913
Sodomites, 1344; their cities destroyed, 15:73-77
Solar system, 1718
Solomon, 4:163; 651; 6:85; fabrications against, 2:102; 146; did not worship idols, 2:102; 147; 1857; significance of wind being made subservient to, 1646; devils working for, 1647; understands speech of birds, 27:16; 1844; granted abundance, 27:16; 1845; hosts of, 1846; reviews birds, 27:20; navy of, 1646; 34:12; 2025; death of, 34:14; weak rule of the successor of, 34:14; 2029; 38:34, 35; 2141; story of killing the horses, 2140; prays for a spiritual kingdom, 38:35; 2142
Son of God, significance of, 1050; a metaphor for an honoured servant, 21:26; 1623
Sonship, doctrine of, rejected, 2:116; 161; 6:102-104; 807; 10:68; 1478; 18:4, 5; 19:35; 19:91, 92; 1617; 23:91; 37:149-159; metaphorical use of, 39:4; 2155
Soothsayers, 1332; 37:7-10; 2101-2104
Spirit, the Faithful, 26:193; 1828; spirit of truth, 673; 17:81; 1461; at rest, 89:27-30; 2732
Spirit, the self-accusing, 75:2
Spiritual growth, three stages of, 1239
Spiritual majority, attained at forty, 46:15
Star, the, disappearance of, 53:1; 2371
Stars, as means of conjectures for astrologers, 67:5; 2530; disappearance of, 77:8; 2635; darkening of, 81:2; 2669; dispersal of, 82:2; 2689
State Polity: Inter-communal relations, 3:185; 60:8, 9; form of government, 42:38; 3:158; who should be placed in authority, 38:17-20; 12:55; 22:41; 2:247; 4:58; obedience to authority, 4:59; who is fit to rule, 4:53; 10:14; 24:55; justice as the basis of rule, 38:26; 42:15; 16:90; 6:153; 4:58, 105-107, 135; 5:8; international relations, 16:92, 94; 60:8; when war becomes necessary, 22:39, 40; 2:190, 191, 192, 193, 246, 251; 4:75; 8:39; 9:29; peace, 8:61, 62, 56-58; 9:1-4
Sumayyah, 1402
Sun, total eclipse of, 967; course of the, 36:38; 2083; as a symbol, 2610; sun and the moon brought together, 75:9; 2610; folding up of, 81:1; 2668
Sunnah, 1392
Surāqah ibn Mālik, 1015; 1685; 2059
Suwā', 71:23; 2577

Ṭabrī, 2382
Tabūk, expedition to, 1060; difficulties of the Muslims, 1060; Muslims enjoined to march forth to, 9:41; 1063; length of journey, 9:42; 1064; subscriptions for the expedition to, 1076; called the expedition of straitness, 1100
Ṭā'if, 2585
Ta'mah ibn Ubairaq, 620
Tamīm Dārī, 743
Taqdīr, significance of, 2665; is a law, 87:3; 2715
Tasnīm, 2696
Taubah, 1100
Tayammum, 4:43; 581; 5:6
Thābit ibn Qais, 301
Tha'lbah, 1079, 1080
Thamūd, see Ṣāliḥ; history of, borne out by remains of rock habitations, 914; relation of, to 'Ād, 911
Thaqīf, 1043
Thaur, Mount, 1062
Theft, 5:38; 693
Theodosius, 1483
Thicket, dwellers of, 1347
Time, testimony of, that truth shall prosper, 103:1-3; 2793
Titus, 1414
Torah, 3:3; significance of, 383; corruption of, 5:44; 697; 698; 699; retaliation in, 5:45; 700; promises success for sacrifices made, 9:111; 1097
Treaties, stress laid on regard for, as opposed to modern loose views on, 16:92; 1395

Trenches, companions of the, 85:4; 2705
Trinity, 4:171; 654; 5:73; 723
Triumph witnessed by the Prophet, 2812
Trumpet, blowing of, 6:74; 789
Trust, unfaithful to, 33:72; 2016
Tubba' people of, 44:37; 2274; 50:14

'Ubaid Allāh, 2000
Ubayy ibn Ka'b, xlix
Ubayy ibn Khalf, 1930
Uḥud, 3:120; 482; assistance of angels at, 3:123; enemy return disappointed, 3:126; 487; served as a distinction, 3:139-142, 153-167; causes of the misfortune, 3:151, 152; victory was first obtained, 3:151; 503; the party who made default, 504; enemy assumes offensive after retreat and Muslims in disorder, 3:152; 505; Muslims rally round the Prophet at his call and defend themselves, 3:153; murmurings of hypocrites, 3:153; 509; 510; delinquents pardoned, 3:154; Prophet's gentle dealing, 3:158
'Ukl, 279
'Umar, xxxvi; 1077; 1368; 1685; 2477; 2306; 2517; story of conversion of, xxxvi; emphasized necessity of collecting written manuscripts of the Qur'ān, l; expelled Jews from Arabia, 2475
Umayyah ibn Abī Ṣalt, 960
Umayyah ibn Khalf, 1858; 2387
Ummī, significance of, 950
Umm Ḥabībah, 2000
Umm al-Kitāb, 1292
Umm Salamah, 2000; 2517
'Umrah, see Pilgrimage, the minor
Universe, beginning and end of, 46:3; 2281
Usāf, 2577
Usury, 2:275; 364; 365; 3:129; 489; 30:39
'Utbah ibn Rabī'ah, 1858; 2202
'Uthmān, testimony of, to the writing of the Qur'ān, xxxvi; collection of, was simply a transcription of copies from Abū Bakr's collection, liii; lv; orders of, to destroy private copies of the Qur'ān, lv
'Uzzā, 625; 53:19

Veil, the, between righteous and unrighteous, 7:46; 889
Virtue, greatness of reward of, 10:26; 1124
Visions, 1142; p. 462

Wadd, 71:23; 2577
Walīd ibn Mughīrah, 2542; 2600
Walīd ibn 'Utbah, 1858
Wall, the, 1523; 18:96, 97
Wāqidī, 2382
Wars, as precursors of a spiritual awakening, p. 1200; 2787
Water, as source of life, 11:7; 1164
Way of Allāh, meaning of, 196
Widows, period of waiting for, 2:234; 309; remarriage permitted, 2:235; provision for, in addition to share of inheritance, 2:240; 317
Wife, see woman
Wills, see Bequests
Wine, see Intoxicants
Woman, rights of wives, 2:228; 296; 4:34; 568; 570; 572; may claim divorce, 2:229; 301; as bringer up of children, 2:223; 288; evidence of, 2:282; 374; appearance of, in public, 1750; 1751; head coverings of, 24:31; 1751a; may wear an over-garment, 33:59; 2011; old women need not observe purdah, 24:60; 1765; dowry must be given to, 4:4; 537; what women it is forbidden to marry, 4:23; marriage as means of raising their status, 537; desertion of, 572; relation of husband and wife, 231; position of, in pre-Islamite Arabia, 544; 554; 555; 557
Word of Allāh, significance of, 418; 1529; 31:27
Yaghūth, 71:23; 2577
Ya'īsh, 1400
Yaman, 2032
Yambros, 930
Yanos, 930
Yāsir, a Christian slave, 1400; 1402
Yathrib, 33:13; 1977
Ya'ūq, 71:23; 2577
Yūz Āsaf, identified with Jesus Christ, 1723
Zacharias, 3:36; prays for a son, 3:37; birth of John announced to, 3:38; a sign granted to, 3:40; 420; 1534. See also 6:86; 19:1-11; 21:89, 90
Zaid, ibn Thābit, xxxvii, xxxviii, xxxxix
Zaid, son of Ḥārithah, 1990; divorces Zainab, 33:37; 1991
Zainab, 2000; marriage of, with Zaid, 33:36; 1990; 1991
Zainab, daughter of Khuzaimah, 2000
Zakāt, see Poor-rate
Zaqqūm, 17:60; 1442; 37:62; 2111; 44:43
Zerubbabel, 1413
Ẓihār, 33:4; 1967; 58:1-4; 2460
Zoroaster, Darius a believer in the religion of, 1517
Zoroastrians, 139

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF SURAHS

Surah	*Page*	*Chapter*
Ibrāhīm	495	14
A'rāf (Al)	317	7
Aḥzāb (Al)	799	33
Aḥqāf (Al)	952	46
Ikhlāṣ (Al)	1219	112
A'lā (Al)	1167	87
Āl'Imrān	127	3
Anbiyā' (Al)	627	21
An'ām (Al)	278	6
Insān (Al)	1125	76
Inshirāḥ (Al)	1187	94
Inshiqāq (Al)	1158	84
Anfāl (Al)	363	8
Infiṭār (Al)	1152	82
Barā'at (Al)	383	9
Burūj (Al)	1161	85
Baqarah (Al)	6	2
Balad (Al)	1176	90
Banī Isrā'īl	543	17
Bayyinah (Al)	1196	98
Taḥrīm (Al)	1073	66
Taghābun (Al)	1065	64
Taṭfīf (Al)	1154	83
Takāthur (Al)	1204	102
Takwīr (Al)	1147	81
Tīn (Al)	1189	95
Jāthiya (Al)	946	45
Jumu'ah (Al)	1059	62
Jinn (Al)	1106	72
Ḥāqqah (Al)	1092	69
Ḥā Mīm	906	41
Ḥajj (Al)	646	22
Ḥijr (Al)	507	15
Ḥujurāt (Al)	976	49
Ḥadīd (Al)	1027	57
Ḥashr (Al)	1043	59
Dukhān (Al)	940	44
Dhāriyāt (Al)	987	51
Raḥmān (Al)	1013	55
Ra'd (Al)	483	13
Rūm (Al)	774	30
Zukhruf	928	43
Zilzāl (Al)	1198	99
Zumar (Al)	878	39
Saba' (Al)	821	34
Sajdah (Al)	793	32
Shams (Al)	1179	91
Shu'arā' (Al)	709	26
Shūrā (Al)	916	42
Ṣād	866	38
Ṣaff (Al)	1055	61
Ṣāffāt (Al)	852	37
Ḍuḥā (Al)	1184	93
Ṭāriq (Al)	1164	86
Ṭā Hā	609	20
Ṭalālq (Al)	1069	65
Ṭūr (Al)	993	52
'Ādiyāt (Al)	1200	100
'Abasa	1143	80
'Asr (Al)	1206	103
'Alaq (Al)	1191	96
'Ankabūt (Al)	760	29
Ghāshiyah (Al)	1170	88
Fātiḥah (Al)	1	1
Fatḥ (Al)	967	48
Fajr (Al)	1172	89
Furqān (Al)	696	25
Fāṭir (Al)	832	35
Falaq (Al)	1220	113
Fīl (Al)	1209	105
Qāri'ah (Al)	1202	101
Qāf	981	50
Qadr (Al)	1194	97
Quraish (Al)	1211	106
Qaṣaṣ (Al)	743	28
Qalam (Al)	1085	68

Surah	*Page*	*Chapter*
Qamar (Al)	1007	54
Qiyāmah (Al)	1120	75
Kāfirūn (Al)	1215	109
Kauthar (Al)	1213	108
Kahf (Al)	567	18
Lahab (Al)	1217	111
Luqmān	786	31
Lail (Al)	1182	92
Māi'dah (Al)	237	5
Mā‘ūn (Al)	1212	107
Mujādilah (Al)	1036	58
Muḥammad	959	47
Muddaththir (Al)	1115	74
Mursalāt (Al)	1130	77
Maryam	594	19
Muzzammil (Al)	1111	73
Ma‘ārij (Al)	1098	70
Mulk (Al)	1079	67
Munāfiqūn (Al)	1062	63
Mumtaḥana (Al)	1050	60
Mu'min (Al)	892	40
Mu'minūn (Al)	664	23
Nāzi‘āt (Al)	1138	79
Nās (Al)	1222	114
Naba' (Al)	1134	78
Najm (Al)	1000	53
Naḥl (Al)	518	16
Nisā'(Al)	184	4
Naṣr (Al)	1216	110
Naml (Al)	727	27
Nūr (Al)	678	24
Nūḥ (Al)	1102	71
Wāqi‘ah (Al)	1020	56
Humazah (Al)	1207	104
Hūd	438	11
Yā Sīn	841	36
Yūsuf	462	12
Yūnus	417	10